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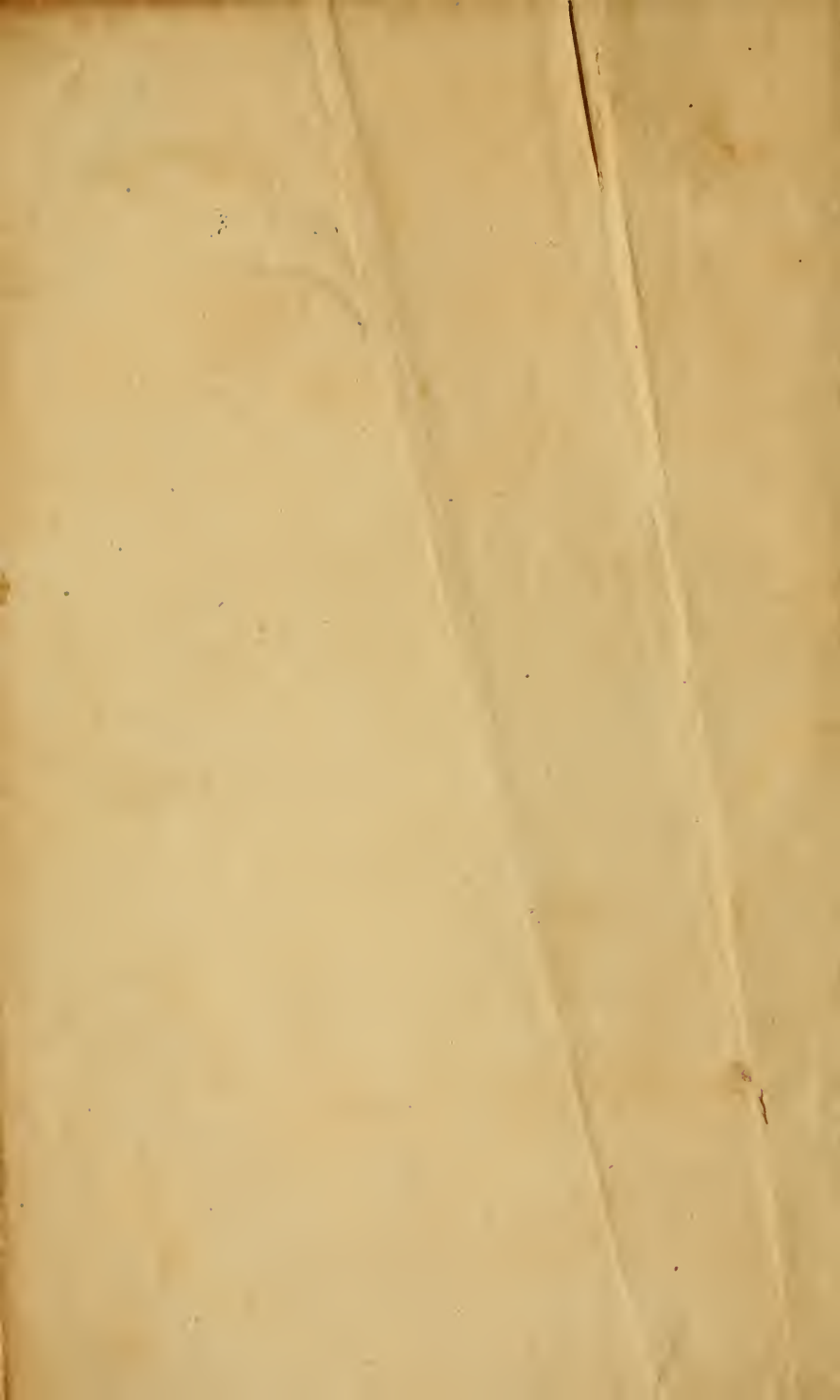
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Tho. Medhurst. 1776. A Grosvenor Street.

COMMENTARY Vpon the Prophecie of ISAIAH.

By

M^r. JOHN CALVIN.

WHEREVNTO ARE ADDED FOVRE TABLES:

The first touching places of Scripture alleaged: The second, of the principall matters handled: The third, of Authors and diuers names mentioned: The fourth, of certaine texts cited out of Isaiah in the new Testament, Which by the Author in the Commentarie are compared and reconciled.

TRANSLATED OVT OF FRENCH
INTO ENGLISH: BY C.C.

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sinne of the world. Iohn 1.29.

To him also giue all the Prophets witnesse, that through his name all that belecue in him, shall receiue remission of sinnes. Act. 10. 43.

Lord, who will beleue our report? And to whom is the arme of the Lord reuealed? Isai. 53. 1. Iohn 12. 37. 38.

T* Medhurst



T* Medhurst

AT LONDON

Imprinted by FELIX KYNGSTON, and are to be sold by
William Cotton, dwelling in Pater noster Row, at the signe of
the golden Lion. 1609.

Wm. H. ...
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TO THE HIGH AND MIGHTIE PRINCE,

HENRIE, PRINCE OF GREAT BRIT-
TAIN, SONNE AND HEIRE APPARANT TO
our Soueraigne Lord, IAMES King of
Great Brittain, &c.

AND TO THE MOST NOBLE AND VER-
TVOVS PRINCESSE, THE LADY ELIZABETHS GRACE,
his Highnesse most deare Sister; all honour and happinesse,

*with eternall glorie through Christ
IESVS.*



Most gracious and renowned Princes, ha-
uing translated out of French into our
English tongue, the booke of the prophe-
cie of *Isaiah*, interpreted and expound-
ed by Master *John Calvin*, of reuerend
memorie : I humblic craue that it may
be published vnder your most Princely
names and protection. The reason of
this my humble petition is, that the honor

of so noble a worke may not be imbased by the meanes of my
endeuours. This Prophet by birth was the sonne of *Amos*, esteem-
ed by many to haue been brother to *Azarias* King of Iudah, and
Father in law to King *Manasses*: which being so, this Prophet was
by birth of the blood Royal, and descended of the house of *David*,
which for the promise of Christ to come of him, was the most
noble house of all the Kings of the earth. Being so borne, his edu-
cation could not be but Princely, and his bringing vp in all good
learning, wisdom, vertue and honor. His spirituall graces, not at-
tained vnto by ordinarie meanes, but inspired into him immediatly
by the Spirit of God, were excellent. This appeareth particu-
larly in the sixth Chapter of this Prophecie, declaring that an An-
gell

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

gell of God with a burning coale taken from the Lords Altar, and laide to the mouth of the Prophet, refined his lips and his tongue, that they became pure and precious as the finest Gold. The same is manifest in all the booke of his Prophecie; wherein both the light and the heate of that heavenly fire appeareth. For he not onely declared the will of God sincerely, according to the lawe and testimonie deliuered to *Moses*, but also foreshewed the future euent of the Kingdome of *Judah*, and of all the flourishing states and Kingdomes of his time.

He Prophecieth also of the birth of Iesus Christ, as if hee had been taught by the Angell *Gabriel*; who brought the annunciation and message of it to the blessed Virgin his mother. Of his passion and death he spake, as if with the Apostle *John* he had stoode by when he was crucified. His resurrection he described, as if with all the Apostles he had stoode vpon Mount Oliuet, where the Lord tooke the cloude of glorie as his heavenly Chariot to ascend and goe vp to his Father. His zeale and indignation against sinne is eident euery where, in his sharpe reproofes of the offences of all estates.

Finally, the booke of his Prophecie beareth written in the head of it the names of foure Kings, in whose time he prophecied; and before whom as a vessell of golde he bare the name of God with great honour. All which things being royall, it seemed to me most conuenient that his booke should still beare in the front of it the names of Princes. And as hee foreshewed that Kings should be Fosterfathers, and Queenes Nurces of the Church of Christ, so my desire was that his booke might be published vnder the names and protection of Christian Princes.

Moreouer, I was led hereunto by the example of this Interpreter, whose exposition vpon *Isaias* prophesie I translate; namelye, of *M. John Caluin*, a man in his time of excellent pietie and learning; and one of the great lights, whereby it hath pleased God both to chase away the errors of poperie, as the darknes of the shadow of death; and to cause his maruellous and comfortable light of the Gospell to shine vnto this present age. For hee dedicated his first exposition of this booke to the young Prince, King *Edward* the sixth, of famous memorie, for the princelie graces, for the zealous loue of true religion, and of al heroical vertues, where- with in his young yeeres he raised an admirable expectation of fu-
ture

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

ture glorie, if his precious life had long continued. He was also most worthily renowned with highest glorie, for that gracious reformation in religiō, which was established by his regal authority, and which our English Church at this day with great comfort doth enioy, vnder the happie gouernment of our Soueraigne Lord the King, your most noble and renowned Father.

Furthermore, the same Author setting out againe this Commentarie, amplified and enlarged, he dedicated this second edition to our late most gracious Queene *Elizabeth*, worthie of eternall memorie in this Kingdome, for the reestablishing (after a few yeeres alteration) of the zealous reformation of her most vertuous brother. Which example hath led mee in most humble manner to seeke for the same worke, the high patronage and protection of such Princes, like those to whom hee presented this his seruice.

To whom I know none so like as your selues, both in regard of your high estate, and also in like most noble descent from the vnited houses of Yorke and Lancaster. Besides which resemblance, your Highnesse also is of like yeeres to the yong Prince King *Edward*, and in the eies of all the kingdome, of like hope of excellent vertue and zealous proceedings in the aduancement of Christian religion.

In like manner your Grace resembleth the most gracious late Queene *Elizabeth*, both in her royall name, and also in the constant expectation of all men, to expresse in time all the princely vertues and graces that shined in that most renowned Princessse, from this Westerne part of the world, to the furthest East, and to the rising of the Sunne.

In which respects, esteeming such a dedication, most like that which my author made of his owne worke, I haue most humbly craued that this my translation of it might bee vouchsafed the honour to haue your Princelie names written in the beginning of it. For notwithstanding the great difference that is betweene a reuerend learned writer and expounder of the holie Scriptures, and the translator of such an exposition, yet this meane seruice hath also his good vse in the Church of God; and is of long and tedious labour to such as take paines therein; which being gratioufully accepted, may encourage others to trauell in this kind, and cause many to giue thanks to God for you both, by whose most

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princely fauours and protection, they are made partakers of such
worthie writings. And I shall alwaies pray Almighty God,
with this new yeere, to multiply many more vpon you, and
dailie replenish your hearts with all princely and he-
roicall graces, that may enable and adorne
Princes of so hie estates, amongst
this people.

*Your Highnesse, and Graces most
humble deuoted, in all loyall
and dutifull affection,*

CLEMENT COTTON.



TO THE MOST HIGH AND RENOWMED PRINCESSE,

ELIZABETH, *Queene of England, &c. A most gracious
defender of the true Christian Faith.*

JOHN CALVIN.



Although in correcting and polishing of this Commentary, most noble Queene, I haue trauelled with such diligence, that it may well be esteemed a new booke: yet because in the first edition it was dedicated to your brother King Edward, who in his infancy farre surpassed the men of his time; whose memorie also I wish euer to flourish, as worthily it deserues: I was determined to alter nothing touching the inscription. But because in this miserable and wofull scattering of the Church, and the abolishing of the sincere doctrine which hath happened in so short a space, with an incredible violence; this booke, with the whole word of God, was banished England for a time: and that now as I hope it shall be received (as before) at your happie entrance into that kingdome; I haue committed no absurditie, as I thinke, if together with the name of so worthy and excellent a King, I also ioyne yours; which all good men do both loue and honour. Yea, besides this occasion which thus offers it selfe; necessitie also may seeme to require that I should intreate your fauour touching this Commentarie in particular; the banishment whereof hath (I am well assured) been much lamented by very many of the faithfull, your louing subiects.

*Although I confesse my meaning is not so much to obtaine your fauour onely in respect of my labours, as humble to beseech, yea and by the sacred name of Christ to adiuere you, that not onely all good bookes may againe find intertainment, and bee freely used in your kingdome vnder your allowance: but also that you be carefull in the first place, of that true religion which hath been shamefully corrupted. If Iesus Christ, the onely sonne of God doth iustly challenge this of all the Kings of the earth, then hath he bound you, most noble Queene, with a more holy band to put your sacred hand to such a worke. For in that time wherein your selfe, the daughter of a King, were not free from that dreadfull tempest rushing downe so furiouslie vpon the heads of all the faithfull; (this Lord Iesus I say) plucking you safe thereout, albeit you had your part with them in the feare of this danger; he hath obliged you to vow your selfe and all your designes to his seruice. And so farre is it off that you haue any cause to blush in respect of such a deliuerance, that contrariwise God hath therein giuen you ample and plentifull matter of reioycing, in vouchsafing thus to conforme you to the Image of his sonne; vnto whom our Prophet among other glorious titles giues him this, namely, That out of prison, and from iudgement was he taken, and exalted vnto a soueraigne degree of celestiaall rule and dominion. As it is not a common honour then to resemble such a Patron: so as oft as you shall call the same to mind (which you should neuer forget) out of what perplexed and wofull feares you are escaped through
Gods*

The Epistle to Queene Elizabeth.

Gods providence, who hath in a visible manner as it were, reached forth his hand from heauen vnto you. Know yee, that he sets this marke before you; namely, that with a fearelesse constancie, and an inuincible magnanimitie of mind, you should interchangeably referre vnto your Protector and Redeemer, that right which vnto him appertaineth; and setting all other busineses aside (with which on all sides you shall be enuironed in these beginnings of your reigne) you will (which I nothing doubt of) giue such order that his seruice vnworthilie corrupted for a time in your countrie, may bee there reestablished in its first glory.

And if Satan endeuour to terrifie, or weaken you in proposiing many and great impediments; you know of whom you ought to craue courage, cheeresfully to goe on, and to overcome all obstacles. God also for his part, who approoues of mens particular actions, will crowne in you his worke, with an happie and wished end.

Moreouer your dutie to religion, most excellent Queene, should the rather prouoke you; seeing our Iſaiah requires, that Queenes should be no lesse nurcing mothers to his Church, then Kings the nurcing fathers thereof. Neither are you only bound to purge out the filth of poperie againe; and that the stocke lately affrighted and dispersed, be againe gathered together and fostered: but that you also call home the banished exiles, who chose rather to lose the present profits of their natie countrie, then there to continue, whilest pietie was chased thence. Here is the summe of your thankefulnesse towards God, and a sacrifice of a most sweet saour, namely, that the faithfull seruants of God, who were constrained to wander to and fro in farre countries for the profession of the Gospell, may now returne home to their houses by your fauour.

As for vs, who for good cause haue bitterly bewailed so lamentable a spectacle (we, I say) haue inst occasion giuen vs now to be glad, and to gratifie you, when by the clemencie of your eie, we presently see the way made open to our brethren, not onelie to serue God with freedom in your Maiesties dominions; but also to be a meanes whereby others may enjoy the like benefit there with them.

To conclude, most noble Queene, if of your fauour you accept (as I hope you will) this testimonie of the reuerence which I owe to your Greatnesse; though many may esteeme the same small and contemptible: yet shall I thinke my selfe abundantly recompenced, and will all my life endeuour by all meanes possible to manifest my thankefulnesse to your Highnesse for the same.

The Lord guide and governe you, most noble Queene, by his Spirit of wisdom; strengthen you with inuincible fortitude; defend and enrich your Highnes with all sorts of blessings. From Geneva, the yeere 1559. Iannuarie the 15. which, as they say, is appointed for the day of your Coronation; for which cause I did the more willingly set pen to paper, hauing obtained some release from a quartan Ague.



TO THE MOST NOBLE
AND RENOWMED, EDVVARD THE
sixth, King of England, &c. A true Christian
Prince.

IOHN CALVIN.



Albeit I acknowledge (most noble Prince) this Commentarie to be faithfully and aptly gathered from my ordinarie readings: yet in regard it was polished by another hand; at the first I feared, lest being published vnder the title of your name, it might seeme I had not furnished my selfe with a present worthe of your Maiestie. But one speciall reason among others, in the end freed mee from this feare; namely, that as this Princely Prophet descended of the blood Royall; and a most honourable Ambassador of Christ the Soueraigne King, suted well with your person: so

I hoped that my labours which I haue taken in expounding his prophecies, would be accepted and esteemed of you.

Moreouer, seeing he had good experience of the disposition of siue Kings, far vnlike each other, to whom he continually preached: yet I need not aduertise you, which of these you ought to follow, neither yet to exhort you to the performance of such duties, vnto which you shew your selfe alreadie most willing.

Vzziah and *Iotham* fauoured him; and yet they wanted sufficient courage in erecting Gods pure worship: the greatest conflicts he sustained was with *Abaz*: not that he was an open enimie; but a false hypocrite, full of dissimulation, and treacherie. And what enimies (I pray you) gaule Gods seruants more then such? His successor *Hezechiab* not only reuerenced this holy personage, but also modestly, as one of the comon sort, submitted himselfe to his doctrine; obeyed his counsels, and suffered himself to be gouerned by his admonitions. Nay which is more, he willingly yeelded to be sharply reproofed by the Prophet when need required. The last, which was *Manasses*, who, as all the Iewes with one consent affirme, was his father in law, wickedly slew him by cruell torments. Yea, euen during the time that good Kings aided him, and also vnder *Hezechias*; who shewed himselfe so godly a protector of pietie and godlinesse, yet then, was he continually vexed with sharpe and tedious trauels, and made to vndergoe very grieuous conflicts: so difficult and rare a thing is it to see men consent to wholsome doctrine. I say more; such as will faithfullie and vprightly discharge their duties in this propheticall function, must needs make account to be at continuall oddes with the world. So much the more therefore ought faithfull Kings, by their defence, to succour the Ministers of Christ, that they be not molested nor pressed aboue measure, by the insolencie of the wicked.

But by how much the more as this vertue is excellent, and truly heroicall; so if wee shall call to mind what hath past in all the ages from the first (till now;) how rarely hath it been found; or how few haue giuen themselues to the practise of it? Many being remisse and fainthearted, haue through meere negligence suffered Gods truth to be suppressed, as if the matter had not at all concerned them. The greater part shewing themselues aduersaries, haue with furie and violence rushed against it. And would to God all those who at this day profess themselues Christians, had but so much heart to aduance the doctrine of saluation, as they are proude in glorying of this name.

But

The Epistle to King Edward.

But to be silent touching others, we may yet at the last worthilie esteeme this comfort, not as a common fauour, in the miseries wherein the Church now is, that you, most noble King, haue been raised vp of God, with this spirit, and excellent magnanimitie of mind, to maintaine the pure religion; and as effectually to offer vnto God your seruice in this behalfe, as you know he receiues and approoues the same at your Maiesties hands. For howsoeuer the affaires of the Kingdome be yet managed by your honourable Counsell: and that as wel the most noble Duke of Sommerfet, your Maiesties Vncle, as also many others, haue taken the cause of religion so to heart, that they labour diligently (as it is very fit they should) to establish the same: yet doe you in such sort outgoe them all; that it well appeares, the zeale which they see in you prouokes them not a little to follow you. For you haue the same, not only to be of such a princely disposition as promifeth much, and to haue some seeds of vertues also, (which yet iueuerthelesse seemes great in so young yeeres) but more then that, such a ripenessse of these vertues alreadie growne beyond your age; which to the most aged, gets not only rare praise, but also makes them much to be admired. And aboute al, so greatly is your pietie commended, that I am very wel assured our Prophet shal haue one, that wil with like respect reuerence him being dead, as *H Ezekias* did whilest he was liuing.

As concerning the fruite which may happily redound vnto you thereby, it is best your selfe should learne it by your owne experience in reading of him: and yet I haue touched that also a little in the preface. There is only one thing which I haue determined to say vnto your Maiestie, (and this it is:) After the Prophet hath laid foorth Gods iust complaints against this so vnthankfull a people, and hath threatned the Iewes with such chastisements as their disloyall reuolt, and desperate obstinacie deserued; namely, that the time approached, wherein they should be brought to an horrible ruine: foorthwith comming to set foorth the new and incredible restauration of the Church, hee promifeth that God will so respect the same, that in despite of all her enemies, shee shall alwaies flourish in beauty, and happinesse. Those which returned from the captiuitie of Babylon felt this ioyous and blessed estate, when the sacrifices being againe newly erected, they might conceiue some good hope of greater benefits, then those which they then enjoyed: as when we behold the breake of day, wee expect the Sunne-rising soone after. But when Christ the sunne of righteousnesse appeared with his glorie in his Gospell, the thing it selfe greatly surpassed all that which had been highlie praised by the Prophets reuelations.

Within short space the knowledge of the true God was disperfed almost throughout the whole world. The pure religion which before was despised and shut vp within the bounds of Iudeah (as in a narrow corner) now began to bee spread into all nations and prouinces, yea, so honoured, that God was called vpon with one consent of faith by infinit multitudes. The sonne of God hauing here and there gathered the Churches, set vp his royall throne, and aduanced the same into the highest degree to be seene of all from the East vnto the West. The Churches adorned with admirable graces of the holy Ghost, not onely tasted of the incomparable fruite of the diuine goodnesse, but were also faire and shining theaters to manifest the wonderfull power of God, euen to such as were blind. And albeit, Christ raigned vnder the crosse, yet amidst the fierie conflicts and persecuti- ons, his glorie shined more gloriouslie, and his triumphs more stately, then if the Church had alwaies enjoyed tranquillitie.

In the end it came to passe, that that hautie pride of the Romane Empire submitting it selfe also vnto Christ, was a singular ornament to the house of God. But the malice & ingratitude of men was the cause why this happinesse lasted not successiuelly. And so the spouse of Christ as one stripped of so pretious a robe, spoiled of her dignitie, and deprived of her honourable attire, was brought backe againe to a miserable deformitie: yet God alwaies preferued some remainders, as it were in secret corners; but as touching the outward face of the Church, for the space of many yeeres, nothing appeared any where, but scatterings and confused waits. And we at this day behold how the Roman Antichrist, vsurping farre and neere ouer the sanctuarie of the Lord, by a sacrilegious tyrannie holds it vnder his feet rent and oppressed. For seeing the puritie of doctrine is there corrupted by monstrous errors, and that Gods seruice being ouerturned, idolatries raigne there without number; that in stead of a gouernement rightly instituted, a cruell torture hath been brought

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brought in, that the Sacraments be in part by grosse and absurd abuses corrupted, and partly shamefully set to sale: what remaine there (I pray you) but wofull ruines of that naturall beautie of the spirituall building?

Norwithstanding the Lord in our times hath begun againe to set vp that which was fallen downe, that at least there might be some image of the true Temple where he was purcly serued according as he hath ordained in the Gospel. To which end he hath selected out as it were from among the least of the common people, his chiefe builders, to aduance this worke by sincere doctrine. I grant, it is of it selfe a difficult worke, and of great waight, though Satan should let vs alone in quiet. But if euen now whilest some part of this building is raised vp, he doth his vtmost to break it downe, is it any maruell if we labour much, and with great care, & yet see little or no fruit for the present to come of our labors? Therefore these mightie Giants proudly scorne vs: as if whilest we studying how to practise the ruine of the tyrannous Romane sea; wee should striue to ouerthrow the mount Olympus.

These great wits also, who (as they thinke) know somewhat, deride our diligence; in regard we are so earnestly busied in restoring the Church to her first estate: as if in the same any certaine or settled estate were to be expected. For these (forsooth) imagine that they are so well founded, and on all sides so furnished, that it is no lesse easie to abolish poperie, then to mingle heauen and earth together. But the conceit of these wise men differs somewhat. For in regard the puerfuitie of the world is so great, that it cannot be held in awe, they thinke we trauel in vaine, and against the streame to seeke in correcting vices, to haue a pure and sincere administration of a Church. The flout of *Erasmus* is well enough knowne; What hopes *Capito* of the tenth which shall come after him? It cannot be denied but *Wolfgangus Capito* was an holy man, who with a most sincere affection endeouored to purge the Church. But because he was perswaded that the Ministers of Christ should no lesse lose their labour in correcting the stubbornnesse of the world, then if they should haue taken vpon them to haue forced the streame the contrarie way (for thus they are wont to thinke who talke of things in the shade) he taxeth vs all of inconsiderate zeale in the person of one. But both the one and the other are much deceiued, in that they consider not, that wee so imploy our selues in the Lords seruice, as he hath commanded, that in the meane while the restauration of the Church is meerey the worke of his owne hands. Neither is it without cause that the whole Scripture commonly testifies, and that our Prophet againe and againe so carefully repeates it. Wherefore being mindfull of this doctrine, let vs no way be discouraged from vndertaking vnder Gods guidance, a businesse which farre surmounts our owne abilities; that so no encumbrances may either breake off our purpose, or so weaken vs, that we should desist from our enterprife.

And here I doe expressly summon you, most excellent King, or rather God by the mouth of his Prophet *Isaiab* calles you, namely, to goe on in imploying whatsoever power and force God hath endued you withall; and with new encreases to set forward the restauration of the Church, which is now so happily begun in your kingdome. First, you daily heare and reade that this charge is committed vnto you in that Kingdome ouer which God hath placed you. Yea, and *Isaiab*, as I haue said, calling Kings nurcing fathers of the Church, permits not that the helpe which shee in this behalfe requires of you in her affliction, should now be wanting vnto her. Neither ought your heart to bee lightly touched with that, where the Prophet denounceth an heauie curse to fall vpon all Kings and nations, which shall defraud her of their aide.

Againe, your Maiestie also evidently knowes, that euen the necessitie of these times requires it. And albeit by your endeouors, it may be you shall gaine little; yet knowing how acceptable a seruice this is vnto God, and that it is a sweete smelling fauour in his nostrils, no dangers whatsoever ought to turne you from this enterprife.

Seeing then that God thus exhorts you to behaue your selfe valiantly, and therewithall promiseth you an happy issue: why shuld you not cheerfully follow him whē he calls you? In another place our Prophet cries; *Prepare, prepare the way for my people.* It is wel enough knowne, how there was no hope that the poore captiues could bee restored home to their countrie againe, neither was this presently performed. But in regard the Prephet by the spirit of prophesie, then foresaw what the posteritie should effectually feele, lest by so la-

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mentable a spectacle, the faithfull might be discouraged, he prevents them betimes; telling them that there are no obstacles or impediments, whatsoeuer (be they as firme and as close as they may be) thorow which God wil not make a way to deliuer his Church. Neither do we stand in lesse need of consolation to quicken vs vp at this day. And as for you, most noble King, it is very requisite that you be readie and watchfull, in respect of the charge which is committed vnto you, seeing *Isaiah* exhorts all Kings and Magistrates, in the person of *Cyrus*, to reach forth their hand to the Church in her trauel, to the end shee may be restored to her former estate. Although in this regard your condition differs much from that of *Cyrus*, in that he being but a stranger ouer the Lords flock was neuer taught expreslie, willingly, and with a franke courage to offer himself to restore & maintaine the Church: but you, whom the Lord hath not only vouchsafed to receiue by adoption, but hath also placed you in highest ranke among his children; the Prophet calles you to this office, as if he reached you out his hand. So much the more confidently therefore, and with the more ardent affection ought you to proceede on in this race. The matter (as I haue said) is in it selfe full of great difficulties, intangled with much tediousnesse, and mingled with dangers; because Satan ceaseth not to broch his cunning shifts and deuices (if by any meane he might) either to ouerthrow, or destroy the holie temple of God; sometimes also God by such trials will prooue our constancie. But if you be resolu'd, that hitherto you haue enterprised nothing by your most graue Counsell but by diuine authoritie from Gods word, and that for the present you so continue in restoring the estate of y^e Church, no doubt but you shall find by experience how wonderfully God will effect that which he hath giuen his Ministers in charge. England shall receiue an incomparable fruit from this so happie a going forward: and we shall haue cause too, with you and your whole kingdome to reioyce. In the meane while I will not cease to further your holy endeouours, as there is good cause, by my poore prayers, in regard they are the best meanes I am able to afford you.

Farewell most noble King. The Lord long preferue your flourishing estate,
assist and guide you by his holy spirit, and in all things blefse
and prosper you. So be it. From Geneva this fise
and twentieth of December.

1551.





To the Reader,



Such pretious esteeme (Christian Reader) were the expositions of this reuerend author in the Church of *Geneua*, that albeit some of them were by himself * spoken, and others of them * written in Latin; and that in fauor of the learned especially: yet because with his more then ordinarie depth of iudgement he alwaies matched a singular simplicitie and plainenesse, so that hee therein stoopes to the capacitie, euen of the simplest; it was

thought fit, that by some of good note in the said Church, they should all be translated into the vulgar French, for the benefit of all such as vnderstood the same.

Which commendable zeale and godly care of theirs, as it worthily prouoked many of this our Church for the common good, (at the happie entrance of our late deare and dread Soueraigne Ladie *Queene Elizabeth* into this kingdom) to translate diuers of his Commentaries vpon the bookes both of the * old, and * new Testament into English; so if their good beginnings had been seconded by answerable proceedings, thousands might, I doubt not, haue reaped the like fruit by those that are yet * vntranslated, which they haue done by the former. Wherefore, this seruice to the Church of God hauing been a long time neglected, and not hearing of any that purposed to set his helping hand to this so necessarie a businesse, I thought it might happily prooue a labour not altogether vnseasonable nor vnprofitable, if according to my poore abilitie I endeououred either to continue forth those former good beginnings, or at least thereby to quicken vp the care of such as are much more able then my selfe, to prosecute the same.

To which purpose (good Reader) some few yeeres since, for the first assay, I selected out of this learned Authors workes in French, his Commentary vpon the Hebrewes, not before translated; which being authorized, I was bold soone after to present thee therewith. Now because, as I suppose, it hath not passed abroad without some good fruit, it hath the rather encouraged me once more, whilest I profited my selfe in reading this Commentarie vpon the princelie Prophet *Isaiah*, to haue some respect of thy profiting also. For which cause thou hast the same now, as the former; translated, allowed, and also published (if thou wilt) for thy particular vse and profit.

As touching the fruit that is thence to be reaped, it would bee much better that thy self from thine owne experience mightest be able to report, then for me here at large to dilate. Only this I thinke I may not omit: if in reading this prophesie thou wouldest haue the difficulties therein cleared; thy iudgement in other things not obscure, either rectified, or confirmed; thy meditations concerning diuers sorts of instructions, menaces, reprehensions, promises, and consolations enlarged; loe here a *Philipp* readie at hand in any of these things to satisfie

* To wit, his ordinarie Lectures vpon the Prophets, which being read in the Schooles, were by approued Notaries there, taken from his mouth verbatim, and afterwards vnder the title of his lessons, or readings, imprint. d.
* Namely, his Commentaries, which were written by him at seuerall times in the house.
* Genesis, I. Ihuus, and Psalmes.
* All the Euangelists, Acts, Rom. &c.
* Namely, his lessons vpon the prophesie of Ieremias, the Lamentations, Ezechiel, &c.

At. 8. 27
to 35

TO THE READER.

tisfie thy desires. To conclude, if thou entrest vpon the reading of this booke, and wouldest indeede benefit thy selfe thereby, then giue me leaue to vse the Apostles exhortation (though by him vsed to another purpose) *Be not wearie in welldoing, but proceed on constantlie, so shalt thou* (I doubt not) *in due season reape, if thou faint not.*

Gal. 6.9.

Farewell, and profit more and more in the studie of Gods word, neuer giuing the Lord rest day nor night, till in the truth of thy heart, thou canst in some good measure professe with these three Worthies following, that thou likewise hast made the same thy chiefe repast, delight and treasure.

Job.

I haue not departed from the commandements of his lippes, and I haue esteemed the words of his mouth more then mine appointed foode : Iob 23.12.

Jeremiab.

Thy words are found by me, and I did eate them, and thy word was vnto mee the ioy and reioycing of mine heart : Ier. 15.16.

Dauid.

The law of thy mouth is better vnto mee then thousands of gold and siluer : Psalm. 119.72.

Thine in Christ, C. C.



THE FRENCH TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

I*T is twentie yeeres since and more, good Reader, that the lessons of M. Iohn Calvin vpon the Propbet Iſaiah (which being collected by M. Nicolas Gallars) were printed vnder the title of a Commentarie; and dedicated to that noble Prince of blessed memorie, Edward the sixth, King of England. A long time after, the Author himſelfe reuiewing this collection, imprinted both in Latin, and in French: ſatisfied not himſelfe only to reuiew it, thereby to explaine that, which otherwiſe ſeemed obſcure, by reaſon of the breuitie of it; and to ſet that in order, which was ſomewhat conſuſed: but he laboured therein with ſuch diligence and good ſucceſſe, that he augmented it in Latin with excellent and neceſſarie matters for the vnderſtanding of the text; more then the third part: bringing all things into ſo exaſt a forme, that if any bee pleaſed to take ſo much paines, as to conferre the firſt Commentarie or collection of thoſe leſſons, with this ſecond; he ſhall find that which we haue ſaid to be very true. Neither was this gathered in the ſchooles the ſecond time, as at the firſt; but was written in the houſe, euen word for word by the Authors owne direction: who hath ſo aptly diſpoſed and couched the whole together, that in peruſing of it, you ſhall perceiue in this booke, as well as in others which haue alreadie paſſed his hands, that he hath done great ſeruice to the Church of God, and hath alſo faithfully chalked out the way vnto ſuch as deſire to profit in diuine ſtudies. But eſpecially by theſe his Commentaries, which being careſully read, will ſerue noleſſe to the explaining of many texts that are contained in other bookes of the holy Scripture, as they will alſo be moſt helpfull to giue the true ſenſe of the Propbet Iſaiah; which hath mooued mee (good Reader) to beſtow my paines in translating the whole anew into French: leſt ſuch among you as vnderſtand not the Latin tongue, ſhould be deprived of ſo great a benefit.*

*Reade, and profit thereby in the feare
of God.*



A PREFACE TO THE PROPHECIE OF ISAIAH:

BY M^r. IOHN CALVIN.



They haue been wont to spend many words in setting forth the office of the Prophets. But I see no readier way then to referre them to the law; whence their doctrine is drawne, as the riuers from the fountaines. For they set the law before them for their imitation, so as by good right we may affirme and hold them to be the expositors thereof, in whom there is nothing separate from it. Now the Law contains three points. First, the doctrine of life :

The Prophets ground their doctrine vpon the Law.

Whereof they are the Expositors. The law contains three points:

secondly, the threatnings and promises: thirdly, the couenant of grace, which is founded in Christ.

For as touching the Ceremonies, they were exercises, by which the people were held in the seruice of God, and in godlinesse; according to the Contents of the first Table.

The Prophets then expound the doctrine thereof more at large; and lay that fourth in more plaine termes, which is brieflie contained in the two tables; teaching that which the Lord principallie requires.

As touching the threatnings and promises which *Moses* touched in generally, they applie them to their owne times, and describe them particularly. Lastlie, that which is said obscurely in *Moses*, touching Christ and his grace; they set it forth more perspicuousslie, and alleage more ample and abundant testimonies of the free couenant.

Threatnings: Promises:

But that the thing may be more cleere, we must fetch the matter further off; namely, from the Law it selfe, which God ordained as a perpetuall rule for his Church, that it might alwaies be in mens hands: and that all their successors should follow it.

Now because this doctrin of the law sufficed not this obstinate & vnruely people; the Lord also foreseeing that they would neuer be held in, vnlesse it were by some bridle: hee addes a prohibition, not to seeke to Magitians, Southsayers, Inchanters, Sorcerers, nor to such as regard the times, or the flying of birds, to such as asked counsell of familiar spirits, or at the dead; because such things were an abomination to the Lord.

Prohibitions, Deut. 18. 9. 10. 11. 12.

And to preuent the replies which they might make, namely, that their condition should be worse, then that of the infidels, who had their Southsayers, Astrologers, Sacrificers, and such like, of whom they might aske aduice and counsel; but they shuld be destituted of any that might be able to giue them satisfaction in doubtful and intricat causes: herein, to take away al pretext, & that they might not defile themselues in these execrable customes of the Gentiles, God

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Deut. 18. promifeth to raife them vp *Prophets*, by whom he wil manifefit his wil, who alfo fhall faithfully teach them whatfoeuer hee fhall giue them in charge; that they might haue no caufe to complaine for the time to come, as if any thing were wanting vnto them.

I grant, that in that place *Mofes* mentions a *Prophet*, and not *Prophets*. Notwithftanding it is a change of the number, to wit, the fingular for the plurall, a thing common in the Scriptures. And howfoeuer the place ought properly and principally to bee vnderftood of *Chrift* (as *S. Peter* expounds it *Act. 3.*) in regard he is the Prince of the *Prophets*, and that all of them, with their doctrine alfo depend vpon him, and with one confent aime at him: yet by this name, which is collectiue, it alfo comprehends the reft of the *Prophets*.

The Lord then hauing promifed them *Prophets*, by whom hee would declare vnto them his counfell and will, he commanded the people to reft in their expofition and doctrine. Not that the *Prophets* fhould adde any thing to the law, but that they fhould faithfully expound the fame, and conferue the authoritie thereof.

Mal. 4. 4. Whence alfo it is, that *Malachi* exhorting the people to perfift in that doctrine, faith, or rather God by him: *Remember the Law of Mofes my feruant, which I gaue him in Horeb for all Ifrael.* Thus bringing them backe to Gods law only; and commanding them to be content therewith. But would *Malachi* haue them to defpife the *Prophets* then? No. But for asmuch as the prophefies are dependances of the law, and that the law summarilie comprehends them all, this exhortation fufficed. For fuch as are well acquainted with the fumme of the doctrine, and principall heads of it, hauing their willes well inclined thereto; it is certaine that they will not contemne the prophefies: for it were a thing too fond to boaft of hauing affection to the law, and yet in the meane while not to make any account of the diuine interpretation thereof: fuch as are fome at this day, who are fo fhameleffe, that they dare brag of louing Gods law, and the whileft cannot endure to bee admonifhed or reprehended by the doctrine which is drawne and collected from the fame.

Note.

The firft table.

Thus when the *Prophets* deale with mens manners, they bring in no new thing, but explaine thofe things which were mifunderftood in the law. As for example, the people thought they had done their duties to the vtmoft, when they had offered facrifices, and obserued the ceremonies: for the world is wont alwaies to meafure God according to their owne ell, and to botch him vp a carnall feruice. This corruption the *Prophets* reprocue fharpely, fhewing that all ceremonies are nothing where the integritie of the heart is wanting; and that God will be worshipped by faith, and a right inuocating of his name. This was manifefted to them plainely enough in the law, but it was needfull it fhould take a deeper impreflion, and that they fhould be put againe in mind of it. The hypocrifie, wherewith men maske themfelues vnder the vaile of ceremonies, was to be difcouered.

The fecond table.

As touching the fecond table, the *Prophets* thence drew their exhortations, fhewing how all wrong, fraud and violence was to be abandoned. The *Prophets* office then was nothing elfe, but to hold the people in obedience to Gods law.

Threatnings.

Vifions.

In the threatnings and promifes they haue fomething more fpeciall. For what *Mofes* propounded in generall, they describe in particular. Befides, they had vifions, which were proper to them: by which the Lord reuealed things to come, that fo they might applie the promife and threatnings to the peoples vfe, and might further affure them of Gods will.

Mofes

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Moses threatens, *God will pursue thee with the sword, the enemies shall vex thee with-* *Moses.*
out, and within, domestical contentions shall annoy thee. Thy life shall hang as by
a thread; thou shalt tremble at the shaking of a leaf; and such other things.

But the Prophets say: *Behold, God hath raised against thee the sword of the Chal-* *Th: Proph:ts*
deans, and of the Egyptians: also, God hath armed these to the battell. This citie shall be
destroyed at such a time. The like is to be said of the promises.

Moses saith, *If thou obseruest the commandements, God will blesse thee.* And then *Moses.*
 he goes on in recounting blessings in generall.

But the Prophets in particular affirme, *The Lord will blesse thee in such a* *The Prophets*
thing.

Also the Lord promiseth by *Moses* in these words, *Although thou wert scattered* *Moses.*
and driven to the utmost parts of the earth, yet from thence will I gather thee.

But the Prophets promise, that albeit the Lord hath scattered them *as farre as* *The Prophets*
Babylon, yet within 70. yeeres he will cause their captiuitie to returne.

And as touching the free couenant which God made with man through *Couenant of*
 Christ, the Prophets are much more eident; and doe much more confirme *Grace.*
 the people in it. For they set *Christ before their eyes*, when they would comfort
 the faithfull; and raise vp their minds to the hope of his comming, euen as it
 were to the foundation, and to the place of the couenant, vnto whom the effect
 of the promises was to be referred.

Whosoeuer shall ponder these things, shall easilie perceiue what hee is to
 seeke in the Prophets, and whereunto their writings tend. But for the present,
 it sufficeth that we haue pointed it foorth as with the finger.

Hence we may soone gather how wee ought to handle the doctrine of the
 word, and how we ought to imitate the Prophets; who so much admired it,
 that thence they collected the admonitions, reprehensions, threatnings and *Nota*
 consolations, to applie them to the peoples vse. For though it be not dailie re-
 uealed vnto vs what we ought to doe, yet are wee to compare the conuersation
 of the people of our times, with that of the people of old; and by histories and
 examples to denounce the iudgements of God. Namely, that from the venge- *Go: alwaies*
 ance he tooke vpon such sinnes in that time, he will likewise be reuenged vpon *like himselfe.*
 those that reigne euery where in our time. Why so? Because he is alwaies like
 himselfe.

The faithfull teachers then must come furnished with the like wisdome, if
 they meane to handle the doctrine of the Prophets profitablie. Thus much
 as touching the prophesies in generall.

To come to our Prophet *Isaiah*: the inscription sufficiently shewes both what *The inscrip-*
 he was, and in what time he published his prophesies. For his father is here nam- *tion.*
 ed, to wit, *Amos* brother of *Azarias* king of Iuda. Whence it appeares hee *Isaiah de-*
 was of the blood royall: and of this opinion are all the ancients. And yet nei- *scended of*
 ther his stocke, nor neere affinitie to the King (for the Iewes affirme he was fa- *the blood*
 ther in law of *Manasseh*) could hinder him from being put to death in hatred *Royall.*
 of his doctrine, neither was he respected any more, then if he had been of some
 base estate or condition.

The names of the Kings here mentioned, set foorth the time, in which hee *The time*
 prophesied. There are some who thinke that he began about the end of *Vzziahs* *when*
raigne. And they take their coniecture from the vision which is recorded *Isaiah*
 in the sixth chapter, by which he testifies hee was confirmed. But this conie- *Propheesied.*
 cture is too weake; as shall be shewed in place conuenient. It rather appeares
 by the inscription, that he prophesied in the daies of *Vzziah*; of which I see no-
 thing

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thing to the contrarie. How euer it bee, it plainly appeares that he prophesied aboute 64. yeeres. For *Iothan* raigned 16. yeeres: *Abaz* as much; *Hezekias* 29. This makes 61. Ad those in which he prophesied vnder *Vziah*; and afterwards vnder *Manasses*, who put him to death: These at the least will make vp 64. yeeres; in which *Isaiab* ceased not to performe the office of a Prophet. And it may well be that he prophesied longer: but of this we can gather no certentie from the historic.

Isaiab put to death by *Manasses*.

Isaiab a paterne for all Pastors.

This then ought to be seriousslie marked of all the Ministers of the word, that from his example, they may learne patiently to beare the burthen of their office, though it be cumbersome and painefull: not thinking it any disgrace to suffer many sore and tedious trauels, seeing they haue so many worthie paterne set before them. I grant it must needs discourage them exceedingly, when they see that things goe not forward; and that their labours take not such good successe as they desire: thinking it better to leaue all, rather then to bestow so much labour in vaine. They haue need therefore often to remember, and to set before their eyes such examples. (Why so?) Because *Isaiab* fainted not, although he gained little by so many painfull trauels.

Jeremiah.

Jeremiah also ceased not by the space of 50. yeeres to call vpon this people, who in the meane while hardned their hearts the more: and yet wee see they forsooke not their charge, whatsoeuer difficulties came betweene. Euen so must wee follow our vocation, and constantlie beare all sorts of encumbrances.

The change of Kings.

Note also the circumstance of the change of Kings which are here numbred vp, chap. 1. 1. For it is impossible that in so great diuersitie, the State should alwaies continue alike. No doubt but many troubles fell out. And yet our Prophet perseuered with an inuincible constancie; and neuer suffered his heart to be overcome of feares.

Quest.

But some may aske whether *Isaiab* himselfe put this title to his prophesie, or some other. None of the expositors that I haue read, answers this question. For my owne part, albeit I am not very well satisfied, as touching this question, yet I will shew what I thinke.

Ans.

How the Prophecies were collected.

After the Prophets had preached to the people, they gathered a compendious summe of their sermon; which they affixed to the gate of the Temple, that the prophesie might the better be viewed and learned of all. And after it had remained there a sufficient time for some certaine daies; the Ministers of the Temple took it downe, and put it into the treasure of the Temple, that the memorie thereof might continue for euer. Very likely it is (I say) that the bookes of the Prophets were thus gathered, as may appeare by the second Chapter of *Habacuk*; who soeuer be disposed to consider the same well: as also from the eight of this prophesie.

Haba. 2. 2.
See chap. 30.
8. and chap.
8. 1. 2.

The Prophecies preferred by the singular prouidence of God.

Now this was done no doubt by the speciall prouidence of God, that by the Priests themselues, whose office it was to conserue the prophesies for such as should succeed, it is come to passe that wee at this day enioy these treasures; which they for the most part lightly esteemed. For the Priests were the greatest enemies, that the Prophets had to deale withall.



An Epigram vpon the Translation of
M. Caluins Commentarie vpon the Pro-
phetic of Iſaiah.

THrice happie (England) if thou knewſt thy bliſſe,
Since Chriſts eternall Goſpell in thee ſhin'd
Thou art. H'is beetle-blind that ſees not this,
Brutiſhly ingrate that with a thankfull mind
Doth not acknowledge Gods great Grace herein,
And learnes thereby ſor to forſake his ſinne.

Gods word hath long in thee been ſoundly taught,
The ſound thereof hath rung throughout the Land,
And many a Soule by Fiſhers net been caught,
Which erſt lay thrail in Satans cruell band:
This fauour great by none can be expreſt,
But ſuch as haue it felt in their owne breſt.

Thy natiue ſonnes in thine owne bowels bred,
Like faithfull Shepheards haue done worthilie,
And thee with ſtore of heauentie Manna fed,
Forcing the wolues to leaue their crueltie,
To ſlinke aſide, and hide themſelues in holes,
In caues and dens, like pur-blind Backs and Moles.

Tyndall, Frith, Philpot, father Latimer,
The Goſpell preacht by word, by life, by death:
Iuel, Fox, Reynolds, Fulk and Whitaker
To ſecond them haue ſpent their vitall breath
In hot purſuit of that great Romiſh Bore,
Who ſpoiled quite this English wine before.

I ſpare to ſpeake of Deerings ſiluer voice,
Of Greenhams zeale, of Perkins labours ſound,
Of hundreds moe of Zion-builders choice,
The like whereof can ſcarce elſe where be found:
Such ground-worke they of Gods Truth here haue plac'd
As neuer ſhall by hels whole force be raz'd.

Besides all theſe, of ſorren Lights the chiefe,
Beza, and Viſinus, many other moe,
Martyr, Muſculus, for thy more reliefe
Are ſcene in English weed abroade to goe,
From place to place in euery Shire and Towne,
To teach the Truth and throw all Errors downe.

And

*And here presented is vnto thy sight
The Roiall Prophet Esais Euangel:
For some thinks I may it terme aright,
That Prince of holy Prophets doth so well,
So lively Christs whole historie presage,
As if h' had liu'd in that same very Age.*

*Whose Oracles great Calvin doth vnsfold
In thine owne native Tongue for thy Soules health.
Here maist thou gather precious Stones and Gold,
And store vp heapes of Heauenly lasting wealth;
Here maist thou find with very little paine.
Which would'st not lose for thousand Worlds againe.*

*Here maist thou see the black-mouth'd Atheists
Confounded quite by Demonstration cleare;
The cunning Papist put vnto his shifis,
And made in his right Colours to appeare;
Her's Christ, his Truth, and Life, thee set before,
Heauens Gates set open wide: what would'st thou more?*

By Francis Hering, Doctor in Physicke.



A COMMENTARIE Vpon the PROPHEESIE OF

ISAIAH, WRITTEN BY THAT
REVEREND AND PAINEFVLL

Pastor, in the Church of Christ, Master

JOHN CALVIN.

Verf. 1. A vision of Isaiah the Sonne of Amos, which he saw concerning Iudah and Ierusalem; in the daies of Uzziah, Iotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah Kings of Iudah.



Although the Hebrew word *chazon* which the Prophet useth be deriued of seeing, and doth properly signifie *vision*: yet notwithstanding for the most part it imports as much as *Reuelation*. For as

oft as the Scripture makes mention of speciall visions which appeared to the Prophets, whereby the Lord meant the better to confirme them when hee would haue some excellent thing come to light, it vseth the word *Mareah*, which properly signifies *vision*. But to the end heape not vp many testimonies, in the third chapter of the first booke of *Samuel* (where mention is made in generall of prophesies) the author of that booke saith, that the word of the Lord was precious in those dayes, because there was no manifest vision (where he vseth the word *Chazon*) and a little after, the vision by which God manifesteth himselfe to *Samuel*, is expressed by the word *Mareah*. Also in the twelfth chapter of the booke of *Numbers*, where *Moses* distinguisheth the two ordinarie meanes of Reuelation, hee there with dreames coniointeth *vision* as the speciall. And yet by the ninth chapter of the same booke of *Samuel*, it appears that the name of *Seer* was imposed in old time vpon the Prophets: but by way of excellencie, because God discovered his counsell familiarly vnto them.

Now as touching this present place, it is out of doubt that the certaintie of doctrine is deciphered out vnto vs by this very word; as if it had been said; There is nothing contained in this booke which was not manifested to *Isaiah* by God himselfe. Wherefore

the true sence of the word is to be obserued; for thereby wee learne, that the Prophets spake not of themselves, neither yet preferred their owne imaginations: but that they were enlightened by God, and had their eyes opened to see those things which otherwise of themselves they had not been able to haue comprehended. The doctrine of *Isaiah* then, euen in the very inscription, is recommended vnto vs; to wit, because it contains nothing of mans inuention, but the reuelations of God: to the end we might bee assured that whatsoever is contained in this booke, was reuealed vnto him by the holy Ghost.

[Concerning *Iudah*.] It were not amisse if it were translated *Against Iudah*. For the particle *Al* signifies both the one and the other; and the sence will be all one: for whatsoever this booke contains, it doth properly appertaine to *Iudah* and *Ierusalem*. But if any shall obiekt that there are many things mingled in this booke which concerne *Aegypt*, *Tyrus*, *Babylon*, with other cities and countries: the answer is, that it was not necessary to recite euery particular in the inscription; because it was sufficient that the principall summe should be set before vs, thereby shewing to whom the Prophet was chiefly sent, namely, to *Iudah* and *Ierusalem*. For whatsoever his prophesies concerne beside, it is accidentally as they say: neither yet was it any digressing from the scope of his office to preach to others also: what calamities approached neere vpon them: for *Amos*, though he were specially sent to them of *Israel*, yet passed hee not the bounds of his vocation when he prophesied also against *Iudah*: yea we haue yet a more familiar example here of in *S. Peter* and *S. Paul*; *Peter* was appointed ouer the *Iewes*, and *Paul* ouer the *Gentiles*, and yet *Saint Peter* passed not beyond the bounds of his office in preaching to the *Gentiles*, as when he went in to *Cornelius*: neither *S. Paul*, when he offered the preaching of the *Gospel* to the *Iewes*, to whom he resorted as soone as he entred into any citie. And thus was it lawfull for *Isaiah* to doe, in like manner, Nor whilst he enduoured to discharge

Oiection.

Answer.

Gal. 2.8.
Act. 10. 17.
13.5 &
14.1 & 17.
2.10. & 18.
4.19.

1. Sam. 3. 1.
15.

Numb. 12. 6

1. Sam. 9. 9.

his dutie to the vttermost in teaching of the Iewes, and purposely bent all his studies that way: did he yet go beyond his calling when hee speakes (as it were by the way) of other nations?

He takes *Iudab* here for the whole nation, and *Ierusalem* for the chiefe seate of the kingdome: for hee separates not the citie from the kingdome; but names it by way of excellencie, as being the mother citie. Euen as if a Prophet at this day should be sent to speake vnto the whole kingdome of *France*, should name the citie of *Paris*, as the chiefe of the kingdome. And it was needfull that this should be done; first, to the end the Citizens of *Ierusalem* should not exempt themselves, as though they were guiltlesse: or rather, as being dispenced withall, from being vnder any checke, in respect of the greatnes of their dignitie. Secondly, that by meanes hereof they might be prevented from sending the Prophet backe to the Comions, and countrie people. But they are deceived, who would haue *Ierusalem* to bee named a part, because it was situated in the tribe of *Beniamin*, seeing the one halfe thereof, which was subiect to the successors of *Dauid*, is comprehended vnder this name of *Iudab*.

Verf. 2. *Hearre O heauens, and thow earth hearken: for the Lord hath said, I haue nourished, and brought vp children, but they haue rebelled against me.*

* Or, haue done wickedly against me.

Isaiah hath here imitated *Moses*: for so it is the custome of all the Prophets to doe; neither is it to be doubted but he alludes to that excellent song of *Moses*, *Deut. 32. 1.* in the very entrance whereof he calls heauen and earth to witness against the people. I graunt that it is a terrible protestation: for it is as much as if both of them should turne themselves to the dumbe elements voyde of sense, because men had no eares to heare, but were become vtterly benumbed in all their senses. *Isaiah* then speakes here as of a rare and prodigious thing, which were euen enough to smite the very elements with astonishment: though otherwise senselesse in the euen. For what could be more horrible, then to see the *Israeclites* reiect the Lord, in whom they had receiued so many benefits? Those who by *heauen*, vnderstand the Angels, and by *earth*, men, doe too much lessen the force of these words: and doe also take away that wherein the chiefest weight of the Prophets vehemencie lieth. Now all the expositors almost doe finish the clause, *For the Lord hath spoken*, here: As if the Prophet meant to say, Seeing God hath opened his sacred mouth, it stands all men in hand attentiuely to receiue his word. And thus the sentence in appearance indeed is more full: but the circumstance of the place requires another knitting together of the words; namely, that this word *hearken* bee referred, not generally to what purpose one will; but solely and onely to the next complaint. And so, the sense is thus; Hearre the

complaint which God commenceth against you: *I haue nourished, &c.* For he recounts such a monstrous thing, as he is almost cast into a swound at the sight of it: so as he is faine to call in all the insensible creatures (contrarie to all order) to be witnesses thereof. I had rather then take these things in their proper signification, because they doe better set forth the Prophets meaning.

And to the end that no man should wonder why he speakes thus to things without sense or reason, experience it selfe not obscurely teacheth vs that the voyce of God is heard euen of the dumbe creatures: yea, and the very order of nature is nothing else but an obedience, which is yeilded vnto him thorowout all the partes of the world, to the end his soueraigne authoritie might shine in all places. For the elements, the heauens and the earth, doe their duties, and yeeld obedience to the commaundement which is prescribed them, and that at the least becke which God maketh to them: The earth bringeth forth her fruits; The Sunne, the Moone and the Starres doe finish their courses; The Sea passeth not beyond the limits which God hath appointed vnto it; The heauens also doe turne about to their certaine spaces: Finally, in all things wee may obserue a wonderfull distinction, although all these creatures be destitute of reason and vnderstanding. But man, who is indued therewith, in whose eares and heart the voyce of the Lord do often sounds, as if he were wholly senselesse, moueth not, neither boweth he his necke to submit himselfe to the obedience of his God. The dumbe and insensible creatures then shall beare witness against such obstinate and rebellious persons, to the end they may one day feele that this obstestation was not vsed in vaine.

I haue nourished.] Word for word it is, I haue made them great. But because he speaketh of *children*, wee cannot turne it better then that, *I haue nourished*, or brought vp. For the Latines, in stead of *nourishing*; say, to bring vp children. Yet hee by and by adds other benefits wherewithall hee had wonderfullie enriched them: as if he should say, I haue not onely performed the office of a good father in nourishing, and sustaining you in this life: but I haue also taken paines to exalt you to honour and dignitie. For there was no kind of fauour or mercie which the Lord withheld from the, euen as if he meant wholly to empirie himselfe. As hereafter in the fifth chapter he reproclereth them saying, What could I haue done any more to my vineyard that I haue not done vnto it? Why? the Lord might very well haue said as much to all nations, seeing hee nourished, and bestowed many blessings vpon them: but the *Israeclites* were his speciall chofen people, whom he had adopted before the rest of the world to himselfe, and intreated them as his most deere children, embracing and cherishing them with a speciall care, euen as in his very bosome. In a word, he adorned and beautified them with all manner of good things.

Now to apply this to our time; let vs consider

ſider whether our condition bee not like, or rather much better than that of the Iewes in ancient times. The adoption of God obliged them to the purſue of his ſeruite: our bond or obligation is double: namely, becauſe he hath not onely redeemed vs by the blood of Chriſt, but becauſe he who hath once vouchſafed to deliuer vs, doth ſtill call vs alſo to himſelfe by the preaching of the Goſpell, and therein prefers vs farre before all thoſe whom he hath yet left blinded in their ignorance. If we acknowledge not theſe things, of how much greater puniſhment ſhall we be worthe? for by how much the more the grace of God hath been abundantly powred forth vpon vs, of ſo much the more ingratitude ſhall we be conuincd before him.

But they haue rebelled] S. Ierome translates it, They haue deſpiſed me. But it appears ſufficiently by other places, that the Hebrew word *Paſſang*, expreſſeth yet ſomewhat more; namely, that they reuolted. God teſtifies then that he could not hold them vnder his obedience; no not by all the benefits hee could beſtow vpon them. But that they turned away more and more, & eſtranged themſelues, no otherwiſe then the ſonne, who by leauiſg his fathers houſe, ſhewes that hee is become altogether incorrigible. It is a monſtrous thing for children not to be obedient to their fathers; eſpecially to ſuch a one as neuer ceaſeth to doe them good, beſowes his whole care as it were vpon them. *Lycurgus* would not make any law againſt the vthankfull (becauſe it was a thing againſt nature not to acknowledge a benefit receiued). A child then that is vthankfull to his father is a double monſter, yea rather a threefold monſter againſt a liberall father, who ceaſeth not to doe him good. For albeit the Prophet calls them *children*, it is not giuen them heere as a title of honor, but the more to aggravate this their reuolt, and to make it the more odious.

Verſ. 3. *The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Aſſe his maſters Crib, but Iſrael hath not knowne: my people hath not underſtood.*

THIS comparison doth further exemplifie the crime of their reuolt. For the Lord might well haue compared his people to the Heathen, and Infidels: but he toucheth them neerer, in comparing them to brute beaſts, and in ſhewing that they are yet more fooliſh then they. For albeit theſe beaſts be voyd of reaſon & vnderſtanding, yet are they teachable, at the leaſt wiſe in this reſpect, that they acknowledge thoſe who feede them. Seeing then that the Lord had not onely fed this people as in a ſtraw or Crib, but had fed them largely and abundantly, no otherwiſe then the father doth his children whom he tendreth; and had not onely pampered their bellies, but did alwaies repleeniſh them with ſpirituall foodde: had he not good cauſe, think you, to eſteeme them worthe rather to be ſent to ſchoole to learne of *Oxen* and *Aſſes*

then of men; eſpecially when hee ſaw they were become ſo beaſtly? he ſends his people then to theſe brute beaſts to learne their duties of them. And no man ſuall for it often ſals out that the vnicurable creatures do better follow the order of nature, and doe in their kind ſhew more humanitie then men themſelues. And not to alledge many examples, this one which *Iſaiah* here propounds ſhall ſuffice: namely, that theſe beaſts being altogether ſenſeleſſe and blockiſh, doe yet notwithstanding obey their maſters and theſe who haue the gouernment of them. And if in other things we ſhall conſider wherein the beaſts doe ſurpaſſe men, how many particulars ſhall we find out? What is the cauſe that ſcarſely any beaſt will offer violence to one of his owne kind; and that he ſhould therein, as you would ſay, acknowledge his owne likenes. What is the cauſe alſo that all ſorts of beaſts doe take ſuch paines to nourish their little ones, ſeing it often falleth out that women forgetting nature, and all womanhood, doe reiect and forſake their children? And doe we not obſerue how beaſts will keepe ſuch a mediocritie that they will eate and drinke no more then that which ſufficieth them for life, and to vphold their ſtrength; whilſt men in the meane ſpace doe ſtuffe and gorge themſelues, or which is worſe, do ouerthrow themſelues with ſurſetting? Laſtly the beaſts do in nothing paſſe beyond y bounds of nature, which are ordaind for them.

But the Papiſts (whoſe cuſtome it is to ouerthrow the naturall ſenſe of the Scriptures and by their dreames do corrupt all the myſteries of God) haue here found out a notable fable: for they make men beleue that the *Oxen* and the *Aſſes* did worſhip our Lord Ieſus Chriſt lying in the cratch after he was borne: wherein they ſhew themſelues to bee excellent aſſes. And yet would to God they themſelues would but follow the poore Aſſe which they haue forged! namely, that they were Aſſes worſhipping the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and not rather wincing and kicking againſt his Maieſtie with their heeles. For the Prophet ſpeakes not here of a miracle, but of the order of nature: declaring that whoſoeuer they be that doe ouerthrow the order thereof by a bad conuerſation, are become monſters. We neede not forge new miracles then to giue authoritie to Ieſus Chriſt: for ſo, by mingling the falſe with the truthe, this inconuenience would follow vpon it, y none would beleue either the one or the other. Neither neede we doubt, if there had been any ſuch miracle, but the Euangelists would haue put it in writing.

The name *Iſrael* which here he oppoſeth againſt theſe beaſts, hath a very great emphasis in it. We know what honour it was to the poſteritie of *Jacob* to beare this name, which God himſelfe had impoſed vpon, this holy Patriark, becauſe he overcame the Angel in waſtling. Which name was ſo much the more diſhonoured, by how much the more theſe baſtard and degenerate children durſt notwithstanding make their bragges of that title. And ſit there is a cloſe reproch in it;

not onely because they vsurped the name of this holy personage (whose vertues they imitated nothing at all) but also because they were vnthankfull vnto God from whom they had receiued all manner of benefits. Lastly, we must supplie an ourthwart comparison: for the greater their dignitie was, in that they had been exalted farre aboue all other people, so much the more (to reproch them vnder this honorable title) are they separate from other nations. The Greeke Interpreters haue added this word *me*; but I had rather repeate that which the Prophet hath said, to wit, that Israel hath not knowne his possessor or owner; that is to say, God: nor his *crib*; that is, his Church, wherein hee was nourished, and to which hee ought to bee gathered. Especially seeing these poore beasts doe acknowledge their master that feedes them; and doe voluntarily returne to the place where they were wont to find pasture.

Verf. 4. *Ab, sinfull nation*, a people laden with iniquitie, a seede of the wicked, corrupt children: They haue forsaken the Lord: they haue* prouoked the holy one of Israel to anger: they are gone backward.*

* Or, sinfull woman.

* Or, they haue despised.

AH.] Although he had reproofed their fault sharply enough, yet notwithstanding the more to amplify it, he yet further addes this exclamation: by which he shewes his detestation against so horrible and foule an ingratitude. Some thinke this particl *Ab*, is put here in signe of lamenting. Saint Ierome hath interpreted it, Woe: but me thinke it should more fitly agree to an exclamation, arising partly from astonishment, and partly from sorrow. For wee are wont to burst into outcries, when so vnwotthie a thing is committed, that words cannot expresse it; or rather when words answerable to the greatnes of the grieffe failes vs. In stead of *sinfull nation* as we haue translated it, the Greekes haue turned *sinfull woman*, the vulgar translation also bearing the same. But the Hebrew word signifies those who are giuen ouer to wickednes, and it is not to be doubted, but the Prophet here accufeth them of their desperate malice.

A people laden] &c. We must note the force of the similitude; for hee not onely means that they were plunged in their iniquities, as in a deepe mirie pit; but also reprocheth them that they sinned not so much of ignorance or infirmity (as the weak often do) but that they followed on and continued in their rebellion of set purpose. As if he should haue said, They are giuen vp to all iniustice, and haue wholly sold ouer themselves to commit euill. Where he addes, *Seede of the wicked*; it is as much, as mischieuous seede. Some expounding it more wittily, say, that they declared themselves vnworthie to hold any place among the children of Abraham: because they were become bastards, and degenerate. As in other places they are called a *seede of Canaan*; yea they are reproched with

the name of vncircumcised; euen as though they had bin begotten of prophane or a strange people. But it is an vsua manner of speech among y Hebrews; which the Greekes also obserued in their speech, when they say, *sonnes of the good, for good children.*

Corrupt children.] It is word for word, corrupting; and therefore the expositors supplie, *Themselues, or, their waies.* But me thinke *bastard*, or degenerate agrees better. For his meaning is that they are so depraued, that they resemble their fathers nothing at all. Moreover, hee adorns his nation here with foure titles, which are not very seemely: And Such indeede as were farre remote from the good conceit which they had of themselves. But thus must hypocrites bee dealt withall, to awaken them; and the more they sooth vp themselves in casting off the feare of God, so much the more must they bee thundred against. For a milder and a more gentle doctrine would not haue preuailed with such a kind of people any thing at all: neither would a slight manner of reproofe haue moued them. The false persuasion therefore of their righteousness and wisdom was to be plucked away from them; for therewith they masked and disguised themselves, and often made their bragg: thereof in vaine.

For they haue forsaken the Lord.] Now hee addes the reason why hee hath so sharply and bitterly reprooued them: namely, lest they should complaine as they were wont to doe; that they were too severely dealt withall. First then he vpbraids them with that, which is the fountaine of all euils: to wit, *they had forsaken the Lord.* For euen as it is the chiefe perfection of righteousness to cleaue vnto God, as *Moses* teacheth; What doth the Lord thy God require of thee but that thou cleaue vnto him? so is it the greatest miserie wee can plunge our selues into, when wee haue forsaken him. Now the Prophets meaning is, to let the Iewes see, that they were not onely guiltie of one fault: but to shew them that they were become Apostats altogether. No doubt, but that which followes serues for an amplification; whether we reade, *To prouoke, or, to dispose*; yet I rather rest in the latter. For it was too grosse an ingratitude to make light account of him who had adopted them for his owne, from the rest of all nations. And for this cause he calles himselfe the *holy one of Israel*, because in giuing himselfe vnto them he had thereby adorned them with his holines. For this name is so attributed vnto him euery where, in regard of the effect. From how barbarous a pride then did the despising of so great an honour proceed? If any had rather retaine the word *prouoke*; the sense will be, that they had reiected the Lord: euen as if they meant to prouoke him to anger of set purpose. Whence we may see how detestable their Apostasie was.

Deut. 10. 15

They are gone backward] The sense is that when the Lord did set a certaine way and forme before them how hee would haue them to carrie themselves, they on the contrarie were carried away with their lusts: and

and yet he confirms the former ſentence ; to wit, that they had given the bridle ſo farre to their ſhameleſſe malepertnes, that they were altogether reuolted from God : yea, and that wittingly and willingly, by erring from that marke vnto which they ought to haue bent their courſe all their life long.

Verſ. 5. Wherefore ſhould ye be ſmiten any more? for you ſhall away more and more: the whole head is ſicke, and the whole heart is heauie.

Wherefore ſhould] &c. Some do turne it, vpon what? or, in what part? And they take it as if the Lord ſhould ſay, There are no more plagues left to ſtrike you withal. For hee had tried ſo many waies to bring them into the right way, that there was no chaſtiſement left. But I had rather interpret it, Wherefore, or, to what purpoſe? As alſo the Hebrew word importes ſo much; and withall I take it that the ſenſe ſeemes to agree beſt thereto. For ſo we are wont to ſay, wherefore; to what purpoſe, &c. His meaning is then, that the Iewes are growne to ſuch a pitch of wickednes and vngodlines, that it is impoſſible to make them become any whit better. We know by experience that after deſperate men haue once hardened their hearts, then they will rather be broken all to peeces then receiue any correction. Now he complains that there was ſuch an obſtinacie in them, euen as if the Phyſician hauing aſſaid all good remedies to cure his diſeaſed patient, ſhould begin to ſay at the laſt, All the ſkill I haue, will doe no good. And withall hee accuſeth them of extreame malice: for when the wicked are come to that paſſe that chaſtiſements will not humble them, then are they come to the very top of all wickednes. So then it is as much as if the Lord had ſaid, I ſee very well, that though I ſhould correct you neuer ſo much, yet I ſhall do you no good. For queſtionleſſe things are then become wholly deſperate when the chaſtiſements and calamities which God vſeth as remedies to heale our vices, will profite vs nothing. And yet for all that the Lord is ſo farre off from ceaſing to puniſh ſuch ſtil, that (which more is) it ſtirres vp and inflames his wrath ſo much the more againſt vs: For there is nothing more burthenſome to him, then ſuch an obſtinacie. Notwithſtanding it is rightly ſaid, that hee loſeth his labour, when he cannot thereby draw vs to repentance: and that all the remedies hee applies to a people ſo vterly paſt cure, are in vaine. So then he is ſo farre off from ſparing ſuch, that hee not onely doubles his blowes and afflictions vpon them, trying all meanes poſſible: but he is conſtrained neuer to giue ouer till he hath vterly conſumed them. But then indeede hee plaies not the part of a Phyſician, but rather of the Surgion: which is the cauſe why he ſo laments here, that his chaſtiſements ſhall now become vnpromitable to the people.

You ſhall away.] This is a confirmation of the

former ſentence; ſo that I diſtinguiſh this member from the former, which others notwithstanding doe conioyne together. As if he ſhould ſay, You will be ſo farre off from ceaſing to erre, that (which worſe is) you augment your wickednes more and more, for I ſee you are ſo carried away to doe euill, as if yee had laid your heads together, deliberately to conſpire thereof in your minds: ſo that there is no hope at all left of any moderation. Now God in this ſpeech purpoſed to manifeſt vnto al men how incorrigible their ſpirit was, to the end they might pretend no excuſes afterwards.

The whole head.] Others tranſlate, Every head: and thinke that the princes and great men among the people are here meant by theſe particular names. But for mine owne part, I rather agree to their opinion, who tranſlate, *all the head.* For me thinke it is a plaine ſimilitude, taken from the body of man; to wit, when the bodie is ſo fore afflicted, that there is no hope of health left. Now he names two principall partes whereupon the health of the whole bodie depends: and hereby he declares the extremitie of the diſeaſes, wherewith this wretched people was vterly ſpent. It was not ſome part or common member of the bodie then, which was pained, but the *heart* was wounded; and the *head* very ſore diſeaſed: in a word, that the vitall parts (as they are called) were ſo putrified and infected, that they were incurable. But the Interpreters doe not agree in this behalfe: for ſome referre this ſickeſſe to ſinnes; others, to puniſhments. To ſinnes thus; You are alreadie become a rotten and ſinking bodie, wherein nothing that is whole and ſound is left: wickednes and ſinne hath gotten the ſwinge amongſt you, by the infection whereof all is deſiled and corrupt. But I had rather vnderſtand it of the puniſhments: for the Lord doubtles ſtil purſues this complaint: namely, that the people are ſo rooted in obſtinacie, that they cannot bee brought to amendment of life for any plague inflicted vpon them; and that howſoever they had been ſmiten euen to death (at the leaſt way, rent and torne in peeces with ſore blowes in a fearefull maner) yet that they became neuer the wiſer for all that.

Verſ. 6. Euen from the ſole of the foote vnto the head, there is nothing whole therein, but wounds, and ſwelling, and ſores full of corruption: they haue not been wrapped nor bound vp, nor molliſied with oyle.

Theſe words alſo haue affinity with the former, wherein hee ſtil protecutes the very ſame matter vnder the ſame ſimilitude and maner of ſpeech. Thoſe who referre the firſt part vnto ſinnes, doe not ſufficiently weigh the remainder of ¶ that follows. Let vs grant that the people corrupted with vices are compared to a ſicke bodie: what coherence will there be touching the things which by and by follow, to wit, that their

wounds were not wrapped nor mollified with oyle? It appears therefore that the Prophet speaks of the afflictions wherewith the people were almost consumed. And he also sets forth this continuall languishing in them, as a testimonie of their extreme hardning. He calles the wound *Corrupt*, from whence flowes a continuall infection, as if a spring (deepe in the earth) should continually send forth new streames of venome. So that by this similitude, he shewes that the maladie is incurable, seeing the corrupt water which is in it runnes without stay. The amplification also is not small, when hee saith, there were *no remedies* applied thereunto. For the three similitudes which he cōioynes together, tend all to one end, namely, that this people were in so miserable a plight, that they were without any hope of comfort, without consolation and without remedie. So that in such kinds of punishments, one might easily discretne the extreme seueritie of God.

Verf. 7. Your land is wast: your cities are burnt with fire: strangers deuoure your land in your presence, and it is desolate like the overthrow of strangers.*

W^{As} Word for word it is, desolation. And thus *Isaiah* profecutes that more largely, and more clearly, which he had said before figuratiuely touching the wounds: To wit, that the land was afflicted with an horrible wast. For I had rather referre the sentences to the time past: because the Prophet rather recountes how many calamities haue formerly happened, before he denounceth the vengeance of God. For he casts their dotage and benumbednes of hart in their teeth, in that they continued so befotted in their miseries. *As the overthrow of strangers.* This is added for amplification sake. For their sense is too narrow and constrained, who would haue the Hebrew word *raim*, which significeth *destruction* (which word the Prophet also here useth) to be put in the stead of *zerem*, which signifies an overflowing of waters. True it is that the word may be applied to enemies: but it is better to take it in his proper signification, for strangers. For the calamitie is then much more grieuous when men vnknowe, and those that come from a farre countrie doe make warre in a kingdome; because they are lighty farre more cruell, and doe more hurt then the neighbour enemies. For they race the cities: they burne vp houses, buildings, and villages; destroying all things; and sparing nothing. In a word, they rush in with barbarous inhumanitie, seeking nothing but to kill, sack, and burne: yea, they study rather to do hurt, thē to get their booty. But y^e neighbour enemies because they are able to hold that which they haue won, vs^e to leaue garisons there; and as soone as any reuolt is intended, or any trouble moued, they forthwith send succors: and therefore are not so cruell, neither doe they spoyle the countrie out of which they may fitly reape any commoditie. Hee therefore describes no

ordinarie destruction, but rather so bloodie and fierce an one, as exceeded all the rest.

From hence then we may note, that when God hath once begun to chastice & correct, he makes not an end with vs by and by. But in striking vs with many wounds, hee redoubles the blowes, and ceaseth not to visit vs still with one plague after another, if so bee we cannot be brought to true repentance. Let vs then chelue and flee such an obstinacie, if we meane to escape the like punishments: or if we meane this reproach which was iustly cast vpon the Iewes, should not by as good right light vpon vs: namely, that albeit wee haue been diligently admonished, and haue felt the hand of the Lord, yet for all that we could not bee corrected nor amended. What maruaile is it then, I pray you, if wee are pressed with so many and so diuers calamities, whereof we can see neither end or issue? Surely we euen fight hand to hand as it were with God and against all his rodde by our rebellion. Is it not needefull then that hee should take vs in hand; and deale with vs, as men do with restic and vnruely Iades, who the more they wince and kick, the more they must bee pummelled about the head, and spurred vpon the sides? There want not many at this day, I dare say, who accuse God of Crueltie as if he were too outrageous, and that he ought to carrie a more soft and gentle hand ouer vs: But in the meane while they consider not how horrible our wickednesses be. For if they would looke well into them, truly they should easily perceiue an admirable mercie of God, euen in the midst of this his seueritie, which seemes so great in their eyes. And to the end wee may not thinke the Lord was too rigorous towards this peopl^e; let vs consider the vices which he by and by reckons vp.

But a question may here be demanded; to wit, why the Prophet should say that the people were so many waies afflicted, seeing he began to prophetic (as we said before) vnder the reigne of *Vzziah*; in whose time the state of the kingdome of *Judah* was verie quiet, so that howsoeuer the kingdome of *Israel* sustained some losse towards the ende of *Vzziah* his daies, yet that notwithstanding appertained nothing at all to the kingdome of *Judah*. For which cause the Iewes indeed thinke this to appertaine to the reigne of *Iotham*, and not to the reigne of *Vzziah*. Now howsoeuer their opinion seemes not to agree very well at the first blush, yet is it not without some probability of reason, if wee shall examine the opinions of others. For wee know that they haue not alwaies kept the order of time in gathering together of the prophesies. And it may bee that this Sermon of *Isaiah* had obtained first place here for no other cause, but for that it contains a summe of that doctrine which shall be handled afterwards. Others thinke they escape easily away when they expound all these things of vices; and not of punishments: but they cannot so easily auoid that which is spoken of the burning of cities, and wasting of the land. If any thinke the Prophet speaks not of the present

* Or, forcaine enemies.

preſent eſtate of the kingdome, but of that which was to come; and that in the perſon of God, hee denounceth the iudgements which were at hand, howſoever they then ſaw them not before their eyes; I doe not greatly gainſay it. Although it be very likely that the Prophet ſpeakes of things which were knowne vnto him. It is rather a certaine narration then of a thing done, than a propheſie: though in the verſe following I confeſſe he ſhewes what the iſſue is, which approacheth.

Verſ. 8. *And the daughter of Zion ſhall remaine like a cottage in a vineyard, like a lodge in a garden of Cucumbers, and like a beſieged cite.*

HE alludes euen to that cuſtome which is now in vſe amongſt vs in France: namely, to a little cottage which the Vinekeepers prepare when the grapes doe ripen. Alſo he vſeth another Similitude which is almoſt like vnto the former; drawne from the manner of that nation, when the ſeruants watched to keepe the gardens of cucumbers. Afterwards in verſ. 9. he himſelfe expounds what he meanes both by the one & by the other. Now the expoſition may be double; to wit, that all the countrie ſhould be waſted, and nothing left in ſafetie, but the cite of *Ieruſalem*, which ſhould remaine as a cottage: or, that the cite it ſelfe ſhould bee brought to nought. The Iewes follow the firſt interpretation, and vnderſtand this place of the ſiege of *Senacherib*: but I thinke it reacheth further off; namely, to the deſtructions which followed afterwards. We may alſo referre it to the neerenes of neighbour hood, which being ruinated and deſtroyed amongſt them, it could not bee auoyded, but that the cite ſhould ſeeke great loſſe thereby. But as I take it, the true meaning of the Prophet is, that the evils wherof he ſpeakes, ſhould come euen to the cite it ſelfe, ſo as it being conſumed, ruinated, and brought to nothing, and into deriſion, ſhould become like a cottage. Now he calles *Ieruſalem*, the daughter of *Zion*, by a phraſe of ſpeech vſuall in the Scriptures, which intitleth ſome people by the name of daughter, as the daughter of *Babylon*, and *Tyre*, for the Babylonians, and Tyrians themſelues. Alſo hee rather mentioneth *Zion*, then *Ieruſalem*; becauſe of the dignitie of the Temple: and this manner of ſpeech alſo is very frequent thorowout the whole Scriptures.

Verſ. 9. *Except the Lord of hoſts had reſerued vnto vs, euen a ſmall remnant, we ſhould haue been as Sodom, and ſhould haue been as Gomorah.*

HEre he concludes that which he had pronounced before touching the ſcourges of God: to wit, that there ſhould be ſuch a ruin; or rather, that it is alreadie preſent, ſo as by the beholding of it, it might bee fitly reſembled to the deſtruction of *Sodom*: were it

not that the Lord ſhould pull out a few remainders as out of the miſt of the ſire. This verſe therefore confirms that which I ſaid erewhile: where the Prophet hauing ſpoken of the calamities which were alreadie hapned, did in briefe manner conuoyne therewith the euent which ſhould ſhortly enſue: as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, Suffer not your ſelues to be beguiled with faire words: For looke what deſtruction hapned to *Sodom* and *Gomorah*, the ſame ſhould fall vpon you, vnleſſe the Lord in hauing compaſſion vpon you, ſhould reſerue ſome few. And vnto this agrees that which is ſaid in *Ieremiah*, *It is the Lords mercies that wee are not conſumed*, &c. Lament. 3. 22.

Now from hence we are to note two things: Firſt, that hee here denounceth an extreme ruin: yet for as much as God hath to doe with his Church and elect people, therefore this iudgement ſhall be mitigated by a particular and ſpeciall fauour; to the end the faithfull (whom hee here rightly compares to *ſmall remnant*) may bee deliuered from the generall deſtruction of the whole nation. Now if God hath puniſhed the iniquities of the Iewes by ſuch horrible chaſtiſements, doe we thinke the like will not befall vnto vs if we partake with them in their rebellions; for the Lord had conſecrated this people to himſelfe, and had exempted them from the common condition of others. And wherefore ſhould hee rather ſpare vs if we continue hardened in our impietie and diſloyaltie? But which more is, what iſſue can we expect in the miſt of ſuch an heape and puddle of vices whereinto men plunge themſelues euery way thorowout the whole world? Truly euen the ſame that befall to *Sodom* and *Gomorah*: namely, if we ſhould be brought to nothing, did not the reſpect which God hath to his free covenant (wherein hee hath promiſed that his Church ſhall neuer periſh) withhold his vengeance from vs. This threatening alſo which is very terrible and fearefull, appertaines to all thoſe that are obſtinate and deſperate, whoſe manners cannot bee reformed by any ſtrokes of God his rodde.

On the other ſide, wee are to note that which I haue alreadie touched out of *Ieremiah*; namely, that we ought to attribute it to the only mercie of God that we are not al vterly conſumed and brought to nothing. For if we ſhall behold how great the iniquities are which do reigne in euery place, and amongſt all ſorts of men, we ought to admire Gods mercie that we ſee ſo much as one man alie, and that all haue not been cleane ſwept away from off the earth. Thus it pleaſeth the Lord to keepe his hand in; to the end he may ſtill continue a Church in the world. And *S. Paul* alſo who is the beſt expoſitor of this place yeeldes the ſame reaſon; for alledging it in the Epistle to the *Romans*, chap. 9. 29. he beates downe the inſolencie of the Iewes, to the end they ſhould not bragg of that naked title which they bare, as if it had been enough for them that they were deſcended from the ancient fathers, in regard of the fleſh. For he admoniſheth them

that God could deale with them as hee had done in old time with their fathers: but that he is still minded for his mercies sake to referre a Church to himselfe: and to what end? euen that it should not vterly perish. For it is for the loue and fauour which hee beares toward it, that the Lord *referueth* some little seede, when in regard of our rebellion hee is constrained to exercise his rigorous iudgements. Which sentence ought greedily to comfort vs in our extreamest calamities; yea, euen then when we shall thinke the Church as good as forlorne: that when we see the state of things turning vpside downe, so as to our seeming heauen and earth goeth together (as they say) yet that we euen then continue firme and inuincible touching our trust in God his mercie notwithstanding, resolving our selues that God will neuer cease to haue care of his Church howsoeuer the world goe.

Euen a small remnant.] This particule *small*, may be referred as well to that which went before as to that which followes. And therefore some translate, We had been almost as *Sodom*. Notwithstanding, I had rather referre it to the former speech: to declare that the number which God referued from the common destruction, was very small. But some rather thinke that this is taken affirmatiuely, and was therefore put to expresse the matter the more liuely: which I reiect not; although it may be taken in his true and natie sense, as if it had been said, There shall but a small number of the people remaine. Now we are to note this sentence diligently: for, vnles the Church haue faire and large dominions, men are wont to despise her. And from thence it comes that hypocrits bragge so much of their multitudes; and that the weake also stagger, as being dazled with their pompe and glorie. It therefore appears by this place, that wee must not measure the Church by the hugenes of the multitude, vnlesse we meane to esteeme more of the chaffe, then of the wheate; because the quantitie therof is greater. But it ought to suffice vs that although the number of the faithful be verie small, yet that God notwithstanding acknowledgeth them for his elect people. And with this also should that consolation of Christ come into our minds: Feare not *little flocke*, for it is your fathers pleasure to giue you the kingdom, Luk. 12. 31.

Verf. 10. *Heare the word of the Lord O princes of Sodom: hearken vnto the law of our God O people of Gomorah.*

HE confirms that which he had said before; to wit, that God his vengeance is not cruetie: why so? Because they had deserued a farre greater punishment. And howsoeuer there was some difference betwene them and the Sodomites, in regard of the punishment; yet the fault was alike: so as if the Lord had not pardoned them, hee might euen iustly haue plagued them with the like iudgement. In a word, he telles them, that if

God doe spare, it is not to the end they should conclude with themselves, that their sinnes were lesse then those of the Sodomites; but that they were to attribute it rather vnto the mercie of God. Now there is no great diuersitie in that he attributes the name of the cite of *Sodom* to the *Princes* and the name of *Gomorah* to the *people*: but it rather shewes their condition to be both alike. But whereas hee repeats one thing twice; this diuersitie of names hath the greater elegancie. As if he should say, The *Princes* and *people* differ no more one from another, then *Sodom* differed from *Gomorah*. True it is that hee alludes to the diuers degrees of men, when he attributes two cities to them as it were apart: but in regard that *Sodom* equals *Gomorah* in value, wee see hee binds them vp both together as it were in one fardle. The summe then is; If any man wil iudge of the *Princes* and *people*, he shall find them agreeing as well together in one, euen as *Sodom* and *Gomorah* did. That is to say, there was neuer a barrell better hearing: but they were as like, as one egge is to another. For there was no more vprightnes in the princes, then in the people. The Prophet begins now therefore to vnmaske the Lewes, and that very iustly: for as it is a common thing with all hypocrites to shroud themselves vnder mercurious pretences, to the end they may not be espied: euen so stood the case with this people, who were stained with this vice aboue any other. And therefore the Prophets had no sharper conflicts with them, then about this matter. Pride also (with this bragging of stained holines) reigned amongst them; and they gloried no lesse in the noblenesse and excellencie of their nation, then of their outward ceremonies and seruice: by reason wherof this feueritie of the Prophet did greatly gall them. But in as much as it was needefull to draw out their villanies into light, the more they set vp their bristles, the more liuely doth the Prophet thunder against them. And thus must all hypocrites be serued.

The word of the Lord.] The Prophet takes the *word of the Lord* and the *law*, for one and the same thing. And yet notwithstanding I doubt not but hee vsed this word *law* of set purpose, to the end he might taxe their sottish opinion: For whilst they imagined to appease God with sacrifices which they offered without faith or repentance, they interpreted the law of God after their owne fantasies. By which words then he admonisheth them, that in alledging the authoritie of *Moses*, he brings in no new deuce of his owne, neither addes he any thing to the *law*; but that in hearing him, they should only heare the will of God, wherof hee faithfully enformeth them. Also that the law of God doth in no sort fauour or allow of their dealings in this point: to the end they should not thinke to beguile the Lord with a false persuasion of their owne righteousnes.

Verf. 11.

Verſ. 11. What haue I to doe with the multitude of your ſacrifices, ſaith the Lord? I am full of the burnt offerings of Rammes, and the fat of fed beaſts: and I deſire not the blood of Bullocks, nor of Lambs, nor of Goates.

Now Iſaiah brings in God ſpeaking, who interprets his owne meaning himſelfe. For it is not enough that the Lawgiuer doe command onely, but that he alſo ſhould adde a natiue expoſition to the Lawes, that they be not corrupted. Now it is not to be doubted, but that the former ſharpe reprehension was very ill taken: For what could one haue ſpoken more boldly or roundly againſt them? They gloried in the name of *Abraham*, bragging in the title of his children, and proudly vaunting themſelves thereof. For which cauſe the Prophet thus armes himſelfe with the authoritie of God againſt them. As if he ſhould ſay, Know you, that you haue not ſo much to doe with me, as with God himſelfe. Next he ſhewes what it is that God reſpects, and what his meaning is in demanding ſacrifices of them: namely, not that hee doth ſo much eſteeme of the ſacrificing of brute beaſts; but that they ſhould ſerue, as outward props and helpes of godlines. And therefore that the Iewes greatly deceiued themſelves, who put their cheefeſt holineſſe in ſuch outward ceremonies. For they thought they had diſcharged their duties very well, when they ſacrificed and offered their offerings: and when the Prophets required any thing more of them, then they complained as if they had beene ouer hardly dealt withall. But the Lord telles them that hee abhors and reiects their offerings. Now it may ſeeme that this is too ſtrict a courſe: for were they not the things which God himſelfe had inſtituted and commanded? But wee muſt note that as touching the commandements of God ſome ought to be obeyed ſimplie, and others for another end: as for example; The law commands, firſt, that we ſerue and honor God: ſecondly, that wee ſeek our neighbours profit. Theſe things are of themſelves pleaſing vnto God, and are abſolutely required of vs. But it is otherwiſe in regard of ceremonies, for they are exerciſes which are not ſimplie required in reſpect of themſelves, but for another end. And the like we may ſay of faſting. For the Kingdom of God ſtands not in abſtinance from meats and drinks: faſting therefore hath reſpect to an higher end.

God therefore hath not ſo inſtituted ceremonies as if hee would bee appeaſed by the worke wrought; but that the people ſhould by them exerciſe themſelves vnto godlines: and ſhould thereby bee the more ſtirred and trained vp in faith, and in his pure worſhip and ſeruiſe. But hypocrits are onely forward and carefull in obſeruing theſe, as if the principall matter of religion conſiſted in them: and thinke themſelves the moſt deuout people in the world, whiſt they wearie and tire themſelves a long time in the obſeruation

thereof. And that they might yet appeare the more holy; they euer lightly ad ſome thing of their owne, and inuent ſome noueltie from day to day: but in the meane time they wickedly abuſe the holy ordinances of God, in that they refer them not to their right ends. All their ceremonies therefore are nothing elſe in God his account, but prophanations of his holy worſhip and ſeruiſe. For whiſt they reſt fettered as it were in the bare and naked outward action only, what difference is there betwene their ſacrifices, and thoſe of the Gentiles? which wee know are ſtuffed full of ſacriledge, becauſe they are not referred to a right and lawfull end. This then is the reaſon why the Lord reiects all ſuch ceremonies notwithstanding himſelfe had inſtituted them: to wit, becauſe the people looked not to the right end and vie, for which they were ordained. Herein then ſtode the continuall conſtict which the Prophets had with the people; namely, in plucking off theſe vizards from their faces: and in ſhewing them that the Lord did not content himſelfe with outward ſeruiſes, neither could be appeaſed with ſuch faire ſhewes.

And the faithfull ſeruants of the Lord haue euery where experience of the ſame combats euen at this day. For men doe alwaies meaſure God by their owne ell; and thinke to appeaſe him with outward appearances, and will not be brought by any meanes to offer vp vnto him a pure and vpright heart. But *Ieremiah* will eaſily diſſolve all the difficultie of this place. Fer in the 7. chapter, he ſaith out of the mouth of the Lord: *if then I redeemed your fathers out of the Land of Egypt, I did not command them to ſacrifice to me: only I commanded them that they ſhould heare my voyce and keepe my commandements.* Wherein he ſhewes, that all the obſeruation of the ceremonies did depend vpon the word; and that they are vaine and vnprofitable, if they be ſeparated from it, euen as if one ſhould diuide the ſoule from the bodie. Hereinto alſo belongs the argument of the fiftieth Pſalme: *Will I eate the fleſh of fat Bulles, or wil I drinke the blood of Goats? Offer vnto God praife, and pay thy vowes vnto the moſt high.* *Ieremiah* alſo in another place ſaith: *Truſt not in lying words ſaying, The Temple of the Lord, This is the Temple of the Lord, but rather amend your waies, &c.* Alſo *Micheah*: *Doth the Lord delight in thousands of Rammes, or in ten thouſands of fat beaſts of the vallies? By and by after he addes: I will ſhew thee O man what is good: and what it is that the Lord thy God requireth of thee, to wit, To doe iudgements, to loue mercie, and to humble thy ſelfe ſo walke with thy God: Mich. 6.* By which places it appeares, that God reiects ceremonies, becauſe they were ſeparate from the word, as from their ſoule or life. Whereby we may ſee how great the blindnes of men is, who cannot bee perſwaded that all the paines they take this way in the ſeruiſe of God is vnprofitable vnleſſe the integritie of the heart goe before.

And this vice is not onely rooted in the common people, but almoſt in all men; yea, euen in thoſe who in their owne opinion thinke they excell moſt. From hence it is at

Deus. 6. 5.

Leuit. 19. 18

Rom. 14. 17.

* That is to say, a worke which they esteeme good in it selfe: albeit the heart of him which doth it be neuer so bad.

this day that this goodly deuice of *the worke wrought*, cannot bee pulled out of the minds of many; which the doctors of the Papists haue found out. But it is not man which speakes here, but God himselfe: who by an immutable decree, declares that men sacrifice vnto him in vaine: and that whatsoeuer they doe else, is without fruite, vnlesse they call vpon him by a true faith.

Verf. 12. *When yee come to appeare before mee, who required this of your hands to tread in my courts?*

Behold here a most excellent refutation of Counterfeit worship; when God affirms they came not before him as hee commanded them: pronouncing in generall that it is but lost labour when men offer him that which he requires not: because he will be no otherwise serued then according to his commandement. Whence is it then that men doe so please themselves in such inuentions, but because they vnderstand not that all their seruing of God is vnprofitable and odious in his eyes? For otherwise they would by and by thinke thus with themselves, Surely, God requires obedience as the principall: neither would they with such ouerweening extoll their owne workes; which hee on the other side scornes and derides: not onely for that he receiues not profit at all thereby; but because hee would not haue men to attribute that vnto him, which they haue rashly inuented of their owne heads without his commandement: and also because hee cannot endure that men should establish their owne fantasies, in stead of his law. Although to the end he may yet touch them neerer to the quicke, he by and by adds, That it is a *seruice* falsely so called; which he esteemes to be but lost labour: namely, that in assembling themselves in the Temple, they did nothing else but wear the paucements thereof with their feete: as if he should say, You must needs thinke that I am much bound to you, for beating mine eares thus with your feined prayers.

Verf. 13. *Bring no more oblations in vaine: incense is an abomination vnto me: I cannot suffer your new moones nor sabbaths, nor solemne daies (it is iniquitie) nor solemne assemblies.*

This is a very profitable admonition to repress y^e inordinate appetite of those who ceased not obstinately, to follow their vaine and feined seruices, that at least being warned of God, they might repent, if at any hand they would be admonished. But it appeares by this place, how obstinate hypocrits are in their false confidence, being once hardned therein, because they cannot possiblic heare the Lord, although hee manifestly warne them that they should cease to lose their labour as they doe. *Incense is an abomination* &c.

That he might pricke them vnto the quicke indeede, he passeth yet further, and tels them that such seruice is not only vnprofitable, but that he also detests it, as abominable vnto him: and very iustly; for it is an high sacrifice to prophane the seruice of God; vnder which they falsely shrouded themselves. For euen as God esteemes nothing more deare and precious vnto him the his glory; so is nothing lesse tolerable vnto him, then to see it trodden vnder feete by any corruption whatsoever: which yet is then done, when euer yame thing is set vp in stead of his true worship. Some are deceiued in vnderstanding this place, thinking that the Prophet speakes of the abolishing of the law; for that is not his meaning: but he rather brings the people of his time to the true obseruation of the ceremonies; and shewes wherefore, and to what end they were instituted. The seruice of God was spirituall euen from the beginning of the world. And whereas there were other exercises diuers from ours in the old Testament, it was in regard of men, and not of God; for there is no changing with him; *Lames 1. 17.* but he applied himselfe to the weakenes of man. This gouernment then was fit for the Iewes, as an Abce for children. Therefore he shewes to what end this gouernment was established, and what was the true vse of ceremonies.

Verf. 14. *My soule hateth your new moones and your appointed feasts: they are a burthen vnto me: I am wearie to beare them.*

The Prophet adds nothing different from the former doctrine, but in generall pronounceth of al ceremonies, "where there is not spirituall truth ioyned but onely a false pretence appeareth, that they are not onely things vnprofitable," but wicked. From hence we must obserue, that we labour but in vaine vnlesse we worship God aright as it is meete, and himselfe prescribeth: For if truth be it indeede which pleaseth God in all things; then much more doth he looke for it in the worship which is done to his Maiestie. Moreouer our labour is not onely lost (as hath been said heretofore) but the worship of God is hereby peruered, which is the greatest villanie that can be committed. Now all superstitions are so many corruptions of the pure worship of God: and therefore it follows that they are wicked and detestable. Superstition then is to be esteemed either by the thing it selfe, or by the affection of the heart from whence it proceeds. By the thing it selfe; when men dare bring in of their owne heades, that which God hath not commanded. As all those things are which superstition (commonly called deuotion) hath begotten. One will set vp and Idoll; another will build a chappel; the third will found yeerely penions to haue Masses said daily for him; others, such like paltrie stuffe without end or measure. Now when men take vpon them to be so malepert as to forge new seruices:

* Viz. In the performer; as after appeareth by M. Caluins owne words. * i. As he performeth them, that is, an hypocrite his action is vnprofitable to himselfe and impious.

1. Sam. 15. 22.

uices, there hath superstition the full swing. It may also be in the affection of the heart, when men doe vse the ceremonies (which God hath allowed and commanded) in outward appearance: who in the meane while sticke fast there; neuer aiming at the marke, and truth of them. As for example, the Lewes hold the ceremonies ordained by *Moses* with tooth and naile, but yet they leaue that which is the principall behind them. For they regard a good conscience nothing at all; a man shall not heare them speake of faith, or of repentance; they haue no knowledge of their spirituall miserie: and (which is worst of all) they separate Christ from their satisfices, giuing no place at all to the truth. Wherein we cleerely see the truth of that which wee haue taught heretofore; to wit, that it was a bastarding & painted shew which they made: so as their sacrifices differed in nothing from the sacrifices of the heathen. We neede not wonder then if the Lord call them an abomination. I will not stand to scan the phrascs of speech which the Prophet here vscth; they are diuers: and yet notwithstanding they are not to be lightly passed ouer. For the Lord well discernes how great the rage of man is to forge new seruices, and therefore he vscth amplifications to depresse this vice the more; and againe pronounceth, that hee hates them. Besides, for as much as men doe flatter themselues and are perswaded that the Lord will make some account of their dreames and store of deuices, he on the contrarie faith that he abhorres and detests them.

Verf. 15. And when you shall stretch out your hands I will hide mine eies from you: and though you make many prayers, I will not heare: for your hands are full of blood.

IT came not from any superstition that the people in old time vsed to stretch out their hands in prayer: neither came this gesture of any vaine or friuolous lust, as many others haue done: But in regard that nature her selfe thrusteth forth her hands to seeke for that which the desirerh: testifying euen by outward signes that she hath her recourse vnto God. Therefore in as much as we cannot stie vp vnto him, wee list vp our selues as it were vnto him by this signe or gesture. True it is that the fathers had no commandement to doe it: notwithstanding they vsed it as being inspired of God. And by this very signe are all idolaters conuinced euen of sottish blindness: for they protest by this outward gesture that they haue their refuge in God, and yet notwithstanding in effect they withdraw their hearts from him to idoles. Also to the end the superstitious might be the more conuinced, the Lord was pleased that this custome should alwaies continue in vse amongst them. The Prophet then condemnes not the lifting vp of the hands simple, but their hypocritie, whereby in appearance they made shew to call vpon God, but in their

hearts they were farre from him, as in the 29. chapter he doth more fully charge them. The Lord confesseth indeed that he is neere; but it is to those that call vpon him in truth, *Psaln. 145. 18.* For where hypocritie reigneth, there can be no true inuocation. That therefore which is said in another place is not contrarie to this; namely, when they shall stretch forth their hands vnto me, I will heare them. For the Lord there speaks of that inuocation which proceedes of faith. For faith is the mother of prayer: but if faith be absent, prayer is a meere mocking of God. This he yet amplifies further when hee tels them that he will not heare their cries, although they should *multiply their prayers*: As if hee should say; Be it that you neuer cease praying, yet this your diligence shall profit you nothing: For hypocrites haue this vice also peculiar vnto them, that they imagine the more they babble, & more holy they are, and that they can the more easily obtaine the thing they aske. But he refels their babbling her, as we see.

For your hands.] Now he begins to declare more plainly why he abhors, yea, reiects their prayers, as also their sacrifices with disdain; namely, because they presented themselues before his face with a brauerie full of dissimulation: and in the meane while were cruell, bloody and giuen to euery kind of iniquitie. Now howsoeuer he by and by addes other sorts of iniquities, he yet speaks thus notwithstanding in regard that he had mentioned the lifting vp of the hands: and faith, that euen *in them*, they bare a signe and marke of their impieties, so as they need not to marueile why they be so sharply heaté back. For otherwise this manner of speech, To list vp pure hands, was not only in vse among the Prophets and Apostles, but also euen amongst prophane authors, who were pricked forward by the very instinct of nature, to exercise themselues in reproofing the sottishnes of mé: or rather it may be the Lord plucked this confessio or ceremonie from them, to the end that at the leastwise there might alwaies be some appearance of true religio amongst thé.

Notwithstanding the Prophet meant not to charge the Lewes to be such theeues or *murderers* as rob and kill by the high waies side: but hee strikes at their priuie deceits and opressions whereby they got other mens goods into their owne hands. For God iudgeth otherwise then man doth: man espieth not the priuie iuglings and wylie practises of the wicked by which they are accustomed smoothly and cunningly to beguile the simple ones; or if so be they chauce to come to light, they are extenuated, and not examined according to the weights of the Sanctuarie: But God pulling out these gallants by the poll into light, who were wont to shroud their robbeties vnder honest titles, pronounceth before all men that they are *murderers*. For if thou kill a man, be it after what manner thou wilt, then art thou a murderer, whether thou cuttest his throate, or takest away his maintenance, and that which is conuenient for him. He speaks not of them then which were openly

Rom. 16. 17.

1. Tim. 2. 8.

openly

openly wicked, being detested of all for their dishonest dealing: but of such as caried two faces vnder one hood; professing themselues good men in outward shew, and kept their credit with the world. And this is a circumstance well worthy our obseruation. For thus must wee procede at this day against those lank and emptie fellows who will cloake their villanies vnder vizardes of honestie, and in the meane while, what by deceit, violence, or some such other iniurie, they oppress the poore and needie. Although then they impudently cry out that we doe them wrong to compare them to thecues and murderers, yet must they be reprehended with such seueritie, as the Prophet vsed here to their fellows. For when wee speake in the name of God, we must not iudge according to the reason and opinion of men: but must with all boldnes pronounce that which the Lord his iudgement approueth.

Vers. 16. Wash you, make you cleane: take away the euill of your workes from before mine eyes: cease to doe euill.

Now hee exhortes the Iewes to repentance, and shewes the true way to come thereto, if so be they meant y^e their seruices should be allowed of God. Whence wee gather, that nothing can please God, vnlesse it come from a pure conscience. For God is not like a man, that he should esteeme our workes by the outside of them. Men do many times praise the worke which a wicked man hath done, but in God his sight (who chiefly respects the heart) the polluted conscience defiles all the rest of the vertues. And that is it which the Prophet *Haggie* teacheth, setting an example of the ancient ceremonie before them: namely, that whatsoever a polluted man had touched was vnclane: whence he concludes, that no cleane thing can proceed from the wicked. Our Prophet hath already affirmed, that it is in vaine to offer sacrifices vnto God, in vaine to make vowes, in vaine to call vpon him, if the integritie of the heart do not sanctifie the outward seruice. Wherefore to the ende the Iewes should not labour any longer for nothing, he requires this *cleannes*: and begins with a generall reformation, to the end they should not think they had bleared the eyes of God by doing their duties in some one or two things only. And thus must they be handled who haue estranged themselves from God. Wee must not touch a disease or two of a sick infected body: but if care be had to heale it truly and soundly, we must be forced to call them backe, and to begin all anew: yea the contagion of the disease must be purged wholly from within; that so they may begin to please God, whereas before they were detestable and abominable in his sight. And no doubt also by this Similitude of *washing*, hee exhortes them to purge themselves from their inward vnclanneses. But vnto this hee will by and by ad outward workes.

Now in that he commands them to wash

themselues, it is not because men come to repentance by their owne proper mouing, and free will; but he shewes that no other remedie will serue the turne; vnlesse they appeare pure and cleane before God. Now we know that the Spirit of God is wont to attribute that to men, which himselfe workes in them, who therefore is called *cleane water*, *Ezech. 36. 25.* because repentance is a worke proceeding from him.

Take away. Now the Prophet descends to the fruites of repentance. For he not onelie declares in plaine termes that they ought to be cleanned and washed; but he commands them to shew a testimonie of their change in their whole life, and in all their actions. Notwithstanding hee confirms the former sentence; namely, that the sithines of the people is before the Lord, which defiling and stayning all their workes takes away all the goodnes which might seeme to be in them. He makes expresse mention of *the eyes of God*, to the end that whilst he beholds them, they should not think to deprime him of seeing, and so make him a companion with them of their blindness. *Cease from euill.* He goes on still to blame their life. Some expound this place, as if by *euill doing*; the Prophet should vnderstand euill liuing: But it ought properly to be vnderstood of those misdoings whereby a mans neighbour is offended. Seeing in the next verse following, it is said, *Learn to doe well*: where the clause, *To your neighbour, should be supplied.* For he speaks of the iniuries, and good turnes which our neighbour receiues of vs. Now because repentance hath his seate in the heart, therefore he sets it forth by these kinds, whereby men may come somewhat neere to the knowledge of it. For euery man would be taken for a good man: but the outward workes shew what euery man is within. He brings them then to externall workes, that by them they should shew forth the truth of their repentance. Now hee comprehends the fruites of repentance vnder two members, to wit, *a ceasing to doe euill; and a learning to doe well.* For first wee must abstaine from doing all wrong: yet so, as wee deale not like those prodigall ones who would be esteemed liberall, when they take from one to giue to another: neither yet like those pinchpennies who thinke they haue quit themselues well when they are carefull in keeping their own, doing others no harme; and yet in the meane while will doe good to none at all. His meaning is then, to comprehend both the one and the other: for the obseruation of the second table consisteth in these two points.

Vers. 17. Learn to doe well: seeke iudgement, relieue the oppressed: iudge the fatherlesse, and defend the widowes.

* Or, him who is transgressed vnderfoote.

Even as immediatly before, where he commanded them to abstaine from euill, hee therein comprehended a continuall exercise thereof: as if hee should say, Hitherto your whole life hath been nothing but a committing

ring of euill : now on the otherſide he teacheth them to bee mecke and courteous ; and drawes them to *learne* what it is : euen as if he had had to doe with new apprentices, and raw ſchollers. And firſt he commands them to *ſeeke iudgement* : others translate, Examine your ſelues ; which I approue not. For by the word *ſeeke*, hee ſignifies a further thing, namely, an actuall studie, as they call it. Alſo by the word *iudgement* he comprehends whatſoever is good and right, as if he ſhould ſay, Study to be vpriight.

Relieue the oppreſſed.] The Prophet after his accuſtomed manner comes to particulars, after he hath ſpoken of things in general: and howſoever he had alreadie exhorted them to welding and equite in ſpeciall manner ; yet now willing to preſſe them more neerely, he reckons vp ſome particular kindes thereof in plaine words, by which hee comes to a more ample and full declaration of the general. For otherwiſe men would alwaies goe for iuſt and vpriight ; and hardly ſhould you ſtirre or moue them with generall doctrine. But when one comes once to particulars, euen as if one ſhould bring them out by the polles into open view, then they are conſtrained to ſubmit themſelues ; or at the leaſt to become more tractable : whereof we haue daily experience.

Iudge.] The Prophet makes choice here of two particulars, which do beſt of all lay open and diſcouer the wickednes of men. For they very ſeldom take the cauſes of the *widow* and *fatherleſſe* in hand, becauſe they looke not for the reward. And hence it is then that poore creatures are expoted to infinite ſorts of iniuries ; namely, becauſe no man is haſtie to ſuccour them : for who will ſerue in the place of iuſtice for nothing ? nay are there not many who giue themſelues to poll and pill the poore and needie ? And doth not this manifeſtly ſhew, how few make conſcience of executing iudgement ? Indeed it is no wonder if the rich and mightie haue friends to maintain and vphold their cauſes, ſeing they are drawne and allured thereunto, not of conſcience, but for hope of gaine. But the Lord here ſhewes that he takes care for the fatherleſſe and widowes ; and that he will iudge and reuenge their cauſe, if any haue offered them violence. And as much he ſaith of all other diſtreſſed, who being held down by violence and tyrannicall cruelty, do ſigh and grone vnder the oppreſſion of them who are more mightie then they.

This ought to miniſter a ſoueraigne conſolation to all the children of God : whoſe condition it is to poſſeſſe their ſoules by patience. For how proudly ſoever the wicked aduance themſelues, yet ſhall not that hinder the faithfull to triumph in their anguiſhes. Let this ſentence therefore bee alwaies ingrauen vpon their hearts, *The Lord will ſuccour vs* : and, *Although men deſpiſe vs, yet will he care for vs* : He will helpe the helpleſſe, and will defend their cauſe.

Vers. 18. *Come now and let vs reaſon together, ſaith the Lord : though your*

ſinnes were as crimſin, they ſhall bee made white as ſnow : though they were red as ſkarlet, they ſhall be as white.

COME NOW.] The Expositors haue bene wont to translate, I pray you, or Then : but me thinks the aſſurance of a good cauſe is here noted ; ſo as the Hebrew particule *now*, ſerueth for an exhortatiō. For he ſhewes that the Iewes ſhould be able to make no replies, and that they would remaine ſtarke dumbe ; although long time ſhould be giuen them to iuſtifie themſelues. And ſurely to muſt hypocrites be dealt withall : for they are ſkillfull to pleade boldly with God, and will bee ſeeking out ſtaring holes. Therefore he ſaith if they bee minded to plead, he is as readie as they.

But ſome may demand what reaſon the Prophet hath to ſtand chiefly vpon the duties of the ſecond Table, rather thē vpon the duties of the firſt. For we know that in diuiding of the Law, it is not without cauſe that God hath placed the firſt Table formeſt, as in the chiefe ranke. Neither is it to be doubted, but as it is firſt in order, ſo it is alſo formeſt in dignitie. I anſwere, that the Prophets **Quest.**
haue ſpoken diuerſly in reproouing the hypocriſie of men. For ſometimes they complaineth that the Sabbath is violated : Otherwhiles that prayer is neglected : but chiefly and principally they crie out againſt idolatry and ſuperſtitions. But our Prophet complaineth here, that men made no account of their duties towards their neighbours. Yet ſo it is, that all tends to one end : namely, that our workes are vaine before God, when they come not frō a pure conſcience : and that we haue no feare of him at all before our eyes. Now they are wont to ſet forth the feare of God, one while by the calling vpon his name ; another while by the obſeruation of the Sabbath ; and ſometimes by other workes. But in regard that a man beſt knowes the certaine difference which is betweene the true ſeruite of God and hypocriſie, by workes of charitie ; the Prophet keeps a very direct courſe in mentioning of them. For hypocrites are very diligent in outward ſeruices and ceremonies : and yet are full of enuie within. They buiſt with pride and contempt of their brethren ; they burne with auarice and ambition : neither can they eaſily be vnmaſked whillt they couer themſelues vnder the performance of outward ceremonies. Such then muſt be examined by this rule, euen as by a touchſtone, and thereby bee tried whether they haue the true feare of God in them or not. We may well bee deceiued indeede if we will iudge of the godlines of a man by the ſecond Table onlie ; but if any man ſhall exerciſe himſelfe in the duties of the commandments of the firſt Table, which are teſtimonies of godlines and of the ſeruite of God, then muſt he be brought to this triall, to wit, whether hee walke without deceit with his brethren : whether hee abſtaine from wrong and violence : whether hee be true in his word and promiſes : and whether hee carrie him-
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selfe louingly towards his brethren. And this is the cause why Iesus Christ saith, that Mercy, Iudgement, and Truth are the principal parts of the law, (when he reprocheth the Pharisees for laying aside the care of true iustice, in that they pleased themselves onely in pectie things, tithing Mint, Anis, & Cumin, Mat. 23. 23. By faith in that place he vnderstands fidelity, which we commonly call loyaltie: and by Iudgement all vprightnes when we render to our neighbour that which to him appertaineth: not suffering him to be wronged by others, but helping him as farre as we are able. But if these be the principall parts of the law, in what degree shall we place the commandments of the first Table? I answer, that they still keepe their order and dignitie: but by these of the second, which Christ straightly requireth, whereupon hee also insists, the hypocrisie of hypocrits is chiefly discouered, so as a man may more plainly discern there-by whether the true feare of God be in any one in truth or not. And in the same sense must that be taken where it is said, I wil haue mercie, and not sacrifice: Hosea 6.6. 1. Sam. 15. 22. Matth. 9. 13. & 12. 7. For mercie is a declaration and prooue of true pietie. Moreover because it is a true demonstration of loue, it pleaseth God of it felicitie: but sacrifices, please him for another end. Now it appears sufficiently, as I thinke, why *Isaiah* rather mentioneth here the doing of good to our neighbours, then faith, or calling vpon Gods name: as also why the Prophets doe speake so diuersly when they meane to bring hypocrits backe to the true seruice of God, and to shew it forth by the outward fruits.

Though your sinnes &c. This is as much as if he should haue said, I accuse not innocent persons, neither take I pleasure to pleade thus with you; but know, that the cause is great that makes me thus vrge and accuse you. For hypocrits are wont to quarrel with God, as though he dealt too sharplie with them, or as though he were vnappesable. Yea in their obstinacie they find out this excuse, That it is in vaine for them to enduor to returne into fauour with God. And if all excuses faile them, yet notwithstanding they haue this stuff, That they ought not to be pressed so neere: and that men must be borne withall in some things; yea euen the best of all. Therefore the Prophet prevents them, and brings in the Lord speaking thus; For my part if neede require, I refuse not to pleade with you; for thereby it shall appeare that your obstinacie is the cause why we are not at vnitic together: bring with you therefore *cleannes of heart*, and then all our strife shall cease. I would not stand to pleade with you, if you would offer me the sacrifices of an vpright heart. Now from hence wee may gather a wonderfull consolation, namely, that God pleades not with vs, as if he meant to pursue vs with rigor. For if we would earnestly conuert and turtie to him, hee would by and by receiue vs into fauor & blot out the remembrance of all our offences, so as he would not call one of them into account. For he is not like men, of whom one cannot obtaine par-

don for the least offence, that shall bee committed against them. Nay, on the contrarie, he is readie to cleanse and pardon vs: so farre off is it that we haue any cause to complaine of his ouer great rigoroufnes. For he contentes himselfe with the cleannes of the heart; and if there be any sinne that breakes out, besides our purpose, he forgives it, by pardoning such as haue prouoked him.

Verf. 19. If yee will consent and obey, yee shall eate the good things of the land.

Isaiah still pleades the cause of God against the people: and in briefe affirms, that all the calamities which the people sustained ought to be imputed to their owne default: and that they were to blame themselves for not recouering a more happie and comfortable estate. Why so? Because God for his part is alwaies readie to pardon their sinnes, if they harden not their owne hearts against him. But for as much as it seemes, that the Prophet placeth felicitie here, in the will and power of man, the Papiſts contend with open mouth that men haue power of their owne free mouing to doe good or euill. Is it so? As if God discoured here how great the abilitie of men is; when hee acculeth their obstinacie. But he should then say in vaine, *if yee will consent*, if so be it were not in their power. I answer, that howsoeuer the choice bee not in our owne power, as they would make vs beleue it is, yet God iustly chargeth sinners to be the voluntarie authors of their euils, because they pull downe the wrath of God vpon their owne heads willingly, and without constraint. I grant then, that it is a speciall gift of God for a man to enduor to doe good: but it is also as true, that the wickednes of reprobates hindreth them from applying themselves thereunto: and therefore that al the fault of their hardning abides and remains in themselves. And hereupon dependes this reproach, namely, That the people might haue had an happie issue, and a comfortable life, if they would haue become reachable and obedient to God. For seeing that of his owne nature hee desires nothing more then to doe good, we may iustly impute it vnto our owne malice, and vnthankfulness, that this liberalitie which hee daily offereth, comes not vnto vs.

On the contrarie, he addes a terrible and grievous threatning, to wit, that the vengeance of God is readie to cease vpon them, to the end they might feele that the contempters of God shall not remaine unpunished. We must also note that there is but one only rule of well liuing; that is, the obedience which wee yeeld vnto God, and to his word. Also in these words, there is a transported sentence by a figure which wee call Hypallage, because the speech should be resolved thus, If you be of a readie mind, and haue full consent of will to obey; or else thus, and yet in the same sense: If ye hearken and obey me, and my word. Seeing then that God placeth the felicitie of men in obedience, it followes that

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that our life is then well ordered when we heare God ſpeaking, and that we obey him in all things. Now we may ſee how great the wickednes of men is when they vouchſafe not to lend their eare to God, but reſect the felicitie which hee offereth and prepareth for them. Truly their froward affections ought to bee tamed, to the end that whiſt theſe poore wretches draw the wrath of God vpon their owne heads, they might not wittingly and willingly caſt themſelues headlong vpon the edge of the ſword. Wee muſt note alſo, that in the verſe following, which is the concluſion, he threatens them with extreme ruine, if ſo be they ſtill continue to rebel obſtinately againſt God.

The good things of the earth. He means the fruites which the earth brings forth for the neceſſitie of our life. For the earth ſeemes to bee ſomewhat vnkind when it brings not forth her fruites, but keeps them as it were in her boſome. Although I make no queſtion but hee alludes to the promiſes of the law, where God promiſeth that he will bleſſe the ground of ſuch as walke in his commandments, that they may haue abundance of all good things. And yet hee offereth not the commodities of this life vnto vs to the end he would ſlay vs in an earthly felicity, which hypocrits indeed only gaſp after, wholly employing all their wits thereabouts: but that by the contemplation thereof, we ſhould liſt vpon minds to the heauenly and ſpirituall felicity: as alſo that by the taſte of his ſo great goodnes he might accuſtome vs to reſt in the eſtate of eternall happines. Now the ancient people were inured rather to be called by ſuch ſhadowes and reſemblances to the heauenly inheritance, namely, by the taſte of earthly benefites. And this difference is well to be noted, that we may applie this doctrine to our ſelues according to that degree whereunto God hath been pleaſed to exalt vs. Now the Prophet would teach vs that true felicity, with the complements thereof, conſiſts in the obedience of God: alſo, that the wicked, in rebelling againſt him, doe draw vpon themſelues all manner of calamities: and that we therefore ought to impute all the euils which we endure, to our finnes and rebellions, as to the proper cauſe thereof.

Verſ. 20. But if yee reſuſe and be rebellious, yee ſhall be denoured with the ſword: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.

THE wicked alwaies thinke the puniſhments which they ſuffer are farre greater then their fault, although God deale mercifully and fauourably with them. And howſoever they dare not wholly iuſtifie themſelues; yet notwithstanding they ceaſe not (as we haue ſaid heretofore) to accuſe him of too great ſeuericitie. But the Prophet ſhewes how they ſhall bee no end of their plagues which they often ſuffer, till they bee wholly conſumed: as alſo that there are yet more heauie chaſtiſements prepared for them of

God, that they ſhould not imagine to eſcape with thoſe light ſtipps wherewith they were hitherto ſmiten. The Papiſts wreſt this place to eſtabliſh their free will. And thus they reaſon: If men be happie when they will obey God, then it followes that it is in their owne power to will. Behold a childliſh argument. For the Lord by the mouth of his Prophet diſputes not what or how great our power of will is to good or euill: but admoniſheth, that it is by our owne default that we enioy not the abundance of all good things: and further that the neceſſities wherewith wee bee pinched, are the juſt rewards of our diſobedience and rebellion. Now there is great ods betwixt demanding, whether a man bee able to make his will which is euill, good; and, whether by his wicked will (which is his owne by nature) hee draws vpon himſelfe all the plagues which he endureth. Theſe ſubtile and craftie doctours therefore do vniuſtly and falſe ground their doctrine of free choice of good and euill vpon this place.

For the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it. Because threatnings ordinarily doe not much moue ſuch as are carried away with their inordinate deſires and luſts, the Prophet to the end he might awaken them from out of their ſo great drouſines, admoniſheth them that this ſentence proceeds not from the mouth of a mortall man, but that it is come out of the mouth of the eternal God, who is not mutable as men are, but is alwaies as good as his word. He ſets the authoritie of God before them then to feare and terrifie them; to the end that ſuch among them as were fallen into a dead ſleepe in their vices, might earnestly giue themſelues to hearken to his threatnings.

Verſ. 21. How is the faithfull citie become an harlot! It was full of iudgement and iuſtice lodged therein, but now they are murderers.

TO the end the reprehention might be the more forcible, and that their wickednes might be ſo more deteſtable, in that this people were thus reuoluted from God and from all integritie and vprightnes, he cries out as if he ſaw ſome ſtrange and vnwonted thing. And ſurely it was an horrible change, that the people whom the Lord had choiſen and ſet apart to bee a royall prieſthood to himſelfe, ſhould thus fall from ſo ſoueraigne pietie and godlines, into the gulfe and ſinke of all ſinne and wickednes. But he ſpeakes chieflie of the *citie of Ieruſalem*, which was the royall ſeate of the Sanctuarie of God: hee complains that ſhe which heretofore was a *faithfull garden of iuſtice*, is now become a denne of theeuces: and that of an holy and chaſt virgin, ſhe is become an *harlot*. To the ende therefore hee might make the baſtard Iewes (who were farre from the integritie of the holy Patriarks) the more aſhamed, hee takes vnto himſelfe the perſon of a man aſtoniſhed, who wondreth and reaſoneth with himſelfe

selfe how such a thing could come to passe. Also in this word *faulshfull*, hee alludes, as I thinke, to the faith in mariage which the wife ought to keepe to her husband. I grant that the signification of the word reacheth further: but waying the circumstance narrowly, I thinke it not amisse to take the word *faulshfull*, for chaste. For a little after he opposeth the contrarie member; calling her harlot. So as being in times past a loyall wife keeping faith to her husband, shee is now become an harlot past shame, and blussheth not at her villanie. Now it is an vsuall thing in the Scriptures to call the Church of God by the name of his wife: which degree of honour Ierusalem kept whilst shee retained her spirituall chastitie and persecuted in the lawfull and pure worship of God: but as soone as the gaue ouer that, then shee became an harlot.

Now it is not to be doubted but this astonishment of the Prophet was ioyned with great sorrow. For it ought to make our haire to stand an end, to see men revolt and slide backe from God; and forsake the faith and allegiance which once they promised him. Neither can it be but men of any good heart, will be deeply touched with extreame sorrow at beholding of such a wofull spectacle. We reade, Luk. 15. 10, how the Angels reioyce at the conuersion of a sinner, and therefore they are much grieued at the perdition of any one of them. But how much more heauie and sorrowfull are they when they behold the ruine and destruction of a whole citie and Church?

Now this admiration carries with it a complaint: as if the Prophet should haue said to *Ierusalem*; From what an excellent and flourishing estate art thou fallen? into what miserie hast thou plunged thy selfe? What shame and dishonour hast thou laid thy selfe open vnto? For in making mention of her former estate, in which shee had flourished and had been honourable accounted of, hee thereby prouokes her to bee so much the more moued; so as she who in times past had been an honest mother of a family, should haue much more care of her honour and reputation, then such a one as hath passed her whole life in all kind of wicked and leude behaviour.

She was full of Iudgement.] He shewes what the fruites of this loyaltie was in times past. We may take *iudgement* for vprightnes only, or, if any will, he may take *iusstice* for giuing to euery one that which to him belongeth: and *iudgements* for taking the cause of the innocent in hand; and reuenging the poore and needie: For so the Scripture indeede vseth them, when these two words are ioyned together. But because they are not wholly ioyned together in this place, I take *iudgement* simple for vprightnes; as being one, and the same thing twise spoken, to manifest it the more clearly.

But now they are murderers] Here hee shewes how *Ierusalem* is become an harlot. For whereas iustice and equitie were in times past highly in estimation in her eyes: now on the contrarie shee is full of *murders*. Now

he meanes not murderers and theenes onely, as hath been said: but those who vnder colour of iustice drew other mens goods to themselves by deceit, and violence: and lastly those who walked not plainly and simple with their neighbours, in what estimation soeuer they were: as sometimes, may very often it fall out, that the most wicked are the most praised. Now from this estate whereunto *Ierusalem* was come, let vs consider after what manner Satan for the most part exerciseth his tyrannie ouer the Church of God, euen as if the bridle were laid in his necke. For if euer there were a Church, it was in *Ierusalem*; and yet notwithstanding *Isaiah* saith, that it was become a denne of theenes, or as a caue wherein men were deuoured and swallowed vp. But if Satan had his swinge so there; let vs not meruaile if the case bee now alike with vs; but let vs rather giue order that we be not corrupted by so wicked examples.

Verf. 22. *Thy siluer is become drosse: thy wine is mixt with water.*

THE Prophet speaks by a figure: and vnder two similitudes, shewes here, how that although things were not wholly ouerturnd in appearance, yet that their estate notwithstanding was changed and corrupted in such wise, as it was far from that which it was wont to be. For he saith, that *drosse* shined in stead of *Siluer*: and that there was nothing in their wine but colour, without any saour: as if he should haue said, Howsoeuer thou makest a faire shew of goodnes, yet there is nothing that is pure to bee found in thee. Thy wine which was wont to be of it selfe, is now mixed; and howsoeuer it deceiues them that looke vpon it, yet by the taste one may know it is corrupted. Now all this is to none other end, but that the Iewes, hauing once purged themselves from all dissimulation, should begin to confesse their finnes, and not to please themselves any longer in them, as hypocrites are wont to doe. To which purpose these Similitudes which he here vseth, are very apt and fitting: for the *drosse* of siluer hath some resemblance with siluer; also the water that is mixed with the wine, hath some shew of the colour of the wine it selfe: and yet notwithstanding they are farre off from the puritie of the things, which they resemble. So the hypocrites paint themselves with the colour of false siluer, although indeed they deserue no more commendations then drosse: yea they are more detestable therein, then if they were openly wicked. Yet notwithstanding, they oppose themselves against God and men, and no lesse disloyally then wickedlie paint ouer themselves with vanitie and vaine shewes to couer their malice withall.

Verf. 23. *Thy Princes are rebellions and companions of theenes: euery one loueth gifts, and follo weth after rewards, they iudge not the fatherles, neither doth she*

doth the widowes cauſe come before them.

Here is an alluſion and meeting together of wordes in this place, which hath a verie good grace; as if hee ſhould ſay, Thy Princes are piicers. Neither ſpeakes he ſo of the princes, as if the people were holy and blameleſſe, but hee toucheth the wellſpring of the miſchiefe: for euen as no euill is more hurtfull, then that which comes from the head, and diſperſeth it ſelfe into all the members; ſo alſo is there nothing more pernicious in a commonwealth, then a corrupt and wicked Prince, who ſpreadeth abroad his corruptions ouer all the body, as well by example, as by giuing libertie thereunto: Prou. 29. 12. From whence alſo came the proverb, *Such a maſter ſuch a man*. It is all one then as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid, that it was no particular vice that reigned among the common people, but that the Princes, and great Lords had let looſe the reins to all wickednes. Alſo there is a cloſe amplification in the word *Princes*; becauſe it is a thing much to be lamented, that the euill ſhould come from thence, where remedie ſhould be ſought. He inynes one particular, which is, that they are companions of theeuers: by which words he ſignifies, that they were ſo farre off from endeuoring themſelues to reſpreſſe theeueries and wrongs, that on the contrarie, they drew gaine and profit from thence: and he calles them theeuers iuſtly, who in taking part of the pray, gaue licence to others to ſeale. Neither can it be auoided when a Iudge ſuffereth himſelfe to be corrupted by bribes, that diſorders ſhould not raigne: for it is all one, as if hee himſelfe ſhould conſent with theeuers.

Every one laueth gifts. Hee alſo ſhewes the cauſe wherefore the Princes had ſocietie with the theeuers, and by a wicked conſpiracie had coupled themſelues with them, to ſoſter and maintaine all iniuſtice: to wit, couetouſnes. For iuſtice is gone when Iudges are giuen to the loue of monie: for if accepting of perſons be ſuch a corruption in iudgment, that where it reignes, equite hath no place at all; truly, whoſo euer he be that is poſſeſſed with couetouſnes, ſuch a one hath more reſpect to the perſon then to the cauſe. And therefore he cannot ſee the right: but will pracliſe that which one ſaith, to wit, hee will make lawes, and ymake them againe.

By this we are aduerted, what a vertue it is in a Magiſtrate to know how to contemne gifts: for if he cannot curb his deſires, his hands and eyes, he will neuer iudge iuſtly. It is therefore but a tale when ſome ſay, they can keepe a good conſcience, though they receiue *rewards*. ſeing that which the Lord ſaith, remains euer true; namely, that gifts doe blind the eyes of the wiſe, and peruerce the words of the iuſt: Deut. 16. 29. There is no man then ſo perfect, nor ſo wiſe and learned, whoſe eyes & vnderſtanding may not be blinded with gifts. Whence it is that he iuſtly chargech ſ Iudges to be companions with theeuers, becauſe being carried away with a blind deſire of monie, there was no law neither of

God nor of man which they peruerced nor, and that there remained amongſt them no reſpect either of ſhame or equite.

Wee muſt alſo note, that for the conſiſtition of hypocrites, the Prophet ſets their workes, which were notorious, before them, which were alſo apparent to all the world: becauſe otherwiſe they would neuer bee brought vnder. And yet no doubt but there were many at that time which wined when they were thus termed by ſ name of *theuers*: as alſo at this day, many crie out impudently, and obſtinately that they are not theuers for taking thoſe bribes and giſtes which are offered them, and that it will hinder them nothing at all from iudging iuſtly. Now becauſe ſuch anſwers are fruioleous, the Prophet hauing diſcouered their wickednes, and contenting himſelfe thus to haue reprooued them, he pleades no more with them. And verily nature it ſelfe reacheth vs, that it is vnpoſſible to giue right iudgemēt, when Iudges are ſo greedie of recompence and reward: for it cannot bee but that thereby they muſt needes ſet both their faithfulnes and eſtimation to ſale.

They iudge not theſe things. Euen as the Lord doth ſpecially recommend vnto vs the cauſes of the widowes and of the fatherleſſe, becauſe they are deſtitute of mens ſuccour and helpe; ſo alſo it is no meruaile if hee be offended when hee ſeeth the Iudges neglect them, in ſtead of being mouth, eyes, cares and hands for them. For when no man puts forth himſelfe to ſuccour ſuch as are deſtitute of counſell, force, and neanes, they muſt of neceſſitie bee laid open to iniuries, and all manner of violences, without hope of redreſſe. Now when no man takes their cauſe to heart, it is a ſigne that couetouſnes and briberie haue the cheefeſt ſway there, and not equite.

Verſ. 24. *Therefore ſaith the Lord the God of hoſts, the mightie one of Iſrael, ah, I will * caſe me of mine aduerſaries, and auenge me on mine enemies.*

* Or, comfort me, &c.

The word *Alon*, which is put in the firſt place, ſignifies properly Lord, and is to bee referred to the word that is oppoſite, to wit, Seruant. The name *tebanah*, by which the eternall eſſence and Maieſtie of God is expreſſed, is added conſequently. After then that the Prophet *Iſaiah* had recited ſome particular ſinnes by the which he made it manifeſt to euery one, that all things were corrupted amongſt this people, minding now to vſe ſome threatnings, and to let God his iudgement before them; hee not onlie adorns the Lord with the office, and power of a Iudge, but alſo hee admoniſheth them, that the children of *Abraham* are a peculiar people vnto him; and in this ſenſe, *the mightie one of Iſrael*, is added: although there may be here a priuie and cloſe kind of deriding, wherewith hee galleth the Iewes; as if hee ſhould ſay, that they did fooliſhly bragge of the name of God, ſeing they are ſuch wret-

ched and wicked seruants : and that they trust in his strength in vaine: which strength he is forthwith readie to display against them. Hauiug thus then begun to speake, he addes, *As I will comfort me.* By which words he means that God will not bee appeased till first hee hath had his fill in chastising of them. He takes the word *comfort*, after the manner of men. For euen as wrath is nothing else but a desire of reuenge : so reuenge it selfe also is a kind of contentment: for when any is reuenged, he is glad, and satisfied. Thus the Lord saith that hee will satisfie himselfe in chastising his enemies, as if it were a kind of recompence.

It is true that this place is diuersly expounded, and I meane not to trouble my selfe so farre as to examine all interpretations, neither will I stand to refute those which sute not with the text : it sufficeth for this time, that wee haue the true sense of the Prophet. He speakes not here of the Chaldeans, or Assyrians, as many thinke ; but of the Iewes ; against whom he proclaimes open warre in the name of God, whose herald he is : which threatening was very harsh and vnpleasent vnto their eares, in regard they thought themselves so linked to God, that hee would bee an enemie to their enemies. But God contrariwise shewes that he is become their enemie, because they haue prouoked him by their naughtines. And after this manner must we awaken the hypocrites, who continually fighting against God, notwithstanding blush not still to claime his protection for their safegard. Therefore let vs not inuauaile, if the Prophet doth sharply terme them *the enemies of God*, who hauing broken the covenant, were thus combined together to make warre against him.

And yet notwithstanding, to the end hee may shew that God is as it were constrained and enforced to chastise his people, he threatens them, as it were, with a kind of inward sorrowing. For as nothing is more agreeable to his nature, then to doe good : euen so as oft as his anger is stirred vp against vs, and that hee handles vs severely, it is certaine that our owne frowardnes hath constrained him so to doe, because we will not suffer him to bestow his benefits vpon vs ; but especially he is inclined to deale thus louingly with his owne children : & albeit he seeth that his louing kindnes and gentlenes can nothing preuaile with them, yet is it in sorrow of hart that hee strikes them. But peradventure some had rather expound the particule *How*, as if God should cry out as one being enflamed with wrath. For mine owne part I take it, that in this place there is a voyce of griefe and sorrow : because the Lord in thinking often vpon his covenant, would willingly pardon his chosen people, were it not by their owne obstinacie they did altogether reiect it. In the second member, *and auenge me of mine enemies*, there is a figure vey vsuall with the Hebrewes, who repeat in one and the same verse many times one selfesame thing: whence we also gather, that this sentence hath this drift, namely, that God could

not quite himselfe, vntill he were reuenged vpon this traiterous and disloyall people.

Verf. 25. Then I will turne mine hand vpon thee, and burne out thy drosse, till it be pure, and take away al thy sinne.

THis is a moderation of the former threatening. For howsoeuer hee pursues that which he hath begun to speake of touching his seueritic, notwithstanding he addes therewithall, that the Church shall remaine safe still in the midst of all calamities, wherewith the people should be smitten : neuertheless his principall drift is to comfort the faithfull, to the end they should not thinke the Church should be brought to ruine, although God was constrained to deale more sharpelic with it then he hath been wont to doe. For the holy Ghost alwaies provides in the ministrie of the Prophets for the vpholding of the faith of Gods children (who continually tremble at his words) that they should not bee discouraged, being humbled with feares and threatnings ; because so much the more as the wicked ouerflow the bankes, and scoffe at all threatnings, so much the more doe they which are touched with the true feare of God, tremble thereat.

Moreover, *the turning of the hand of God*, generally signifies the witness of his presence : as if he should say, I will lift vp mine hand : which he is wont to doe after two sortes, either when he chastiseth the wicked, or when he pulles the faithfull out of their miseryes. Seeing then it easily appears by the circumstance of the place, that God would asswage the sharpnes of the correction by mingling some consolation ; *The turning of his hand*, ought to be referred here to the restoration of the Church. For although he pronounceth in generall that they are all his enemies : yet now he moderates & restraines this speech, in calling *Jerusalem* or *Zion* by his owne name.

When he addes, *I will burne out thy drosse*, although he notes the fruit of the correction, to the end it should not be grieuous and burthensome to the faithfull beyond measure : notwithstanding, wee gather from thence that the restoration of the Church, is a speciall worke of God. He euermore *lifts vp his hands* to the end he may punish sinne and bring those that erre into the right way : but yet his roddes should auaille little or nothing, if he himselfe did not make them profitable, by touching their hearts inwardly. And because hee here makes mention of a speciall fauour which hee communicates to his chosen : from thence it follows that repentance is a true and peculiar worke of the holy Ghost ; because otherwise the sinner would harden himselfe more and more vnder the blowes, rather then profit thereby any thing at all. Further we are not to vnderstand this *cleane purging*, in such wise, that there should remaine no drosse, as if God would wholly purge his Church in this world from all filthines : but this manner of speech is rather to be referred to the common fashion

Note.

Gods outward corrections profit vs nothing, at all unless he teach vs inwardly by his holy spirit.

of mens actions, as if he ſhould ſay, The eſtate of the Church, ſhall be ſuch, that the beautie thereof ſhall ſhine like ſilver. The true *puritie* then is ſignified by theſe words, becauſe the Iewes had too much pleaſed themſelves in their filthines before. Now this ſimilitude is very fit, for by it the Prophet ſhewes, that although the Church of God was then ſo ſtuffed with multitudes of corruptions; yet notwithstanding there ſhould remaine a remnant which ſhould recouer their brightnes, after that the droſſe and corruption ſhould be conſumed. And thus he ioynes both members together, becauſe hauing ſpoken in ver. 22. of their offences, hee ſaid, that their filuer was become droſſe.

Verſ. 26. *And I will reſtore thy Iudges as at the firſt, and thy Counſellers as at the beginning: afterward thou ſhalt be called a citie of righteousnes, and a faithfull citie.*

Now he ſpeakes plainly without any figure. And becauſe hee had ſaid that the ſpring and beginning of all euils was in the princes; thus hee teacheth, that their offices and places ſhall be purged by the Lord, when he begins to reſtore the perfect health and welfare of the Church againe vnto her. And from thence it is alſo that iuſtice in the political government comes; to wit, when the governors that rule are vertuous, and fearing God: becauſe all things goe to hauock, when thoſe which gouerne, are wicked. It is plaine enough, that by *Iudges* and *Counſellers* he meanes all Magiſtrates of what ſort ſoever. In that hee promiſeth they ſhall bee ſuch as they were at the beginning, he puts them in mind of the ſingular benefit of God, whereof they had beene deſtroyed. God by his direction had exalted the throne of *Dauid* and commanded that in this governmēt there ſhould ſhine an Image of his fatherly loue. Now although they had corrupted the ſame by wicked tyrannie; yet notwithstanding, they ceaſed not to make their bragges of falſe titles: for they boaſted much of the kingdome of *Dauid*, euen as the Papiſts glorie at this day vnder a falſe pretence of the Church. Therefore the people are juſtly admoniſhed from what an happie eſtate they were fallen by their owne default, that ſo they ſhould not be diſpleaſed to haue their multitudes of *mē* diminished, but might rather be moued to recouer againe the good order which God had ordained.

Afterward thou ſhalt be called.] He extends the fruite of this reformation, whereof he hath ſpoken, to the whole bodie. For the Prophet hauing ſaid that *Jeruſalem* was a faithfull Citie, and full of iudgement before ſhe reuolted from God; now he ſaith, that after ſhe ſhall be chaſtiſed, theſe vertues here ſpoken of ſhall be ſeene to ſhine in her. The ſummie alſo of true repentance is ſet forth in this place: for by *Iuſtice*, is vnderſtood integritie, wherein euery man obtaines of another that which to him belongeth, and that one

man liues with another without oppreſſion. The word *faithfull* extends it ſelfe further: becauſe we call that a *faithfull Citie*, not onely where equitie and mutual iuſtice ruleth among men, but alſo where God is purely ſerued. And thus vnder this word, the puritie and chaſtite of the vnderſtanding is comprehended. Yet we muſt note that iuſtice defends from this faithfullnes, becauſe that when we carrie our ſelves vprightly one towards another; there iuſtice will eaſily beare the ſway. And ſurely by examining the whole a little more narrowly; it ſeemes the Prophet takes not the word *fideliſie* in ſo ample a ſignification as h:retore. Alſo that hee fo ioynes theſe two vertues together, as if they tended both to one end: ſo as *truth* ſhould be the firſt in order as being the cauſe; then that *iuſtice* ſhould be the effect of it.

Moreouer *Iſaiah* not onely promiſeth that ſhe ſhall be juſt and faithfull, but alſo that by theſe badges and markes ſhe ſhall become excellent and renowned: thereby further ſignifying, that her rightcouſnes ſhal be ſuch that the knowledge and renouue thereof ſhall be ſpread abroad euery where. We know alſo that by hypocrites obtaine great and honorable titles: but becauſe *Iſaiah* brings in the Lord ſpeaking, hee holds it as a ſure concludiſon that the citie ſhall bee juſt according as hee hath foretold. In the meane while, as I haue ſaid, he ſets before vs the fruit of a true conuerſion, as if he ſhould ſay; When *Jeruſalem* ſhall bee once brought to true godlines, then others ſhall ſee the fruites of her renouation alſo.

Verſ. 27. *Zion ſhall be redeemed in iudgement, and they that returne in her, in iuſtice.*

HE confirms the ſame doctrine: and becauſe the reſtitution of the Church was a thing hard to bee beleeneed, hee ſhewes that it hangs not vpon the will of men, but that it is grounded vpon the *Iudgement* and *Iuſtice* of God; as if he ſhould ſay, God will by no means endure that the Church ſhould wholly be deſtroyed, becauſe he is *juſt*. The meaning of the Prophet then is, to withdraw the minds of the faithfull, from all earthly cogitations, to the end, that when the hope of the ſaluation of the Church is in queſtion, they ſhould depend vpon God, and not be diſcouraged, although in ſtead of helpe and ſuccour they ſhould ſee lets and hinderances on all ſides. For thoſe that reſerre theſe words of *Iudgement* and *Iuſtice* to men, are deceiued; as *Iſaiah* ſhould ſpeake now of the well ordered eſtate of a city; and therefore that ſenſe which I haue giuen is according to the true meaning of the Prophet, to wit, that although no ſuccour appeare vnto them from men, yet that the iuſtice of the Lord notwithstanding is more then ſufficient to redēme his Church. And truly whiſt wee looke into our owne ſtrength, what hope of helpe can we conceiue? Nay, how many rockes doe there by and by rather appeare, to daſh our

faith all to peeces? It is in God only then that we shall finde a perpetuall firmenes of trust. In the second member, *and they that returne*, the means of the redemption is expressed, to wit, that those which were banished and scattered farre off, shall be gathered together againe.

Verf. 28. *And the destruction of the transgressors, and of the sinners shall bee together, and they that forsake the Lord, shall be consumed.*

TO the end hypocrits should not thinke that any fruit of these promises did appertaine vnto them, and lest they should boast in vaine, he threatens that they shall perish, although God redeeme his Church. For hypocrites are alwaies mingled amongst the faithfull: and which more is, they thrust themselves into the chiefeest places, valuing the Church according to the outward forme and shew thereof, audaciouly drawing whatsoever God hath promised, vnto themselves. But the Prophet pluckes this trust (if it may be so called) from them, because it proceedes from nothing else but pride of heart, and a vaine perswasion. Here therefore is diligently to be considered, with what wisdom and discretion the faithfull Teachers haue neede to be endued withall, for the comfort of the good, that they may refresh their minds with some consolation; and preserve them from fainting, and from being discouraged, whilst they terrifie the wicked with the iudgements of God. On the Contrarie also the faithfull being stayed by the promise of God, and that the wicked seeke to wrest it to themselves, and lift vp their crests with a vaine confidence, we must then keepe this order and meane, that we giue the wicked no occasion to become proud and insolent: as also that the faithfull be no whit out of heart, nor discouraged: as *Isaiah* doth here in this place. For hauing spoken of the redemption of the Church, he threatens the obstinate and wicked, and denounceth their ruin, to the end they might not thinke, these benefites of God did any thing at all belong vnto them. Now although he iudgeth y^e wicked to perdition, yet by this comparison he amplifies the grace of God towards the faithfull: the which should then be the better perceiued, when God should heale those that were his, whilst the wicked in the meane while should perish, as it is said in the 91. Psalme, vers. 7. Againe, he also moderates the sorrow which might disquiet the hearts of the faithfull, for the wast of the Church; for he admonisheth them that the whole bodie could not otherwise be healed, vnlesse the corruption which was in it, were cut off.

* Or, to wit.

Verf. 29. ** For they shall be confounded for the Oakes which yee haue desired, and yee shall bee ashamed of the gardens that yee haue chosen.*

THe particle, *ci*, is put in the Hebrew, which shewes the cause: but it is often

also vsed for an exposition. Now because the Prophet addes no new matter here, but only manifests vnto them the cause of the ruine, which hung ouer the heads of the wicked, the Hebrew word, which wee haue translated, *to* ~~was~~, hath seemed to agree very well; as if the Prophet should haue said, There was no plague more hurtfull to them then superstition; the idols, faith hee, which you doe so heape together to procure your welfare, shall rather turne to your ruine. Now whereas some haue heterofore translated *gods*, for the word *trees*, is refuted by the text it selfe: for he by and by makes mention of *gardens*. Moreover he reprooues all false, and new found seruices vnder the names of trees and gardens, by a figure called Synecdoche, when a part is taken for the whole. For howsoeuer there were all sorts of Idolatrie among the Jewes, yet this particular kind, namely, to chuse *woods and forests*, to offer sacrifices, was specially the most vsuall amongst others. Now be it that one would reade *woods, or gardens* in the second place, yet no doubt, but he meant to point at their Altars, and Chapels, where they performed their diuellish worshipp: and although it was not their meaning, wholly to reuolt from the true God; yet notwithstanding they forged new seruices: and as if one place had been more acceptable to God then another, they consecrated and dedicated them to their deuotions, as wee see it is come to passe in the Papacie. But by and by there followes a change of the person: for to the end the reproofe might bee the more sharpe, he speaks euen to the wicked themselves, of whom he spake before in the third person.

Afterward by the word, *to come*, he taxeth the furious affection wherewith the wicked are set on fire in their superstitions. God requires that the whole heart be dedicated vnto him: but they violently plunged themselves in a blind pursuing of their new devised seruices, as if they were carried away with a beastly and brutish affection. And to say Note. the truth, this sickness is roored almost in the vnderstandings of all men, that hauing once forsaken the true God, they runne a madding after their Idols. Therefore it is, that the Scripture often compares this fury to y^e loues of harlots, who not only cast off all reason, but likewise all shame. Although it further appears by the second member, that hee not onely taxeth their intemperancie, but also their boldnes to violate the seruice of God, when he saith they *chose gardens*: which word is opposed to that which was commanded in the law. For with what flourisher soeuer the vnbeleeuers seeke to shadow their superstitions withal, yet notwithstanding this sentence remains sure, that obedience is better then sacrifice, 1. Sam. 15. 22. And therefore S. Paul Col. 2. 23. vnder the word superstition, comprehends all those corrupt worshipp, which men forge to themselves without the commandement of God. God then complaines, that the Jewes hauing despised his word, pleased themselves in their owne inuentions: as if he should say, It was your duties to haue obeyed

obeyed me, but you have liked better to follow your owne fantaſie, or rather a franticke libertie.

And this is ſufficient to condemne all the inventions of men, to wit, that it is not lawfull in any ſort, to chuſe a way how to ſerue God, becauſe the right of preſcribing that appertaines vnto himſelfe. God had then commanded that no ſacrifices ſhould be offered vnto him but in *Ieruſalem*; the Iewes thought to pleaſe him in other places: which falſe imagination alſo deceiued the prophane nations. And I would to God that it had onely reſted there; but we ſee how the Papiſts are wrapped euen in the ſame error. Laſtly, experience it ſelfe teacheth, that this diſeaſe is common to euery age.

Deut. 12. 13

Obiect.

If any object that the matter is not ſo great in reſpect of the place, that God ſhould therefore abhorre the ſacrifices which were euenly where offered him. Firſt we muſt note the cauſe why God as then would haue but one onely altar, namely, to the end it might be a band of holy vniute to this rude people, and that by this means Religion might continue ſound and immutable. Now although that this ſpeciall cauſe ceaſeth, yet muſt we holde this principle, that commandements were giuen of God, euen touching the leaſt things; to the end the Iewes might inure themſelues the better to obedience. For in regard that ſuperſtition paints her face with the colour of deuotion, it is impoſſible, but men ſhould flatter themſelues in their inuentions. Notwithſtanding ſeeing that obedience is the mother of true religion, it followes thereupon, that the fantaſies of men, on the contrary, are euen fountaines of ſuperſtition.

Obedience the mother of true religion. Mens fantaſies, the fountaines of ſuperſtition.

This alſo muſt be added, that euen as *Iſaiah* did a little before reprove the wickednes of the people, which raigned amongſt them againſt the breach of the ſecond Table of the law, which is loue; now alſo he makes his complaint, that they haue tranſgreſſed the firſt table. For in as much as all perfection of righteouſnes conſiſts in the obedience of the law, the Prophets when they would reprove the ſinnes of men, one while they ſpeake of the firſt, and then of the ſecond Table. We muſt alſo alwaies obſerue this figuratiue manner of ſpeech, when vnder one kind the Prophets do comprehend the whole in generall.

Verſ. 30. *For yee ſhall be as an Oke, whoſe leaſe ſudeth, and as a garden that hath no water.*

The Hebrew particle may bee taken affirmatiuely, as I haue turned it: and it ſeemes that the Prophet alludes to thoſe gardens vnto which they had falſely tied the ſeruice of God; for becauſe he had made mention of theſe gardens, he threatens them with

drought, caſting in their teeth the confidence, which they reposed in them. You pleaſe yourſelues very much, in your gardens, and in your trees (ſaith he) but you ſhall be as trees dried, and ſubiect to fall. The Lord then ſcottes the fooliſh bragging of the idolaters who pleaſe themſelues maruelouſly in their inventions: and thinke that heauen muſt needs be opened to them, when they are in the miſt of their ceremonies. As at this day when the Papiſts haue lighted vp their lampes, and decked their temples; when they ſhine with gold and pretious ſtones; when they heare the melodie of their Organes, and the ſound of their bells, they thinke themſelues the moſt happie people vnder the ſunne, as if God being infinite beholding vnto them, and ſatiſhed with ſuch baggage, they were freed from feare of any danger.

Verſ. 31. *And the ſtrong ſhall bee as tow, and the maker thereof as a ſparke: and they ſhall burne both together, and none ſhall quench them.*

The Hebrew word *Chafon* ſignifies ſtrong; now it is here attributed to God; and yet notwithstanding it retaines ſtill his ſignification, as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, That god whom you made your ſtrength, ſhall be turned into tow. *And the maker thereof*: hee means the caruer: but becauſe mention is made of the idole, it muſt bee referred to the thing in queſtion. Some thinke that the Prophet doth here note out the repentance of the idolaters, who ſhould acknowledge their follie, and with ſhame ſhould burne their idols: but me thinks, the Prophets meaning is otherwiſe. For euen as fire is made of drie ſtuffe, as tow and ſuch like: ſo ſaith the Prophet, God ſhall gather you and your idols together vpon an heape (as when one pileth vp a ſtacke of wood) to the end you may bee conſumed together. So as the idols ſhall be as tow, and the men as the fire; to the end the flame may conſume them both together.

And there ſhall be none to quench them.] We muſt note that when the Prophets ſpeake of the wrath of God, they repreſent it by external ſignes, becauſe it cannot be perceived by our eyes, or other ſenſes. Thus the wrath of the Lord, by which the wicked are deſtroyed, is compared to fire, that conſumes all things. Now it ſufficiently appears by this, what the Prophet meant to ſay, namely, that all the wicked ſhall periſh, let their confidence be what it will; yea which more is, their ruine ſhall be ſo much the greater, by how much they ſhall haue placed their truſt in falſe and deceitfull things: and that in the place from whence they hoped and looked for ſaluation, euen there ſhall perdition fall vpon them. For the idols and puppets are but matches to kindle the wrath of God withall; and that in ſuch wiſe, as it can neuer be quenched.

THE II. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *The word that Iſaiah the ſonne of Amos ſaw vpon Iudah and Ieruſalem.*



His prophesie is a confirmation of the doctrine which we haue had a little before, as touching the restauration of the Church. For in as much as it is a very hard matter to expect the saluation of the Church in the midst of the ruine of it, when as the wrath of God being once kindled doth begin to consume all things round about; then are the bare and naked promises very hardly thought to bee sufficient for vs to rest and stay our selues vpon. For this cause the Lord would haue this speciall vision conioyned in stead of a confirmation with the consolation, which was proposed heretofore; the more assuredly to confirme our faith, that the Church should not perish, no not in all the calamities that could possible befall it. Thus I doubt not but this vision hath affinity with that which we haue seene in the 26. and 27. verses of the former chapter. And by this we may know what was the vse and end of visions. For in as much as the bare doctrine is of no sufficient authority at all with vs; therefore the Lord addeth visions, by which he seales vp in vs the truth of his word. Seeing then that this vision is ioyned with the former promise, from thence we gather a very profitable doctrine: to wit, that all the visions which the Lord reuealed to his Prophets in times past, ought to be ioyned with the promises, and to be as seales annexed vnto them. Herein also we haue greatly to magnifie, and extoll from time to time the wonderfull goodnes of God, who is not contented to giue vs his word alone, but doth also vouchsafe to set the view of the things promised euen as it were before our eyes.

Now he addes a confirmation, because the restauration of the Church is a thing of wonderfull importance: which also ought necessarily to be knowne. For what shall become of the truth of God; what shall become of faith, if there be no Church? And if there be no Church, it would follow, that God were a liar, and that all which his word containes, were false. But euen as he shewes by memorable signes, that it is he alone, who without the aide of men, and by meanes vnknowne, consecrates his Church: so here now by an excellent prophesie, he promisseth to doe the like.

The vse of this prophesie then is double: for in as much as *Iſaiah* and others after him were without ceasing to terrifie and feare this people (so full of obstinate malice) til such time as they should be carried away captiues;

the Temple burnt, and the citie destroyed: it was very needfull in regard of the faithfull, that such rigour should be asswaged by some consolation of hope. Moreouer, in regard that they should languish long in captiuitie, and that after their returne many calamities would breake in vpon them to shake their minds; and in the end should bee wrapped, and as it were ouerwhelmed with a sea of an horrible ruine, and almost a desperate confusion: if they had not bin comforted against so many terrors, they would haue perished an hundred times. But the promise of the restauration of the Church did comfort and strengthen those who were already fallen, to the end that at the least the calling vpon the name of God (which against all dangers is the onely and chiefe remedie) might haue it force amongst them. *The word*, some translate, *The thing*; because the signification of this word is generall: but it is rather to be taken for decree, or ordinance. *Iſaiah* saith then, that this was reuealed to him by a speciall vision.

Verf. 2. *It shall bee in the last daies that the mountaine of the house of the Lord shall be prepared in the toppe of the mountaines, and shall be exalted above the hilles, and all nations shall flow vnto it.*

When he makes mention of the terme or full end of daies, let vs remember that he speaks of the kingdom of Christ. We must also vnderstand the reason why he calles this kingdom so. Vntill this time all things did hang in suspense, to the end the people should not rest in the estate of that time, which was but a shadow; but in the Redeemer, who was to declare vnto them the substance. After Christ came then, if wee will compare that time with ours, we are indeede come to the verie terme of those *daies*. But it was needfull that the fathers which liued then, should with armes stretched forth endeavour to come vnto Christ. And because the restauration of all things depended vpon his coming, it was for good cause that they are commanded to enlarge their hope euen vnto that day. For it was alwaies profitable vnto them, to know that the estate of the Church should bee more perfect vnder our Lord Iesus Christ: especially seeing they were held vnder shadowes and figures; and yet in the meane while were subiect to diuers changes. Also the Lord did terrifie them many waies of set purpose, that hee might hold them in suspense. But the circumstance of this prophesie had a particular respect: for they might haue very well haue fainted in the space of foure hundred yeers, or thereabouts, if this fulnes of time should not haue come

in their minds, wherein the Church ſhould be reſtored to her perfection. Therefore as the Church was euer and anon almoſt ouerwhelmed with diuers tempeſts, ſo euery one of the faithfull laid faſt hold in theſe dangers vpon this ſentence as vpon a board or planck to bring them faſte to the heauen. In the meane while we muſt note, that the perfection of *daies*, did ſo begin at the firſt coming of Chriſt, that it runnes on ſtill with a continuall courſe, vntill hee appears the ſecond time againe for our ſaluation.

Shall be prepared.] This viſion in appearance might almoſt haue ſeemed ridiculous: not only becauſe *Zion* was a little hill of no great height: (as if compariſon had bin made of a heape of duſt, with great mountaines) but alſo in regard that a little before he had foretold her ruine. How could one haue then beleeued, that *Zion* which had loſt all her dignitie, ſhould againe bee thus honoured with ſo great an excellencie, that ſhe ſhould turne the eyes of all the Gentiles to the beholding of her beautie? yet is ſhee ſo advanced notwithstanding, as if ſhee ſhould bee mounted higher then the Mount *Olympus*. Let the Gentiles bragge of their mountaines, as long as they will; yet ſhall they be nothing in compariſon of this little hill (ſaith the Propheet) although it be low and ſmall in appearance. To naturall reaſon indeede this is verie vnlike. What ſhall *Zion* hang in the cloudes? And therefore no queſtion but the wicked ſcorned this promiſe. Wee know well enough that impietic hath alwaies ouerflowed her banks againſt God. Yea, the circumſtance which I haue touched alreddie, was enough at the firſt puſh to haue ouerthrowne this propheſie. How is it then that this little hill could be ſo ſoone exalted, being fallen after the deſtruction of the Temple into vtter diſhonour? But doubtleſſe *Iſaiah* foretold not theſe things in vaine. For in the end, this little hill was truly exalted *about the mountaines*: becauſe that from thence the voyce of the Lord was heard; which ſounded forth thoro'out all the world euen to liſt vs vp into the heauens; from thence the Maieſtie of God ſhined. Laſtly, becauſe it was the ſanctuarie of God, it ſurmounted aboute all the world in height of excellencie.

Now we muſt note the vſe of this propheſie, namely, that *Iſaiah* meant to ſet before them a conſolation, whereupon they were to ſtay themſelues in their captiuitie: that howſoer the Temple ſhould be deſtroyed, and that the ſacrifices ſhould ceaſe, yea and all things ſhould fall to the ground: yet notwithstanding this hope ſhould encourage the faithfull; and that in this horrible confuſion they ſhould thus thinke: True it is that the *mountaine* of the Lord is now deſolate; but yet ſhall ſhee haue her ſeate there againe, ſo as the glorie of this *mountaine* ſhall ſurpaſſe the glorie of all others. To the end then that they ſhould not doubt of the euent hereof, the Propheet hath pictured it forth here as in a table, wherein they might behold the glorie of God. For although the *mountaine* continued then ſafe, yet was it in a manner

deſteſtable, becauſe it was brought to a miſerable deſolation, hauing loſt all her glorie, in regard that God himſelfe had forſaken it. But the faithfull were to behold, not theſe ruines, but this viſion. It alſo ſufficiently appears by that which followes, why hee ſpeakes ſo highly of the *exaltation* of this *mountaine of Zion*, becauſe from thence came forth the Goſpell, wherein the Image of God ſhined. Other mountaines might ſurmount it in height: but becauſe the glorie of God did appeare vpon it in an higher degree, therefore it was alſo neceſſarie that the *mountaine* in which he manifeſteth himſelfe, ſhould bee exalted *about* others. He doth not praiſe the *mountaine of Zion* then in regard of it ſelfe, but in reſpect of her ornament or glorie, wherewith alſo all the world was to be beautified.

Verſ. 3. *And many people ſhall goe and ſay, Come, and let vs goe vp to the mountaine of the Lord, and to the houſe of the God of Iacob, and hee will teach vs his waies, and we will walke in his paths: for the law ſhall goe forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Ieruſalem.*

I N the former verſe he had briefly touched the cauſe from whence ſuch an excellencie ſhould come vnto the *mountaine of Zion*, to wit, becauſe all nations ſhould flow vnto it, as if the riuers ſhould overflow with ouermuch abundance of waters: now he declares the ſame thing, adding alſo the reaſon of it. For one might demand vpon what occaſion ſo many ſorts of people ſhould flow thither by bands from countries ſo farre off. He ſaith then that they ſhall come thither for no other end but to ſerue God. But in the word *Manie*, there is an antitheſis, for he ſignifies that there ſhould not be one nation onely, as before; which ſhould yeeld obedience vnto the true worſhip of God: but that thoſe which were altogether ſtrangers, ſhould come to conſent with like agreement in religion with the: as if he ſhould ſay, The Church which before was ſhut vp as in a corner, ſhall now be gathered out of all parts. Hee hath put many then, for diuers. For it is certaine that he meant not to liſten to which he had ſaid ere while of *all nations*. Further, although this was neuer fulfilled, to wit, that all the people of the whole world hauing left their countrie ſhould aſſemble to Ieruſalem; notwithstanding becauſe the doctrine of the Goſpell (by which God did there gather to himſelfe a Church indifferently from out of al the world) came forth of this *mountaine of Zion*; hee well affirms that thoſe who embraced the couenant of ſaluation, with one conſent of faith, and ioyned themſelues to one onely Church, ſhould come thither. The agreement alſo which is betweene the figures of the *law*, and the ſpiritual worſhip, is to be noted; ſuch as it began to be after the coming of Chriſt.

And they ſhall come.] Firſt hee ſignifies by theſe

these words that the faithfull shall bee filled with such affection, and zeale to enlarge and spread abroad the doctrine of saluation, that none of them shall content himselfe with his particular knowledge, and vocation, but shall desire to draw on others with them. And questionlesse there is nothing more remote from the true nature of faith, then that deadnes of heart, by which men casting aside all care of their brethrens good, doe shut vp in themselves, all the light of knowledge they haue receiued: so as it comes to bee smothered and choked within them. Therefore by how much the more any hath receiued abundance of grace from God, by so much the more ought he diligently endeour to lighten others by his light. Behold here then the true means how to gather a Church together; to wit, by the externall voyce of men. For although the Lord might draw euery man to his knowledge by his secret inspiration; yet notwithstanding he will bee serued by the ministrie and labour of men, to the end hee may exercise them in a mutuall care about the saluation of one another. And by this meanes also he knits them the better together, and takes triall of their teachablenesse, to wit, when one of them will iustifie himselfe to be taught by another.

Moreouer, *isaiah* shewes that all those which haue charge to teach and exhort, should not rest themselves, onely in commanding of others: but rather to ioyne themselves vnto them, and to walke together as companions with them. For wee see some that will command with authoritie, and prick men stoutly forward with exceeding great security, when as they themselves in the meane while will not moue a foote. But the faithfull here content not themselves, in commanding their brethren saying, *goe vp*; but rather leading them the way in going first, they set their owne example before them. This therefore is the right manner of teaching, when by putting that in execution our selues first, which wee require of others, wee make it knowne before all men that we speake truly, and in good earnest.

- 1 And he will teach vs his waies.] In the first
place he shewes, that wee cannot serue God
rightly and as we ought, vnlesse the light of
2 the holy doctrine goe before. Secondly, that
God is the onely teacher of his Church; vpon
whose mouth we ought to hang: whence
3 also it follows, that he takes no delight in the
foolish, and vnstable deuotion of mens in-
4 uentions. And lastly, that howsoeuer he vseth
the ministrie of men to teach vs by, yet that
he referues this notwithstanding as proper
to himselfe, to wit, that they preach nothing
but his pure word. And if all those which call
themselves doctors of the Church had fol-
lowed this rule, religion had not beene so
fouly corrupted, with an endles, and confu-
sed diuersitie of superstitions. Neither can
it be auoided that we should not fall by heaps
into multitudes of errors, when men turne
and wind vs thus after their owne fantasies.
Isa. 53 then in attributing the authoritie and
office of teaching the Church to God onely, by

good right he stoppes at the mouthes of mor-
tall men: so as the very office of teaching is
not committed to the Pastors of the Church,
but vpon this condition, that Gods voyce be
onely heard there. Let such then as would
be esteemed his seruants, suffer themselves to
be ruled in their duties by this sentence, to
the end they may in no sort diminish the least
iot of his authoritie.

There is in the member following, word
for word, *He will teach vs his waies*: which is
thus much in effect, That hee will teach vs
what his waies are; or hee will set his waies
before vs for a perfect instruction. Then he
adds vnto it obedience, *And we will walke in his
paths*. Wherein he shewes both the fruit & the
end: for the doctrine which is giuen vs by
the mouth of God consists not in idle specu-
lations, but directes the whole course of our
lues, and frames vs to his obedience. But
we must note againe, that the waies and paths
of God are called his *commandements*, to the
end we should know that they erre miserablie
which turne aside from them, bee it neuer so
little. And thus all licentious libertie is here
restrained, and the rule of instruction is in
this place giuen vnto all, euen from the
greatest to the least, namely, that they con-
taine themselves within the compasse of
Gods word.

For the law shall goe out of Zion] This is an
exposition of the verse going before, in which
he said that the mountaine of *Zion* should be
exalted aboue all other mountaines, to wit,
that it should be exalted into an high degree
of honour, when it should bee the fountaine
of the doctrine of saluation, which should
spread thorowout the whole world. Hee
cales it the *law*. But wee haue elsewhere
spoken of the originall and proper significa-
of this word. The word *Torah*, which is here
interpreted law, signifies doctrine, because
the law contains so perfect a doctrine in it,
that nothing is to bee added or taken away.
And so he speakes after the manner of the
Prophets. For in as much as the rule of all
pietie is comprehended in the *law*, they are
wont vnder this word to comprehend the
whole word of God; as also vnder this word
Altar, they comprehend the seruice of the
Lord. Moreouer, seeing wee know that this
prophecie was fulfilled, when the preaching
of the Gospell began in this verie place (for
Christ first taught in *Ierusalem*; and after-
ward fro thence the doctrine spread thorow-
out the world) this word *law*, is not to be
taken strictly, which then was rather abolished,
as touching the yoke and bondage of it.
Whence we gather, that this word without
restraint, is to bee taken generally for the
word of God. And whereas the Prophets say
that the waters shall flow fro out of the Tem-
ple, which shall water the whole world; by a
similitude they shew those things which *isaiah*
in plaine words here teacheth; to wit, that
the beginning and wellspring of the doctrine
of saluation should come from this place. For
from thence the Apostles, and other Tea-
chers did spread the glad tidings of saluation
thorowout the whole world.

Chap. I. 10.

Exek. 47. 1.

But the reason why the Prophet thus ſpeakes, is to be noted; namely, to confirme the faithfull againſt all the changes, which otherwiſe vpon euery ocaſion might haue quailed their courage. And therefore it was needefull to preuent offences, and to furniſh the conferences of the faithfull with comforts againſt all ſtormes, in what condition fouer they ſhould be; as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Let your affaires prosper how they will, yet in the miſt of the calamities and afflictions which oppreſſe you, wait notwithstanding; and be you certainly perſwaded, that the Law ſhall come forth of Zion, and the word of God from Ieruſalem. For it is a decree of God, which cannot be falſified nor ouerthrowne by any chance or change of time.

We may gather by the courſe of the times which followed, how needfull this conſolation was for the faithfull. For when Iuda was forſaken and deſolate, the temple deſtroyed, and the gouernement of the Church wholly deſaced, and that tyrannie increaſed more and more; it was an eaſie matter to quench all hope, and to haue become deſperate altogether. On the other ſide, when the Iewes were come home out of captiuitie from Babylon, when horrible ſuperſtitions by little and little increaſed, and that the Priests had vſurped a wicked tyrannie, in ſtead of exerciſing their office as became them; if this promiſe had not comforted the faithfull, what might they haue elſe imagined, but that Religion was aboliſhed, and that the ſeruiſe of God was quite and cleane extinct? And no doubt but this temptation, which happened by meanes of the vices which were in the miſt of them, was more troubleſome for them to beare than their exile in Babylon. In their baniſhment they had Prophets, by whoſe doctrine they were put in hope; but in this corrupted eſtate all fruit of doctrine was taken from them, Religion and godlines was deſpiſed; but the Lord ſuſtained them at a pinch by the onely ſtay of this prophēſie. For when as the law was ſo vilely prophaned and contemned, and as it ſeemed caſt downe from his proper ſeate, which the Lord had conſecrated and appoynted for it; would any man haue thought, that nor onely it ſhould haue had his place there, but that it ſhould alſo raigne ouer all ſtrange countries that were farre off? Contrariwiſe, the Prophet not onely ſaith that the Law ſhall be eſtabliſhed in his throne, but alſo that it ſhall goe a great deale further off: whereby hee ſignifies, that it ſhall bee no longer ſhut vp within his firſt bounds, becauſe it ſhould be indifferently publiſhed among the Gentiles.

And queſtionles this carried great waight and authoritie with the Apoſtles, when they vnderſtoode that they were ordained to doe thoſe things which are here promiſed. Otherwiſe they neuer durſt to haue aduentured the taking of that charge vpon them, they would neuer haue had courage enough to haue finiſhed it. Laſtly, they could neuer haue borne ſo weightie a burthen; eſpecially if you adde, that they had the rage of the

whole world inflamed againſt them. But they were ſurely perſwaded that hee which had made this promiſe, and giuen them in charge to beare his meſſage, would eaſilie ouercome all theſe difficulties. We muſt alſo note, that from hence we may gather a great confirmation of our faith, by conſidering that the doctrine of the Goſpell came forth of Zion: for from thence we conlude, that it is not new, nor lately ſprung vp; but that it is the eternall truth of God, the teſtimonie whereof appeared a long time before it came to light. We alſo gather it was neceſſarie that all the ancient ceremonies ſhould be aboliſhed, and that a new manner of teaching ſhould be brought in; although the very lame doctrine in ſubſtance ſhould ſtill remaine. For at the firſt the law came out of mount Sinai: but now it came out of mount Zion, and therefore it tooke a new forme. Two things then are to be noted: Firſt, that the word of God is alwaies one, and like vnto it ſelfe: that no man ſhould reprove God of changeablenes, as if he were variable. Alſo, that how fouer at this preſent, the law of the Lord, is the ſame which it was; yet notwithstanding that it came out of Zion, as it were with a new garment put vpon it. Secondly, that the ceremonies and ſhadowes are aboliſhed, becauſe Chriſt is made manifeſt, in whom we finde the truth and ſubſtance of them.

Verſ 4. And he ſhall iudge among the nations, and rebuke many people: they ſhall breake their ſwords alſo into mattocks, and their ſpeares into ſiſhes: nations ſhall not liſt vp a ſworde againſt nation, neither ſhall they learne to fight any more.

His meaning is, that the doctrine ſhall be as a Royall ſcepter, to the end God may rule and gouerne among all nations. For the word, *to iudge*, among the Hebrewes, ſignifies to rule, or gouerne by a figure called *Synecdoche*. Becauſe then, that God had held one people onely vnder his gouernement, the Prophet here teacheth, that the bounds of this kingdome ſhall be enlarged, becauſe it ſhall haue dominion ouer diuers nations. He alſo cloſely notes the difference between the kingdome of David, and this other which ſhall become much more excellent: that of David being but a figure of it. For from that time God gouerned his choſen people by the hand of David; but at the coming of Ieſus Chriſt, he began to raigne by himſelfe, to wit, in the perſon of his onely Sonne; who is very God manifeſted in the fleſh. The Prophets alſo doe ſometimes expreſſe the name of the Prophet David, when they ſpeake of the kingdome of Chriſt; and that very ſiſhe: for it is in regard of the humane nature, becauſe the promiſed Redeemer ſhould come out of that familie; but in this place hee exalts the Maieſty of his diuine nature: where-by it appears how much more excellent the

1. Tim. 3. 16.
1er. 30. 9.
Ezech. 34.
23. & 37.
24.

1
2
3
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condition of the new Church is about the old; because in it God appears to be King in the person of his Sonne. Again, hee also confirms the vocation of the Gentiles: for Christ was not sent to the Iewes onely to raigne amongst them, but also to haue iurisdiction ouer the whole world.

Rebute the people.] The word *taeach* doth sometimes signifie to expostulate, sometimes to correct, also to prepare, or make readie. But in this place the receiued interpretation doth very well agree, whereas the Prophet doth speake concerning the reformation of the Church. For there is neede of correction, that we may learne to submit our selues vnto God. For by reason of that rebellious nature which is inbred in vs, wee shall neuer profit in the word of God, vnlesse we be brought vnder by violence. Therefore Christ also, Ioh. 16. 3. from hence takes the beginning of the Gospell: namely, that the world might be reprobued of sin. Now that the doctrine might not want increase, *Ishiah* shews, that y^e stubbornnes of our flesh must be broken: and therefore hee assignes vnto God, the part of a Iudge *rebuking*, that hee might examine our life; and by condemning our vices, might reforme our manners for the better. And truly we see that the Gospell is of small force, but where the iurisdiction of the holy Spirit beares rule; which doth bring men vnto repentance.

They shall breake their swords.] Now hee adds the fruit which should come from thence, when Christ shall gather the people and nations together vnder his gouernment. There is nothing more desireable, then peace: but although all seeme to desire it, yet euery one troubleth it by his foolish lust; pride, couetousnes, and ambition is the cause that some do cruelly rise vp against others. Because then that men are naturally carried away by their euill affections, to trouble and ouerthrow all things, the Prophet promisseth here that such a mischief should be redressed. For as the Gospell is the doctrine of reconciliation, which takes away the discord betweene God and man, so also it pacifies, and brings men to vnitie one with another. The summe is, that Christ his people shall be meeke, and hauing trodden cruelty vnder their feete, shall studie to liue peaceable.

But they haue done vnfitly, which would restraints this to the time wherein Christ was borne, because that after the battaile *Antioque*, the Temple of *Ianus* was shut vp: as it appears by the histories. I confesse indeede that this peace which was vniuersall in the Romane Empire, was, as it were, a signe of that eternal peace which we enjoy in Christ. But the Prophet meant to say more: to wit, that Christ so reconcileth men to God, that all deadly warres being thereby appeased, there should thereupon follow a healthfull peace among them. For if Iesus Christ be taken away, we are not onely estranged from God, but wee haue open warre continually with him, which will iustly returne vpon our owne heads: from whence it is, that all

things are out of course in the world.

Furthermore, *Ishiah* promisseth, that when the Gospell shall be published, there shall be an excellent remedie in the world to appease all dissensions: and not onely that, but all hatreds being abolished, men shall be inclined to helpe one another. For he saith not simple that the swords shall be broken; but that they shall be conuerted into *massocks*. In which hee shewes there shall be such a change, that whereas they were wont before to vex one another, and did commit manie iniuries to the hurt of their neighbours; afterwards they should entertaine peace and loue amongst themselves, and should lend one another the hand, for the common profit of all: for *massocks* and *sishes*, are instruments fit for labour, and are necessarie and profitable for the life of man. He shewes then, that when Iesus Christ shall reigne, those who in former time were carried away with a desire of doing hurt by all meanes whatsoever, should now be helpful to others by all meanes possible.

Neither shall they learne to fight any more.] The word which the Prophet vseth, signifies cito accustom, or to learne: but the sense is cleare; namely, that they should not exercise themselves any more in those Arts that should doe hurt, neither should they giue themselves, to the doing of wrongs nor of wicked practises, as they had been wont to doe. From hence we gather, that they haue profited very little in the Gospell, whose hearts are not brought to meeknes: amongst whom charitie hath taken so little place that they take no delight in shewing kindnes one towards another. But this can neuer be brought about vnlesse the consciences of men be first appeased by God; for there we must begin, to the end wee may also haue peace with men.

There are some brainicke bedlems which turne this place to the maintaining of a carnall libertie, thereby to take away whollie from the Church the vse of the sword: and from this place doe exceedingly condemne all manner of warre. For example, If a prince defend the people committed to him, and see that none offer them wrong; it is not lawfull, say they, for Christians to vse the sword. But the answer is easie: For the Prophet vnder a similitude speaks of the kingdome of Christ, shewing that it is a kingdome of peace to reconcile men one with another through a mutuall good will. And it is a similitude much vsed in the Scripture, where the thing signified is shewed by the signe: as in Luk. 22. 36. it is said, *Lex* him that hath no sword buy one. It was not the purpose of Iesus Christ to prouoke his seruants to fighting; but he signified thereby, that the time of war drew neere. So on the other side it is said that swords shall cease, or shall be applied to diuers ends, when hatreds and debates shall cease: and that those who were enemies before, should be reconciled. But some may reply, that in the time of peace and tranquillitie there is no vse of the sword. I answer, that peace hath so much strength amongst

The Gosp. li
not only sets
God and
man at peace
together, but
man with
man also.

Obiect.

Ans.

v85

vs; as the kingdome of Chriſt beares ſway and doth flouriſh : and that in theſe two things, there is a mutuall proportion. And would to God that Chriſt might raigne wholly amongſt vs; for then peace alſo ſhould bee in his full ſtrength. But in regard that wee are yet farre off from the perfection of this peaceable kingdome, wee muſt alwaies thinke of the goings forward of it. They are therefore too fond, which conſider not that the kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt hath but his beginning here. Moreouer, God gathers not his Church together, that is to ſay, a companie of the faithfull, to the end they ſhould bee ſeparated from others, but the good are alwaies mingled with the bad, and which more is; the good are not yet come to the marke, and are farre off from the perfection which is required of them. Wee muſt not ſecke then the full accompliſhment of this propheſie here on earth: it is enough if we taſt the beginnings of it, and that being reconciled to God in Ieſus Chriſt, we keep amitie together, and abſtaine from all doing of wrong.

Verſ. 5. *O houſe of Iacob, come ye,*

* Or, we will. *and let us walke in the light of the Lord.*

HE ſharply pricketh forward the Iewes by ſetting before them the example of the Gentiles. For ſeeing that in publiſhing the Goſpell God meant to iudge all nations from the mountaine of Zion, that he might ingraſt them into the bodie of his choſen people, it was a very ſtrange thing, that the houſe of Iacob ſhould revolt from him: and that whileſt ſtrangers ſhould draw neere, the houſehold ſervants ſhould withdraw themſelves, who of right ought to haue held the firſt place, and ſhould haue led others by their example. This exhortation therefore is not onely full of vehemencie, but it is both a graue, and a biting complaint. And therefore he calles them by an honourable name; *O ye houſe of Iacob*, ſaith he, *rome*: which is the more to amplify their ingratitude, that being the firſt borne in the Church of God, they ſhould yet notwithstanding, renounce the right of the heritage which was common to them.

Here is a cloſe comparison then, as if hee ſhould haue ſaid, Behold the nations which runne to the mountaine of Zion, every one exhorting, and pricking forward his neighbour; and they ſubiect themſelves to the word of God, and ſuffer it to iudge them: and the whileſt you Iſraelites that are the heritage of God, what meane you to draw backe? Shall the nations ſubmit themſelves vnto God, and doe you reſuſe to haue him reigne ouer you? Yea is there ſo great a light ſprung vp thoroughout all the parts of the world, and will not you in the meane while bee enlightned? Are there ſo many ſweete waters running forth; and will not you drinke? what a madnes is this? doe the Gentiles runne to them with ſuch haſte, and doe you ſit ſtill? When he addes, *and we will walke*; hee ſigni-

fies that the light is put before their feete, which with cloſed eyes they reiect; yea they quenche it as much in them is: and yet the brightnes thereof notwithstanding ſhould bee ſuch, as it ſhould draw all nations vnto it.

Verſ. 6. *Surely thou haſt forſaken thy people, the houſe of Iacob, becauſe they are full of the Eaſt-manners, and are ſorcerers as the Philiftines, and abound with ſtrange children.*

* Or, anti-
quitie.
* Or, ſooke
their delight
in.

HE openly accuſeth this people of the peruerſitie of their nature; and uot onely in plaine termes, but as one carried away in an admiratiō, he ſuddenly breaks off his ſpeech, and turning himſelfe to God hee cries out; Wherefore then ſhould I ſpeake to this ſo deſperate a people, whom thou haſt iuſtly forſaken? For in giuing themſelves to idolatries, they haue moſt diſloyally turned away from thy word. It may be alſo a propheſie of calamitie which ſhould come vpon them, which the Prophet foreſaw by the Spirit, as if hee ſhould ſay, Wonder not to ſee the mount of Zion laid waſt and ſpoiled for ſo many ſins of the people. Yet is it not made ſuch a lamentable ſpectacle that any ſhould bee brought to deſpaire, but that all thoſe in whom there is any hope of health, being touched with true repentance might conuert vnto God before ſuch a thunderclap come vpon them.

For the Prophets were as Heraulds to publiſh the iudgement and vengeance of God to the wicked, that ſo by all meanes they might endeavour, to bring all that they poſſible could to repentance. And the ſeruants of God muſt neuer put off this affection, namely, euen to ſtudy how they may preſerue the verie reprobate; if by any meanes it could bee brought to paſſe. This place therefore may bring a merueilous conſolation to all faithfull Paſtors: for when it ſeemes to vs that we ſpeake to deafe eares, we ſtagger and begin to forſake all; What ſhall I doe? I doe nothing but beate the aire. And yet notwithstanding, the Prophet ceaſeth not, to exhort thoſe in whom hee ſaw no hope of amendment. An how ſoener he be as a man aſtoniſhed at their ruine, yet doth hee not ceaſe for all that to admoniſh them ſtil. Let vs note alſo, that although the wicked bee obſtinate, yet the iudgements of God muſt be denounced againſt them; let them recoyle, and gnaw the bit as much as they will, yet muſt they ſtil be ſummoned before the iudgement ſeate of God, to the end they may be left without excuſe.

I take the Hebrew word *Ci*, for *ſurely*: for this ſignification agrees beſt, becauſe it breakes off the exhortation which he had begun; and now ſpeakes to God. Alſo when he againe calles them *the houſe of Iacob*, it is added for the greater vehemencie of ſpeech, which men in a matter of great importance are wont to doe: as if he ſhould ſay, This holie nation which God hath choſen, is now left and forſaken.

For they are filled.] Because the word *Kedem* signifies sometime the East, and sometime antiquity, we may interpret it, that they were filled with the manners of the ancient, because they had brought the superstitious in use wherewithall the land of Canaan was in times past infected. For we know that the Prophets did often reproch the children of Israel, that they were liker to the Cananites, then to *Abraham*, and the other holy Patriarkes. And questionlesse it was a double vnthankfulness not to change their peruerse manners, seeing the old inhabitants being driuen out, they were brought in to possesse this land, to the end it being purged from all their filthines, it might afterwards be dedicated to holines. Yet because the other sense is more receiued, I had rather hold that; although the expositors themselves doe not here agree: For some take the letter *Mem* comparatuely; as if the Prophet should say, Before, or, Rather then them of the East: others take it more simple, and better also in mine opinion; in saying, *that they were full of the East*: that is to say, of the vices which they had drawne from thence; imitation being a mercurious contagion: so as nothing is more vsual then to see corruptions glide from one land to another a farre off.

That which by and by followeth opens it yet more cleerely, when he saith, *of the forceries of the Philistins*. For vnder diuinations by a figure which they call *Senecdoche*, hee comprehends the deceits of Satan: to which the prophane nations were giuen. The Prophet then meanes that they differ in nothing from the Philistins; from whom God notwithstanding had separated them by the priueledge of his adoption. And this was sufficient to condemne them vtterly, in that hauing forgotten their vocation, they defiled themselves in the corrupt and wicked waies of the Gentiles. Whence it appears that to sinne by the example of another, doth serue nothing at all to make the fault the lesse.

The latter part of the verse is diuersly expounded: for some draw *strange children*, by a similitude, to the lawes and customes: others referre it to marriages. Because that in taking of strange wiuces without discretion, they had so mingled their seede that there were manie children bastards. The exposition of *S. Ierome* is more grosse, who thinks that they defiled themselves in wicked lusts contrarie to nature. For mine owne part, I doubt not, but by *strange children* he meanes strange nations; and not by a figure, the lawes. The Prophet then accuserth them, that in desiring to please the Gentiles, they wrapped themselves together with them in their wickednesses: and thus had not only mortall men but wicked men also in greater account, then God himselfe. Now he saith, that *they tooke their delight*: because the affection and delectation of a wicked imitation, had rased the true loue of God, and of his wholesome doctrine out of their hearts.

Verf. 7. *Their land also was full of siluer and gold, and there was none end of*

their treasure: and their land was full of horses, and their chariots were infinite.

WE must take good heede to the order which the Prophet keepes here. For he now shewes the causes wherfore the Lord reiected his people. In the former verse hee began with diuinations, and strange manners; now hee descends to the gold and siluer: and afterward he will speake of their horses and chariots. No doubt then but hauing first of all condemned their idolatrie, he here in the second place, reprootes their auarice; and in the third, that wicked confidence which men haue, when by forging vaine succours vnto themselves, they depart farre off from God. It is not a thing to be condemned as vnlawfull in it selfe to haue abundance of gold and siluer; but because this people burned with an insatiable couctousnes, and trusted in horses, and in Chariots, therefore they are iustly reprooued.

Some take the Hebrew particule by way of opposition, as if the sense were thus; And yet they abounded in siluer: thereby to make the ingratitude of this people the greater; because hauing abundance of all things, yet they ran after their idols and enchantments, as if all things had been in a desperate estate. Which is much lesse excusable then if they had gone after them in aduersitie: whereas they shooke off the yoke of God from their necks, being fed with good things in all abundance. Thus by this sense then he should amplifie the wickednes of this people running voluntarily and for no cause to idols, whilest they ouerflowed in their delights: but yet I receiue not this interpretation, because I thinke it too much constrained. For hee rather reckons vp with one breath, as it were, the vices, wherewith the people had spotted themselves: that is to say, *conctousnes, false confidence, and idolatrie*. And howsoeuer their opinion be true which expound it by way of opposition, yet notwithstanding it agrees not with the sense of this place.

A little after *Isaiah* confirms the same also more cleerely. For howsoeuer it be not wicked, nor a thing to be condemned in it selfe (as I said before) for a man to haue gold or siluer, if so be hee vse it as he ought: yet the Prophet iustly sets himselfe against that wicked desire and insatiable greedines in heaping vp siluer; which indeede is a detestable vice. Hee saith, there was *no end*, because their lust was insatiable and without measure. As much is to be said of *horses*, and *chariots*: for in this place he condemnes their peruerse confidence. Now for to preuent this mischief, the Lord had forbidden their Kings to gather great multitudes of chariots and horses together, lest by resting vpon such things, they might bring the people backe againe into Egypt. Because then that it is hard for men who haue meanes at command, not to be puffed vp with pride; the Lord would that his people should be destitute of them, or at least should content themselves with a mediocritie.

Deu. 17. 15.

Verf. 8.

* Or, bowed before.

Verſ. 8. *Their land alſo was full of idols: * they worſhipped the workes of their owne hands, before that which their owne fingers had made.*

HE repeats \bar{y} which he earewhile touched concerning idolatrie; but more clearly.
 1 And in the firſt place he ſets downe the matter: afterwards the uſe, which in a manner is wont alwaies to follow thereupon. For it is a very rare thing to entertaine idols amongſt vs; but we ſhall by and by abuſe our ſelues with them. Becauſe it is all one, as if a man ſhould pile vp wood, and another ſhould put fire to it: will there not bee a fire by and by? it is vnpoſſible it ſhould bee otherwiſe, the fire is not more readie to burne the wood, then we are inclined to ſuperſtitious, and idolatrie. Therefore the word *Elium*, which the Prophet here vſeth, is very ſitly impoſed vpon the idols by the Hebrews: becauſe they are things of nothing; and but vanitie. Neither is it to bee doubted, but the holy Ghoſt by this word would reprove the rage of men, who by means of ſuch vanities thought to draw the nearer vnto God: as the Papifts at this day: who to the end they might the more eaſily ſuare men with their idols: brag that they are lay mens bookes. But it is more ſafe for vs to giue credit to that which the holy Ghoſt ſpeakes. The triall it ſelfe alſo ſhewes clearly what fruit the people gather by theſe bookes. For being deceiued by ſuch groſſe imaginatiōs, they frame vnto themſelues earthly and fleſhly gods: of whom *Ieremiah* juſtly ſaith, that the idoll is not one-ly a vaine thing, but alſo a teacher of falſhood and lies: Ier. 10. 8.

Beware of entertaini^{ng} idols.

We are further to note this deſcription where the Prophet ſaith, that the people bowed downe before the workes of their owne hands. For what blockiſhnes is it that men ſhould not thinke it enough to worſhip wood and ſtone in ſtead of God, but ſhould alſo attribute diuinitie to that which they haue framed; which yet they cannot giue to themſelues! truly it is a monſtrous thing that a ſtocke of baſe and contemptible wood ſhould be by and by worſhipped as ſoone as a mortall man ſhall haue put his hand thereto: as if he had made it a God. But howſoever the Prophet ſpeakes to the ancient people; we may notwithstanding applie the ſame thing to the Papifts, who acknowledge no maieltie of God, but in the workes of their owne hands.

The repetition he addes, *Which their fingers haue made*: carries a great ſignification with it: the more plainly to ſhew their beaſtly liues. Wee are alſo to marke the phraſe of ſpeech by which the outward geſture of adoration is expreſſed, not that it is vnlawfull to bow the knee, or the head by way of ciuilitie, or humilitie: but becauſe hee which bowes himſelfe before an idoll, makes profeſſion thereby of the ſeruiſe of God: whence it appears how childiſh a ſiſt it is which the Papifts haue gotten of that adoration, which they call *dulia*. Seeing here in the matter of

Gods ſeruiſe; the Prophet generally condemnes all ſigne of reuerence whatſoever.

Verſ. 9. * *And a man bowed himſelfe, and a man humbled himſelfe: therefore * ſpare them not.*

* Or, as ſome reade: The common ſort; and, them of the better ſort. * Or, ſpare them not.

SOME of the expoſitors do reade this ſentence together with the former, as if the Prophet ſhould ſtill go on in aggravating of their fault in many words. If we receiue this ſenſe, we muſt vnderſtand by theſe words *perſon* and *man*, all the Iſraelits: as if he ſhould ſay, there is neither one nor other exempt, or innocent from this filthines. But others are of a better iudgement, which thinke the Prophet repeats that in other words, which he had ſaid before; as touching the chaſtiſement: and that hereby he expreſſeth what a deſtruction ſhould come vpon this people forſaken of God. And thus the tenure of the ſpeech ſhould agree very ſitly: to wit, that the ruine of all both great and ſmall, which ſhould conſume the whole people, drawes neere: becauſe that in ſuch an ouerflowing of vngodlines there was no hope of any releaſe from Gods reuenging hand to bee looked for. Moteouer in theſe two verbes, *To bow*, and to *humble*, there is an elegant alluding to the bowing of themſelues, whereof he ſpake in the eight verſe: as if hee ſhould ſay, They haue bowed downe themſelues to their idols: God will therefore cauſe them to be humbled and bowed downe vnder a verie heauie and great burthen of calamities and runes. And withall, no doubt but hee alſo corrects their arrogancie: becauſe it was hard for them to beleeuue that a people furniſhed in ſuch ſort with ſo much riches, could ſo quickly be ouerwhelmed with miſeries.

The latter part of the verſe is expounded two waies, although in reſpect of the ſubſtance there is no great choice which of them ſoever we take. For the meaning of the Prophet is to teach, that God cannot be appeaſed towards ſo obſtinate a people. If we read it in the time to come, Thou wilt not pardon them, the ſenſe will be the more eaſie; yet notwithstanding, the imprecation wil alwaies hold: to wit, *pardon them not*. For wee know that as oft as the Prophets (who were inflamed with the zeale of God) did wiſh that ſome iudgement might come, they threatened the juſt puniſhment which the wicked were to receiue: as being the instruments of the holy Ghoſt; and no otherwiſe. And it is no meruaile, if the Prophet being offended with ſo many abominable crimes, was in this manner kindled with zeale, that he appoints out his countie to deſtruction, becauſe nothing was more precious vnto him, then the ſacred honour of God.

But we muſt alwaies vnderſtand that the remainder and remnant of the Eleſt is to be excepted for the Prophet ſpeakes not here of all, one by one; but of the bodie of this people, which was almoſt rotted in their vices, ſo as there was no hope of health to bee

looked for: for otherwise it had been to no purpose to haue exhorted desperate and obstinate men to repentance, or to let the hope of pardon before such. The summe then is, that the restauration of a new Church is not to be looked for, till God haue first executed his iudgements, and destroyed the Temple.

Verf. 10. Enter into the rocks, and hide thee in the dust from before the feare of the Lord, and from the glorie of his Maiestie.

BECAUSE the wicked gaue themselves too much libertie, and were too secure vnder Gods threatnings, it is an vsual custome with the Prophets when they threaten obstinate sinners to adde such liuely descriptions, whereby to terrifie them: euen as if they should set the thing in present view before their eies. This is the reason why the Prophet now commands the contemners of God to *enter into the rocks*, and holes, to hide them vnder the earth. Wherein hee first shewes them that the iudgement of God is more terrible then an hundred deaths: seeing to escape the same, the graue is to bee wished for. But when hee forceth them thus into their holes, he doth with the greater emphasis manifest the heauy waight of the vengeance of God. Although then that by *the feare of the Lord*, he meanes the scourges wherewith God should smite this wicked people; yet notwithstanding it is not in vaine that he by and by speaks of *the glorie of his Maiestie*: as if he should say, God is terrible to the wicked, according to the measure of his glorie, in whose destruction he will manifest his infinite power. And moreouer, although the wicked cannot bee bowed nor humbled by any chastisement whatsoever, yet are they constrained to feare, when they feele Gods wrath to approach. But as touching the Elect, they are taught of God to feare vnder his chastising hand after another sort: for being smitten with the strokes of his rods, they willingly bend themselves to beare the yoke. *Isaiah* then testifies, that the glorie of Gods Maiesty shal shine most clearely, after hee hath shewed himselfe as a iust Iudge. For whilst he lets men alone, it seemes all is well, and men thinke that hee hath hid himselfe.

Let the Pastors of the word then learne from hence how they ought to behaue themselves, when they haue to deale with benumbed consciences; to wit, that being well awakened by the iudgements of God, they learne to feare this iudgement seate in good earnest. And howsoever it often seemes that we lose our labour in singing thus to deafe eares, yet will this terror of Gods iudgement pearce euen into hearts of iron: at the least to leaue them without excuse. And oft times also it comes to passe that some are healed, and the faithfull in like manner do profit by it, when they vnderstand what shal befall the wicked and reprobate by executing such horrible iudgements vpon them.

Verf. 11. The hic looke of man shall be humbled, and the losines of men shall bee abased, and the Lord onely shall be exalted in that day.

BECAUSE whilst the wicked are glutted with present riches, and rest, all things falling out to their wish, they put these threatnings of the Prophet farre off from them, and by this meanes hardened their hearts against God: in this place therefore hee now sets downe a couric (as hath been said) how to pull downe this pride of theirs: as if he should say, The time will come, wherein your great arrogancie, which makes you thus in vaine to set vp your bristles, yea, and that with an incredible rage against the most high, shall cease. For howioeuer the wicked seeme to be religious, yet you shall perceiue by their pride notwithstanding, that they will not sticke to iustle euen against the Lord himselfe, so as it seemes they are greater then he. In that God thus thundreth against them, it is to the end that he might pull downe their pride and hautines; and himselfe onely might be knowne to be the chiefest. And therefore, as we haue said heretofore, the impunitie of sinne is as it were a cloud cast before our eies, which hinders vs that wee cannot see the glorie of the Lord. For when he reuengeth himselfe vpon the rebellions of men, his glorie doth so much the more appeare. And that is the cause also why *Salamon* saith, That the hearts of the children of men are set in them to doe euill, because in this world they see themselves more happie then the godly, and so blinded more and more. But here hee shewes that after the proud shall be brought vnder in spite of their teeth; then nothing shall hinder, that God should not be knowne to be such a one as he is. Surely there was great reason that the people should willingly haue submitted themselves vnder God, and haue cast their eies vpon his greatnes, in respect that vnder his shadow they were in safetie: and besides the stocke of *Abraham* was adorned so excellently with such varietie of benefites, to the end they should haue bin as y mirror of the holines, and glorie of the Lord. But because the Lewes are now risen vp in rebellion against this so good a God, *Isaiah* denounceth against them, that God will deuise a new way how to axalt his glorie; to wit, euen in their destruction.

In naming, *The hic lookes and losines*, hee notes the inward pride of the mind and hart, by their outward countenance and behauiour. For a wicked conscience will discouer it selfe in the contempt of God and man, euen by the outward gesture and looke. It is in the same sence that *Dauid* notes our lositie eies, and high lookes: *Psalm. 131. 1. &c. 101. 5. Isaiah* also doth better confirme this, in the verse following. Now by heaping vp of so many words with such great vehemency, we may easily gather how notorious their rebellion was. Moreouer, we are not to maruaile that

Eccles. 8. 10

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he inſiſts ſo much vpon the taming of mens arrogancie, if we doe but conſider how hard a thing it is to bow the hearts of thoſe who reſting vpon their riches, are afraid of nothing: imagining that they are aduanced to none other end, but to doe whatſoever they liſt without checke or contolement. For we ourſelues haue experience at this day how tender and delicate, yea and how eaſily ſuch take pepper in the noſe, who attribute to themſelues more then there is cauſe why, and in the end how obſtinately they reiect all holſome admonitions. For this cauſe it is that the Prophet doth thus ſtilly ſharpen his ſtile againſt ſuch iolly fellows in particular, rather then to threaten ſy vengeance of God againſt the whole people in generall. And yet he ſets not himſelfe againſt the Princes onely who were placed in great dignitie about others: for not onely they, but thoſe alſo of baſer condition are readie enough to burſt with pride oftentimes; according to the common prouerbe, Every one hath the heart of a king: ſo as wee ſee every day, that if wee touch the fores of wretched and beggerly fellows but euen with the tip of the finger, you ſhall ſee them vomit forth inſupportable payſoned ſpeeches. Seeing then that this vice was very common, *Iſaiah* toucheth as well the ſmall as the great that were tainted therewith, ſignifying, that by how much the more the Lord had dealt gentle with them, by ſo much the more they were to looke for a greater iudgement: for their hearts were ſwollen with rebellion, becauſe of their too great abundance. Furthermore altho the letter *Lamed*, which is put in the datiu cafe, be ſometime ſuperfluous, yet notwithstanding in this place it holds his proprie: becauſe it ſeemes *Iſaiah* aſſignes out a certaine day, as men are wont to doe, when iudgements or aſſiſes are held. I expound it then, that the day is appointed by God himſelfe, wherein the proud muſt make their appearance before his iudicall throne to receiue ſentence of condemnation.

Moreouer we may gather by theſe words, that God ſhewes himſelfe an enemy to all the proud; and therefore this day of aſſignation is as much as if God had ſaid; I can no longer endure that men ſhould thus wickedly exalt themſelues againſt me: and therefore all ſuch as liſt vp themſelues about me, ſhall be broken in peeces with my hand. Now if this were well rooted in our hearts, who is it that would not abhorre and deteſt pride, by which we thus prouoke the wrath of God againſt vs? If any will reade, Proud and loſtie, in the Neuter gender, it muſt be referred to the fortrefſes, bulwarkes, and munitions: but the rules of Grammar cannot beare it, that wee ſhould expound it otherwiſe then of mens perſons.

Verſ. 12. For the day of the Lord of hoſts is vpon all the proud and haughty, and vpon all that is exalted, and it ſhall be made low.

This verſe is expounded together with the cleuenth.

Verſ. 13. Euen vpon all the Cedars of Lebanon, that are high and exalted, and vpon all the Okes of Baſhan,

14. And vpon all the mountaines, and vpon all the hilles that are liſted up,

15. And vpon euery his tower, and vpon euery ſtrong wall.

ALL theſe allegories which are here inſerted of *Libanus*, and of the *high mountaines*, are ſo far off from darkning the matter, that they do rather giue light vnto it. For let mortall man exalt himſelfe as high as he will, yet ſhal he neuer be able to match ſy mountaines, and higheſt trees in height: which the Lord will eaſily beate downe, as it is caſie for the winde with a puffe to ſcatter the light chaffe here and there. *Iſaiah* then ſhewes the proud here, as it were in a glaſſe, how vaine and fooliſh they were to think ſy their haughtines could keepe them that God ſhould not ouertop them. There is alſo here an exceſſiue manner of ſpeech, which was of great weight, in reſpect of amplifying the threatning. For it is not like that God was angry with the mountaines and trees; or as if hauing changed his purpoſe hee ſhould now bring to nought, that which himſelfe had eſtabliſhed and ſetled: but *Iſaiah* ſets the iudgement of God before their eyes in the guiſle creatures, to the end they might the more aſſuredly perſwade themſelues that their preſumptions and bold wickednes ſhould not remaine vnpuniſhed. We ſee then wherfore he intermingles theſe figures of *Cedars*, *Okes* and *mountaines*.

That which is added of the *walles*, is not ſpoken by way of allegorie or figure. Wee know that whileſt men feele themſelues well fortified they flatter themſelues as if they ſtood in no great neede of Gods helpe. *Iſaiah* then mentioneth the matter of their falſe confidence vnder the names of towers and walls. For if any place ſeeme to be vnable to be vanquiſhed, there will the prophane ones build their neſts; from which they deſpise both heauen and earth, becauſe they thinke they are there ſafe from all dangers. *Iſaiah* threatens them, that when it ſhall pleaſe the Lord to bring men downe, he can quicklie overthrow their fortrefſes vpon which they in a falſe confidence leaned. And howſoever they are things, which in themſelues are not to be miſliked; yet notwithstanding becauſe they do too much occupie our braines, it is for very iuſt cauſe that the Prophet ſharpeneth his ſtile againſt them.

And hereunto belonged that which hee ſpake before as touching the Chariots and horſes, verſe 7. For as it is ſaid in *Miche*: that becauſe men doe reſt themſelues beyond meſure, vpon the riches of this world, therefore it is neceſſary that they be wholly bereft of them, that ſo they may truſt to be ſaued by the onely hand of God, and not hang their hope vpon the ſonnes of *Adam*. So hauing a little before reprooued them for the multitude of their horſes, now he denounceth the

Miche. 5. 10

judgement of God; and withall admonisheth them that it is ympossible to returne into fauour againe with him, till he hath bereft them wholly of those things, to the end they should not rest anie more vpon the false succours of this world.

Vers. 16. And vpon all the ships of Tarshish, and vpon all pleasant pictures.

BY *Tarshish* the Hebrewes do surely meane *Sylicia*; and because the Iewes had great trafficke with this nation, the Scripture often makes mention of the ships of *Tarshish*; which were so called, because they frequented that sea. Navigation certainly is not to be condemned, because it bringes great profit and commoditie to men: as well to carrie forth as to bring home marchandise. This kinde of trafficke also cannot be hurtfull; seeing it is the will of God that all mankinde should be helpfull one to another by mutuall duties; but because pride and crueltie is aboundant in things ingendred by abundance; therefore *Isaiah* reprobues this kind of merchandise, by which the land had been greatly enriched. Adde heteunto, that oft times it comes to passe that the merchandise and trafficke which is vsed with nations farre off; is full of deceit and pillage, and there is no measure amongst men in this behalfe touching excessive gaine. First then the Prophets meaning is, that the Iewes shall be stripped of their riches; to the end they may learne to subiect themselues vnder God. Secondly, he sets forth their couetousnes and vnlawfull gaines by signes; as if one should describe murder by shewing a sword all bloodie.

The second part of the verse shewes that the Prophet condemnes that navigation, by which the land was much infected with corruptions. It is a thing too frequent and common, that delicacie, wantonnes, and abundance of voluptuousnesse, doe easily follow great wealth and riches, which is verie often seene in wealthie countries, and cities of merchandise. For those that trade into farre countries, contenting themselues nothing at all with things which are in their houses, do bring home with them new sumptuous and rich stufes; which in former time were vtterly vnknown. Now because wealth, is for the most part the mother of superfluitie and dissolution, the Prophet makes mention here of rich furniture; as if he should haue said, The Iewes haue decked their houses so sumptuously, that they haue drawne the judgement of God vpon them. For vnder the *pleasant pictures*, by a figure called *Synecdoche* hee comprehends as well rich hangings, as the worke of *Phrygia*, and the vessels made by exquisite Arte.

Now it is certaine that mens manners are corrupted when they giue their lusts the bridle thus to seeke here and there for such vnnecessarie superfluities. And we see that such delicioussnes was the ruine of the Empire of *Rome*. For before the Romans trauelled into *Greece*, they were very chaste, continent and moderate. But in the ende hauing overcome

Asia, they began to wax delicate, and to become more and more effeminate. But after their eyes were once dazelled with golden pictures, vessels, pretious stones and tapistry, and that their nostrils were perfumed with oynments and odors, by the same meanes they became besotted in all their senses; and in following the dissolutenes of the Easterne partes as a more gentlemanlike fashion of liuing, they began to ouerflow more and more in all disordered dissolutenes.

Vers. 17. And the hautes of men shall be brought low, and the loftines of man shall be abased, and the Lord shall be onely exalted in that day.

THE Phophet in naming so many kinde of heights in the former verses, declares that he spake of men. For the high mountaines and great Cedars displeas'd not God, as they were his creatures: but he signifies that all the mischiefe rests in the hearts and liues of men, who do too much trust in high and great things. But some may object; It oft times falls out that the wicked are so farre off from comming to amendment or being humbled by the afflictions which they suffer, that they rather become the more obstinate and rebellious: as it appears in *Pharaoh*, whose hardnes could not be softened by any plagues whatsoever. Wherefore it seemes that that which the Prophet saith heere, comes not alwaies to passe. I answer, that the effect of the chastisement is not expressed: as if God should bow rebels to his obediēce. But the sense of the place is this, to wit, that although the reprobates be hardened, that the Lord will not therefore smite his chastisements, wherewith he will chastise them, till such time as their pride and hautes be brought to the ground. For whilst they rest vpon their riches and fortifications, thinking (as they say) to be safe there; they neither feare nor honour God. But although they be fortified neuer so much, the Lord will subdue and bring them downe easilie; not by a plague or two, but so manie waies, that being brought low, and shut vp, they shall cease to lift vp their horns against him, and shall prouue by experience that it is in vaine for them to be obstinate and rebellious. That which is added, *and the Lord onely shall be exalted*, hath been expounded before.

Vers. 18. And the Idols will be vtterly destroy.

AS heretofore in his reprehension hee ioynd idolatrie with superfluities, couetousnes and other vices; so he now ioynes them againe together in denouncing the punishment.

Vers. 19. They shall goe into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth from before the feare of the Lord
and

Wealth the mother of superfluitie and dissolutions.

Note.

and from the glorie of his Maieſty when he ſhall riſe to deſtroy the earth.

BEfore he ſaid other words: to wit, in conſtraining and compelling them, ſaying, Enter into the rocks; to the end hee might the more luclly prick their conſciences: but now he ſhewes what they ſhall doe: and telles them that they muſt enter. And hereby it appeares that that ſentence was not an exhortation, but a terrible denunciation of the heauie wrath of God, to feare the wicked, and obſtinate, who deſperately deſpiſe all admonitions, and threatnings. That which is added of the *fear of the Lord*, is to be vnderſtood, of the feare which ſy Chaldeans and Aſſyrians put them in; whoſe hand hee called before (as hee doth here againe) the glorie of God: becauſe hee ſerued himſelfe by them to chaſtiſe his people. Although then that they were diſloyall and wicked, yet they ſerued to the glorie of God: ſeing euen the diuell himſelfe ſerues ſomewhat to that end in deſpite of his teeth. Thus he ſpeakes of the Chaldeans, and Aſſyrians, becauſe the glorie of God might be perceiued in the chaſtiſements which hee executed vpon the people by their hand.

Hee confirms the ſame thing by the word *Arise*, which ſignifies as much as to go vp into the iudgement ſeate to giue ſentence. In the particle, which by & by ſolloweth, *to ſtrike the earth*, there is a goodly alluſion or meeting of words, which can ſcarcelly be expreſſed in another language, as if hee ſhould ſay, To ſmite downe to the ground. Now hee ſaith that the Lord will *ariſe*, becauſe it ſemes that hee ſleepes, when hee deſerres his iudgements: he ariſeth then, when he goes vp as Iudge, to inſtict puniſhments vpon the wicked: in ſuch ſort, as men ſhall well perceiue that nothing can ſcape his knowledge, nor be hidden from his eyes: from him (I ſay) who leaues not any wickednes vnpuniſhed.

Verſ. 20. *And at that day ſhall man caſt away his ſiluer Idols, and his golden Idols (which they had made themſelves to worſhip them) * the moultes, and to the backs.*

* Or, into the holes of the, &c.

IDolaters doe pleaſe themſelves wonderfully in their ſuperſtitions and wicked ſeruiſe. For although they bee full of crimes, and naughtines, yet behold their refuge, namely, they thinke to appeaſe God by their goodly ſeruiſes. As if we at this day ſhould ſet forth the wickednes, and villanies wherewith the Papiſts ouerflow, they were not able to denie them: but will flatter themſelves vnder this pretext ſootho, that they performe a goodly ſeruiſe vnto God, and will thinke that all their vices ſhould bee ſufficiently couered vnder this cloake. The Prophet therefore pluckes away this vizard from Idolaters, and denounceth againſt them that they ſhall no more haue ought wherewith to couer their filthines. For the Lord will conſtraine them to caſt away their idols,

to the end they may know it was in vaine for them to haue put their truſt in them. Laſtly, they ſhould be aſhamed of their vanitie. Becauſe in proſperitie they thought that God was fauorable vnto them, as if he had taken delight in their ſeruiſe: and could not otherwiſe perſwade themſelves, til ſuch time as it was manifeſted vnto them by effect, that hee abhorred them. It is in aduerſitie then that they began to acknowledge their filthines as the Prophet *Hoſea* verſe 17. *Hof. 2. 7.* teacheth, when he compares them to harlots, who perceiue not their vncleannes all the while they gaine well; and inioy their pleaſures. But when they haue loſt theſe things and are forſaken of their louers, then they begin to be thinke themſelves of their porerie and ſhame, and to enter into the waie of repentance; of the which they would neuer once haue thought, whileſt they were lulled aſleepe in their wantonnes. And ſo fallies it out with all idolaters who are neuer ſo aſhamed of their beaſtlines as to caſt away their Idoles from them, till being preſſed with extreme calamitie, they thinke themſelves ſomewhat low brought.

Which they had made themſelves &c. That is to ſay, which they had made by the helpe of the workeman. Neither is this added for nothing; becauſe hee ſignifies that the counterfeit and falſe gods are falſely worſhipped. For what good can gods framed by mans hands doe, ſeing God hath his being of himſelfe, and is without beginning? It is a thing then that goes quite backward, and againſt all reaſon, that men ſhould worſhip that, which themſelves haue deuſed. By this ſpeech therefore hee deſcribes their wickednes; in that although their idols were made of gold or ſiluer, or of other corruptible matter, and that they were framed by men; yet neuertheleſſe that they were worſhipped in ſtead of God: withall, he expreſſeth the cauſe why they are diſpleaſing to God, to wit, for that they were honored. With what pretext now I pray you, will the Papiſts couer their impieties? For they cannot denie but they worſhip Images and puppets. Now where ſuch adoration and honor hath place, there is a manifeſt and plaine ſacriledge, which cannot be diſguiſed. By the *holes of the moultes*, hee here vnderſtands all filthy and vncleane corners whatſoever, wherein they ſhould be hid with infamie.

Verſ. 21. *To goe into the holes of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, from before the feare of the Lord, and from the glorie of his maieſtie, when he ſhall riſe to deſtroy the earth.*

THIS is no ſuperfluous repetitiõ, although *Iſaiab* repeats the ſame things wherof hee ſpake but erewhile. For is there any thing more difficult then to prick, & wound men to the quicke, and to prouoke them to the true feare of God? We perceiue this, not onely in hypocrites, but euen in our ſelves, if we looke narrowly into it. For how many things

things are set before vs, by which our minds ought to bee raiſed; and yet notwithstanding wee are ſcarce once moued therewith? It was chiefly neceſſary that this judgement of God ſhould be repeated to the hypocrites, who pleaſed themſelues in their wickednes. Now the ſeuericie of Gods vengeance is therein manifeſted, namely, that the wicked choſe rather to be ſwallowed vp into the deepeſt gulfs that may be, then to come neere into his ſight. From this place it ſeemes that Chriſt borrowed that wherewith he threatens the Iewes; in that day they ſhall ſay to the mountaines couer vs, and to the hills, hide vs. Luk. 23. 30.

Verſ. 22. *Ceafe you from the man whoſe breath is in his noſtrilles: for wherein is he to be eſteemed?*

THEſe things are conioyned with the former, and haue bin ill diuided from them by ſome. For after he hath with threatnings proclaimed the iudgements of God, he exhorted the wicked to ceafe from beguiling themſelues by a vaine confidence: as if he ſhould ſay, I ſee you are blinded and drunke with vaine hope, ſo as there is no reaſon at all which can preuaile with you; which coms to paſſe, becauſe you aſcribe too much to your ſelues; and yet *man* is nothing: for you haue to doe with God, who with his onely looke is able to bring the whole world to confulion. This place is expounded diuerſly. For ſome interpret it of Chriſt, & take *breath*, for conſuming; as alſo the Scripture is wont elſewhere to vſe this ſimilitude. They take *noſtrill* for wrath, becauſe the ſigne of anger appears in the noſtrils: and ſo gather this ſenſe; Take heede you moue not Chriſt to wrath againſt you. But if all be well waighed, we ſhall find this expoſition to be far off from the ſcope of the text. Others, although they expound it of men in general, yet notwithstanding they referre it to this ſentence; Feare not them that can kill the bodie, Mat. 20. 28. But this opinion is no more fitting with the text then the other. For it ſhould be from the purpoſe and would not agree to the time: becauſe there was then no occaſion to diſſwade them from the feare of men. But as I haue ſaid, the coherence of the text, clears vs eaſily from all doubts. For the beginning of the chapter following expounds this plainly, and confirms it: and he which diuided theſe things did ill to ſeparate that which ſhould haue beene ioyned together: for he will there adde; The Lord will take from you the things which ſo much puffes vp your hearts, and begets ſuch high ſpirits in you: This confidence which you haue is vaine and fooliſh. And thereupon dependeth that which hee now ſaith, *Ceafe from man* then

Chap. 3. 1.

But it is neceſſary firſt to ſee what *the breath of the noſtrill* ſignifies. He thereby ſets forth the fragilitie of mankind: namely, that the life of man is but a *breath* which forthwith vaniſheth away; and as *Dauid* ſaith, If the Lord withdraw the ſpirit, man returnes to his duſt:

Alſo, His Spirit departs, and he returnes to his earth. Pſal. 104. 29. Again, They are fleſh, a breath which paſſeth away and returnes not. Pſal. 146. 4. and 78. 39. Seeing then there is nothing ſo feeble and weak as our life, what means this confidence, forſooth, as if the rootes of our ſtabilitie were profound and ſtrong? We muſt then *ceafe from man*; that is to ſay, we muſt leaue this vaine confidence: for *man* hath his *breath* in his *noſtril*: for if his ſoule once depart, he vaniſheth forthwith away as water. Now we ſpeake here, of that breath by which man liues, which is the weakeſt of all things.

Moreouer, when the Lord forbids vs to put our truſt in *man*, let vs beginne at our ſelues; that is to wit, let vs not in any caſe truſt in our wiſdome, or induſtrie. In the ſecond place, let vs depend neither vpon the helpe of men, nor vpon any creature elſe: but let vs place our whole truſt in the Lord. Curſed is he, ſaith *terewiah*, which truſteth in man, and puts his ſtrength in the arme of fleſh, that is to ſay, in outward means and helpes. Ier. 17. 5.

For wherein is he to be eſteemed? Behold here the right way how to beate downe all pride, namely when nothing is left to men wherein they may pleaſe themſelues. For this is as much as if the Prophet had ſaid, Al the glorie of the fleſh is nothing worth. We muſt alſo obſerue, that this is ſaid by compariſon, to the end wee may learne, that if ſo be there bee any excellencie in vs, it comes not by nature, but wee hold it all by borrowing the ſame from without vs. We know that mankind was adorned of God with giſtes which ought not to be deſpised; we know alſo that ſome are more excellent then others; but becauſe the moſt part hauing reiected the Lord, do pleaſe themſelues in their own forme and ſhape beyond meaſure; yea euen prophane men eſteeme ſo much of themſelues, as if they were gods: *Iſaiab* therefore wiſely ſeparates *man* from God, as alſo the Holy ghoſt doth thorowout the whole Scripture. For when men are conſidered in themſelues, it better appears how fraile their condition is, yea how tranſitorie, and inconſtant. As ſoone therefore as men ſhall once beginne to attribute vnto themſelues but the leaſt ſtrength whatſoever, then muſt their vanitie be made known, and diſcouered vnto them, to the end they may acknowledge themſelues to be nothing. By this onely word all the glorious titles of free will and mans merits doe fall to the ground, wherein the Papiſts glorie againſt the grace of God: and all that fond and fooliſh loue, which prophane men haue of themſelues, is alſo plucked away from them. Laſtly we are all called home to God, the author of al good things: to the end wee ſhould not think any thing excellent either in heauen or earth, out of him. For his praiſe is forthwith eclipsed, if ſo be the whole world be not ſtripped of all wiſdome, ſtrength and iuſtice; in a word, of all praiſe, that ſo it may be giuen to God alone.

THE

THE III. CHAPTER.

Verſ. i. For loe, the Lord God of hoſts will take away from Ieruſalem and from Iudah the ſtay and the ſtrength, euen all the ſtay of bread and all the ſtay of water.



WE haue ſaid a little before that the Prophet goes on ſtill with the ſame matter which he began in the ende of the former chapter. For hee admoniſheth the Iewes, that how great riches ſo euer they poſſeſſe; yet notwithstanding they ſhall not bee able by any meanes whatſo euer to hinder the wrath of God (being once inflamed againſt them) to conſume all their preparations. Whence it appeares, that they too much ouerthoote themſelues, who, to put farre away from them all feares, doe heape & gather together weapons, power, ſtrength of warre, counſels, great ſtore of victuals, and ſuch like. The particule demonſtrative *Hinc*, which wee haue tranſlated, *Behold*, or *Loe*, is not put here for the more certentie of the matter; but to ſet forth the ſhortnes of the time, as if *Iſaiah* ſhould euen ſet the thing it ſelfe before the eyes of the wicked. For it often comes to paſſe, that thoſe who dare not openly condemne the iudgements of God, do yet notwithstanding reiect them, as if they touched them neuer a whit; or elſe as if they were farre off from them. What is that to vs, ſay they? or, if afflictions come, wherefore ſhould wee make our ſelues miſerable before the time? when the calamitie comes vpon vs, will it not then be time enough to thinke vpon it? Be cauſe then the wicked digge themſelues ſuch hiding places, and ſecurely take their eaſe in deſpiſing the iudgements of God, the Prophet doth the more neerely preſſe them home, to the ende they ſhould not imagine, that the hand of God ſhould bee farre off; alſo that all their ſtaies, which they promiſed to themſelues, ſhould be but in vaine. To this appertaines that where he calles God, *the Lord God of hoſts*, that ſo his Maieſtie might the more daunt their ſleepe and benumbed conſciences. For God hath no need of titles: but it is neceſſary that our blockiſhnes and drouſines ſhould be awakened by the ſenſe and feeling of his glorie. Now the Prophet in the firſt place threatens, that the Iewes ſhall be ſtripped of all abundance of victuals, ſo as they ſhall be forced to die for want. And by and by he will adde the ſame thing as touching their ſuccours of warre, and all helps of politicke order and government. From hence we may gather, that the Iewes were ſo liſted vp with the prosperous ſucceſſe which their affaires then had, that they fooliſhly ſe-

ured themſelues, as if they had been vtterly exempt from all damage or decay. But *Iſaiah* lets them know, that not onely all the region ſhall bee ſmiten with the rods of God, but that *Ieruſalem* in like manner, which was as it were the inuincible fortrefſe of the whole nation, ſhould be ſmiten alſo: as if he ſhould ſay, The wrath of God ſhall not onely be ſcattered vpon the bodie; but it ſhall pearce alſo euen vnto the very heart. As touching the words, *Maſhen* and *Maſhenah*, which he hath put in the maſculin, and in the feminine gender, I doubt not but by this diuerſitie, he would more certainlie expreſſe, that all kinds of ſtaies ſhould bee broken: and therefore I haue tranſlated, *ſtrength of ſtay*. For I approue not of their expoſitions who referre this to men: becauſe it is rather to bee vnderſtoode of all helps, of all kinds.

Notwithstanding ſome doubt whether the Prophet reſtrains this to victuals, or rather whether he referres it to the other helps and ſtaies which doe follow a little after. But it is very likely that vnder theſe two words he generally comprehends all things whatſo euer, which are neceſſarie for the ſuſtenation of the eſtate of a citie, or people: and alſo, that by way of explication, hee names ſome ſpecials.

The firſt member then hath this ſcope, to wit, that the Lord will tread vnder feete, all defence and riches, by meanes whereof they thought to continue ſafe; ſo as there ſhould be nothing left to ſuccour them. Secondlie, he addes, what the pouertie and want ſhall be: and as we haue ſaid, he begins with food, which, in the firſt place, is of al other the moſt neceſſarie helpe for ſuſtaining mans life.

Now the Lord takes the ſtrength of bread and of water away two waies: firſt, when hee takes them from vs altogether; or elſe when he takes away their ſtrength to nourish vs. For if God inſpires not a ſecret vertue into the, they can profit vs nothing at all, though we ſhould haue them in neuer ſo great abundance: and that is the reaſon why it is ſaid elſewhere, that he breakes the ſtaffe of bread: *Ezech. 4. 16*. That is to ſay, Though the Bakers giue out bread by waight, and though it be eaten, yet it ſhall not ſatiſſie them any thing at all. This ſimilitude ought to be diligently obſerued, to the ende wee may know, that although the bellie bee filled neuer ſo full, yet we ſhal alwaies bee hungrie, becauſe the ſecret bleſſing of God, which nouriſheth and giueth ſtrength, is wanting.

But although the want wherewith the Prophet threatens the people in this place may be vnderſtood of famine, becauſe God will deprivie the Iewes of all kind of reliefe; notwithstanding, becauſe the Prophets are wont for the moſt part to take theſe manners of ſpeech out of the law; this interpretation agrees very well. For hee might ſimply haue ſaid, I will take away from you bread

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God takes away ſtrength from bread after two ſorts.
Leui. 26.
It is not bread, but God his ſecret bleſſing which nouriſheth.

and wine: but he expresseth a thing more secret, in speaking of the *stay and strength of bread and water*: as if he should say, Although the people be not brought to pouertie for want of meate and drinke, yet God can so vse the matter, that they shall famish for hunger, euen whilest they swallow downe their morsels: because his blessing being taken away, all nourishment shall passe away as smoke. To be short, his meaning is, that the people shall haue no food that shall strengthen them, either because they shall haue no bread nor water; or if they haue them, yet they shall be able to get no nourishment out of them.

Vers. 2. *The strong man, and the man of warre, the Iudge, and the Prophet, the prudent, and the aged,*

3. *The Captaine of fiftie, and the Honorable, and the Counseller, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent man.*

HE mentions other helps, by which the state of nations or cities are vpheld in their perfection. He threatens that the Iewes shall be wholly deprived thereof, so as they shall be able to doe nothing in the house, by counsell or aduice; nor in the fields abroad by force of armes. Now he standes not to keepe any strict order, but in contenting himselfe with a brieft summe, he mingles one thing with another. He begins with *men of warre*, by whose hand the countrie was defended. Sometimes God takes them away by death; and sometimes he makes them become faint hearted and effeminate. This last is the most vsuall, so that the successors doe degenerate from the valor of their ancestors: and those who before were stout hearted, in processe of time become fearfull, and are disabled for the warre. We see also that the first often fall out, to wit, that the most valiant haue their courage by and by quailed.

He adds the *Iudges, and the Prophet*. Wee know that amongst the Hebrewes, *Iudges* are taken for all gouernors whatsoever. Also it is not to be doubted but that all Teachers whatsoeuer, are to be vnderstood by the name of *Prophet*. He threatens the Iewes then, that after the ciuill gouernment shall be abolished, and teaching extinct, that then they shall be cut off. And to speake the truth, the Magistrates & Teachers haue the same place in the Common-wealth, that the eyes haue in a mans head. To the same rancke also I referre the word *ancients*, who are the fittest to gouerne: because age obtaines prudence, counsell and grauitie. As touching the name *diuine*, although it be taken in the euill part in the Scriptures, yet it should seeme to be taken in the good part here; seeing *Isaiah* reckons vp those things which are necessarie to defend, or conserue the estate of a kingdome or citie. We may well call this man then, one that knowes wisely how to forecast matters, and who hath a deepe insight into dark & obscure things, which are necessarie; not by diuinations or superstitious Artes, but with a quick

and prompt iudgment, and with great dexteritie of wit. Also in regard that God had forbidden them to go to aske counsell of Magicians, Inchanters, Diuiners; and that *Balaam* himselfe testifies that there was no soothsaying in Israell; Num. 23 23. If any had rather vnderstand this place of diuinations made by Inchantments, I do not gainsaie it; neither will there any a'urditie follow, to reckon it among the number of their chastisements, to wit, that this people so full of wickednesse shall be also deprived euen of all vnlawfull succours: as in *Hosea*, the Idols are ioyned with the Altar and the sacrifices.

Hosea 3-4.

Hee calles him the *Duke* or *Captaine of fiftie*, according to the manner of speech then in vse. For the Captaines of fiftie were among the Iewes, as they of hundreds were among the Romanes. The Greekes do call them by a name which signifies Princes of hundreds. And because such manner of principallitie was not in vse among the Latins, therefore the name also was vnknowne vnto them. The Hebrew word *toes*, which I haue translated *Senatour*, may be applied to particular persons, who are excellent in knowledge. But because they attribute it to Counsellors who exercise a publicke charge, I would not depart from the common opinion.

Moreouer, because handicrafts men haue their good vse in the conseruation of the common good, and for supporting of an estate, as well as other Arts, *Isaiah* saith, that they also being abolished, the downefall of the Iewes approacheth vpon them. The expositors expound that which is said in the last place diuersly; word for word it is, He which vnderstandeth low words, spoken betwene the teeth. Now because the pythionically spirits do giue their answeres by mumblings and low voices, some thinke that he should speake heere of Inchantments. Others expound it better; who by the word *Lachas* vnderstand secret counsels. But for as much as by this word, we may vnderstand a graue oration as well as of things secret; I haue not been afraid to translate it *Oratours*. Notwithstanding if any had rather vnderstand it of those men who are prudent and learned, who being vnfit for oratorie in publicke, doe yet giue counsell in secret, which also is a good thing; I do not say against it.

To conclude, we are to obserue this summarie description of a well ordered estate. For first *Isaiah* hath placed corne and other things necessarie for the maintenance of life in the forefront: secondly, force of warre: thirdly, knowledge how to gouerne y^e people, and other parts of politicall gouernment: in the fourth place the propheticall function & charge: and lastly handicrafts. The Lord beautifies the people with these helps whom he means to bring to ruine. Let vs know the, that all things which we finde profitable to maintaine vs in this life, floues vnto vs from the free fauour of God. Whence it follows that we consider an other point; to wit, that we take diligent heed that we by our vnthank-
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fulnes doe not deprivē our ſelves of ſo excellent gifts of God.

Verſ. 4. *And I will appoint children to be their Princes, and babes ſhall rule over them.*

TO the end the vengeance of God might be the more apparent, he now tels vs how woſull and miſerable this change ſhould be, to wit, when the faithfull & wiſe governours ſhould be cut off; and that God ſhould put daſtards & meecoks in their ſtead. By *Children* we muſt not onely underſtand them that are ſo in age; but alſo in vnderſtanding, and manners: ſuch as are delicate and effeminate perſons, who have no ſtrength in them; neither are able to manage the ſword that is put into their hand. He hath not oppoſed all the members one againſt another: he thought it enough to ſhew ū meane by which a Common-wealth might ſoone be brought to ruine; namely, if ſo be that fooles and ignorant ones do beare rule, who are as children, in whom there is no wiſdome nor grauitie to be found. We may therefore hold it for a ſure principle, that he is vniſt to gouerne a Common-wealth, that is not called thereunto of God, nor furniſhed with ſingular vertues: which thing *Plato* alſo did well perceiue; for howſoever hee were a prophane man, hauing no true knowledge of God, yet he well diſcerned that none was capable nor fit to ſway publike affaires, but he which was indued with diuine vertues. And as the adminiſtration of Common-wealths is of God onely; ſo alſo is it neceſſarie that it be vpheld by himſelfe in euery reſpect; and there remains no more to thoſe whom the Lord governs not, but that they be like to *children*, yea that they be twice children, to wit, deſtitute of all counſell, and wiſdome.

Now the Lord exerciſeth his vengeance two waies: for ſometimes we thinke we haue men of grauitie and of experience in matters; but when they take it in hand, they ſtumble like blind beetles, and haue no more ſkill and wiſdome then little children; becauſe the Lord depriveth them of this ſingular vertue, with which before they were indued: and puts them out of bias, as if he had ſmiten them with a thunderclap. Sometimes alſo the Lord proceeds more ſlowly and takes away excellent perſonages for iudgement, by little and little, and ſuch as were fit for government: and tranſports the ſwaying of cauſes ouer to them which are not able to gouerne a familie, nor a ſillie child. When theſe things come to paſſe, we may hold it for certaine, that deſtruction and ruine is not farre off.

Moreouer, we haue to obſerue (as I touched not long ſince) that the eſtate of a Common-wealth well ordered, is an excellent gift of God: ſeeing all the orders of Iudges, Senators, Souldiers, Captaines, Teachers, and Handicrafts men, doe all of them helpe one another by mutuall community: and doe knit themſelves together for the common ſafeite

of the people. For ſeeing the Prophet threatens and denounceth that theſe things ſhall be aboliſhed as a moſt heauie iudgement of God, he ſufficiently ſhewes, that theſe are rare and excellent gifts, which are neceſſarie for the conſeruatiō of the people.

The office of Magiſtrates, Captaines, and Souldiers is here commended vnto vs then; as alſo the office of Teachers. Which we are well to note, againſt thoſe franticke fellows, who ſtrive to cut off from the world, the power of the ſword; and all other good politticke orders. Now the Prophet ſhewes that theſe things are not taken away but when God is diſpleaſed. It followes thereupon then, that ſuch folke who fight againſt ſuch benefits of God, reiecting and quenching all that in them lies the ſame, are wicked ones and enemies to the publike good. Alſo the Miniſtry of the word doth here receiue his commendation, without which a Common-wealth cannot long endure. For where no prophetic is (as *Salomon* ſaith) there the people periſh: *Prou. 29. 18.* Moreouer, handicrafts, tillage, all occupations of what fort euer they be, as Carpenters, Labourers, and ſuch like, which ſerue for the neceſſities and commodities of men, are here praized, as the miniſters and ſeruants of the Lord, and haue the ſame end, as the others before mentioned; to wit, to preſerue mankind. We may alſo ſay the ſame as touching them that profeſſe the arte militarie; for although a lawfull warre ought to be nothing elſe but a meanes of peace, yet notwithstanding, it is neceſſarie ſometimes to come to ſtrokes: ſo as they who haue the adminiſtration of the ſword, doe vſe it in defending themſelves and theirs. Warre therefore muſt not be condemned in it ſelfe, becauſe it is a meanes to conſerue a Common-wealth. Eloquence alſo is a thing not to be deſpiſed: becauſe there is often neede of it, as well in publike, as in priuate, fully and plainly to ſhew a thing, and to make a truth cleare and euident. For that alſo is reckoned amongſt the gifts and ſpeciall bleſſings of God, when a citie aboundeth with prudent and eloquent perſonages, who can debate with the aduerſaries, in the gate, or in the place where neede ſhall require to defend it ſelfe by counſell and reaſon.

Now the ſumme of this place is, that when the Lord takes away his gifts from a people, and changeth their eſtate, be it any way howſoever, either by altering the forme of gouernment, or that good governours be taken away; the wrath of God is to be acknowledged, who takes away Kings in his wrath, as *Hoſea* ſaith, and giues others in his anger. *Hoſea 13. 11.* We muſt not therefore attribute ſuch changes to fortune, or to other cauſes.

Verſ. 5. *The people ſhall bee oppreſſed one of another, & every one by his neighbour: the children ſhall preſume againſt the auncient, and the vile againſt the honorable.*

HE here deſcribes an exceeding great perturbation which approached to fall vpon

1 Magiſtrates

2 Miniſters

3 Handicrafts men

4 Souldiers. A lawfull warre, is nothing els but a manner of peace.

5 Rethorick

Pſal. 128. 5.

Note

Plato.

The eſtate of a commonwealth well ordered is an excellent gift of God.

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the Lewes; all good order being broken and fallen to the ground, as it happens to all people as soone as good government is ouerthrowne. We know how great the shameles malice of mans minde is where ambition carries euery one away thereunto. Lastly, how furious the lusts of the flesh are, where there is no bridle to restrain them. And therefore it is no maruaile if one doe proudly lift vp himselfe against another, that cruelty hath the swinge there; and that euery one takes libertie to commit all manner of outrage, when Iustice is ouerthrowne, and laid in the dust. If we wisely consider this, we shall esteeme more highly of the blessings which God bestowes vpon vs, when he maintaines vs in a tolerable and good estate, and suffers vs not to bee miserable watted and scattered. Whence it appears, that those who spend and imploy their wits to ouerthrow politicke governments, are the open enemies of mankind: yea, they differ nothing at all from brute beasts.

But this confusion which the Prophet here describes is most odious, to wit, that the child shall presume against the auncient, that the people of *israell*, and those of base condition, shall rise vp against those that are *honorable*, and men of reputation. For there is nothing more strange then to see them shamefully intreated, who are worthy to be honoured. And yet notwithstanding these vnseemely and odious examples happen, when the politicke order is ouerthrowne. Whereas I haue translated the verbe *Niggsh*. To endeouour, or to doe their utmost, it was by constraint: for otherwise the meaning of the Prophet had been imperfect.

Verf. 6. *When euery one shall take hold of his brother of the house of his father, and say, thou hast clothing: thou shalt be our Prince, and let this fall bee under thine hand.*

* Or, scattering.

FOR as much as this sentence is of affinity with the former, and still continues to the words following, *He shall sweare*; it is certaine that the particle *Et*, is taken as signifying a certaine time. For the Prophet intending to set forth an extreme miserie into which this people should fall, he saith, There shall be no man which will take the charge of government vpon him, although he shall be entreated so to doe. Surely ambition hath the swinge so for the most part amongst men, that the greater part doe alwaies thirst and long for headship (and that with enuie) one ouer another, yea they aspire many times to get it with hazard of their liues: For euen in all times we shall see that the greedie lust to reigne and rule hath shaken the whole world: and there is not the meanest village in which some are not to bee found who would be tight glad to haue power and authoritie giuen them to command the rest: so much is flesh and blood prone by nature to be covetous of honour. Whence wee may perceiue, that all things are brought to an

Things are come to a ve-

extreme exigent, when such a dignitie is not onely contemned, but also reiected with a disdainfull refusall. For the calamitie is extreme, and past cure, when men begin to flee and auoid that which they were wont naturally to couet.

ry low ebbe, when men refuse to beare rule.

But for the fuller amplification of the matter, the Prophet sets other circumstances before vs; to wit, that the Lewes shall rather cast off all sense and feeling of mercie and humanity, then to take vpon them the charge of government. If any should refuse to rule in a strange countrie, it may bee it would not seeme strange at all: but when we speake of the preserving of our brethren, it is too vn-courteous a dealing to refuse so honorable a charge. It is a signe then of an extreme desperatenes, when he vpon whose faithfulness his brethren doe rest themselves, and whose aide and succour they wait for, and desire, reiects and casts all desire of rule and authoritie from him.

And therefore also they haue been wont to chuse those for Princes who are rich; or at the least, it is very feldome that government is committed to any, but such as are of a competent sufficiency, lest their pouerty should expose them to contempt and disdain, or else draw them to vse vnlawfull shifts.

This circumstance is also adde, to wit, that although they bee sufficient to beare the burthen, yet they shall not accept of it; as if hee should say, that not the meane and base people shall refuse the place of government onely, but euen the greatest and best furnished also. Moreouer, the verbe, *shall take*, hath a great emphasis in it: for it is altogether as much in effect as to lay hands vpon him, to arrest him: as if *Isaiah* had said, Those who shall seeke a Prince, shall not proceede therein by allurements nor intreaties, but there shall bee a multitude full of tumult, where they shall endeouour to lay hands vpon some one or other by violence, and shall force him to take the charge of government vpon him. And there is no lesse weight in the last circumstance when he addes, *This scattering shall be under thy hand*, that is to say, At the least if there be left in thee any sparke of mercie or humanity, put forth that strength thou hast to helpe vs in this our extreme misery. For when a troupe of men are as a scattered flocke, asking succour at the hands of one of their brethren, as at their pastor and shepheard, yea, pitifully bewailing their scattering, their hearts are harder then iron or flint, who will not then lend their helping hand for their helpe. Some translate, *Let thy hand be vnder this scattering*; to wit, to susteine it: as if there were therein some amplification in the Prophets words.

Verf. 7. *In that day he shall sweare, saying, I cannot be an helper: for there is no bread in mine house, nor clothing: therefore make me no Prince of the people.*

BY the word, *To sweare*, he expresseth a vehement refusall, and a resolute denial. For often

often it falls out, that he, who in the beginning excuſed himſelfe, and made ſhew to be vniſable to doe any thing, yet at the laſt being intreated, doth yeeld to that which is requiſted of him: but he who reſuſeth any thing, and that by way of an oath, giues them that haue ſought his helpe no hope, that hee will euer fulfill their deſires: for he hath reſolued to continue his purpoſe. And it may be alſo that the particule, *in that day* ſignifies as much as incontinently, that is, without pausing any thing at all, or making any longer conſultation about the matter. But becauſe it may alſo be taken to ſignifie a time full of calamitie, I do not gaineſay this latter. There is no difficultie as touching the Prophets meaning, onelic he purpoſed to ſay thus much in effect, that there ſhall be no refuge nor fit remedie to reſtore this woſull diſipation.

Although the expoſitors doe interpret this hebrew word *choleſh* ductly, yet I agree willingly with them, who thinke it ſhould be a ſimilitude taken from Surgeons: becauſe there is nothing more fitting therunto. And it is all one as if ſome bodie being called to heale a ſicke man, he ſhould anſwere, I am no Phyſician; or, the nature of the diſeaſe is ſo incurable, that it is impoſſible to heale it. The coniuunction copulatiue *ווא*, which follows afterwards, is put to note out the cauſe of ſuch a deniall, as if he ſhould ſay, I aſſure you I haue no power to do it. His meaning is then, that the eſtate of this people ſhall bee ſo deſperate, that there ſhall not a man bee found, who dares giue order to redreſſe their wants; no not when things ſhall bee driuen to a narrow pinch,

Verſ. 8. Doubtles Ieruſalem is fallen, and Indah is fallen downe. becauſe their tongue and works, are againſt the Lord, to prouoke the eyes of his glorie.

HERE the Prophet ſhewes the cauſe of this ruine; leſt it might ſeeme that God were cruell in chaſtiſing his people thus ſharply. Now it is as much as if he had ſaid, This people doe periſh moſt iuſtly, ſceing they haue ſo many waies hardened their harts againſt the wrath of the Lord. And hereby he cuts off all complaints. For we know how audaciouslie the world rageth when it is chaſtiſed more then ordinarily it is wont to be. Now he ſaith, they were readie both in words and deeds, to commit all ſorts of euils. Hee ſpeakes alſo of the deſtruction of the citie as of a thing preſently acted; albeit the time paſt, may be taken for the time to come, as oftentimes it is.

To prouoke to wrath] This manner of ſpeech amplifies the fault: ſhewing that of ſet purpoſe they meant to prouoke the Lord. For the things that are done before our eyes doe very much offend vs, eſpecially if they be diſpleaſing vnto vs. Wicked men mocke with God, as if they could beguile him. But becauſe nothing can be hidden from him, be it neuer ſo ſecret, *Iſaiah* reprocheth them that in his preſence without bluſhing they

ouerflowed in committing their wickedneſſes. The epithete *glory*, is alſo to be marked: for it is a ſigne of more then a furious brutiſhnes, not to be touched with any feare of reuerence, when the Maieſtie of God is preſent. Now God had wonderfully maniſteſted his glorie to the people of Iſrael, ſo as they ought to haue been humbled in good earneſt, if they had had any droppe of ſhame or modeſtie in them. Let the wicked then murmur againſt God as they will, and accuſe him of crueltie, yet ſhall the cauſe of all their calamities be found in their owne hands.

Verſ. 9. The triall of their countenance reſiſteth againſt them; yea, they declare their ſinnes as Sodoms, they hide them not. Woe be vnto their ſoules: for they haue rewarded euill vnto themſelues.*

* Or, ſhall anſwere for them.

BECAUSE the Prophet had to deale with hypocrits, that were ſhameleſſe and impudent, who yet bragged that they were very holy men: hee ſaith, that their very countenance reſiſted againſt them, what they were, and that there was no need to goe ſecke out wittneſſes a farre off to beare wittnes againſt them to conuince them of their wickednes. For he takes the word, to anſwer, to beare wittnes, or to confeſſe. How ſoever then that they diſguiſed their faces and their foreheads, ſo as they were able to deceiue others, yet notwithstanding God conſtraines them to diſcouer themſelues, and to maniſteſt themſelues to be ſuch as they were indeede: ſo as in deſpite of their teeth they bare the markes of their fraudes and diſſimulations in their faces.

Others expound, that their wickedneſſes were ſo apparent that one might perceiue the vilanie which they would couer, as in a glaſſe. But that which by and by follows confirms the firſt ſenſe, when he ſaith they declared their ſinnes as the Sodomites. By which words he ſignifies, that they ſo let looſe the bridle to wickedneſſe, y they bragged of their ſilthineſſe without bluſhing; as if it had beene ſome excellent thing worthe of praife; firſt to haue taken away all difference betwene honeſtie and vilanie, and then to giue ouer themſelues to all prophane licentiousneſſe. And therefore he compares them to the *Sodomites*, who were ſo farre blinded with their voluptuousneſſe that they caſt themſelues headlong with a blockiſh brutiſhnes into all manner of leaudnes. You ſee then what is meant by the *reſiſting of their faces*, whereof he hath ſpoken before, to wit, that they bare in their faces maniſteſt tokens of impietie, which were more then ſufficient to wittneſſe their guiltines.

Woe be vnto them] He here expreſſeth that which hath been ſaid heretofore alreadie: that all the cauſe of their euils remained in themſelues: becauſe they had prouoked the Lord by their vices and naughtines. And therefore they had no way to wind themſelues.

felues out; and if they did, yet it should bee but in vaine, because the euill was so rooted in their bones; as if hee should haue said, Seeke what pretext you can to colour your sinnes, yet you cannot accuse God, as if hee should imite you wrongfully. Know then, that your felues are the cause of it; and therefore giue glorie to God, and lay the whole blame vpon your owne heads.

Verf. 10. Say ye, Surely it shall be Well With the iust: for they shall eate the fruites of their Works.

BEFORE I set downe the opinion of others, I will touch ſy true meaning of the words. Because it is an vsuall thing that the threatenings of such heauy vengeance of God haue been wont to bring a marueilous bitter and sharpe temptation to the faithfull; and withall because there is seldome any such publike calamities, but they are also wrapped vp in the same with the wicked; for this cause the Prophet, as I take it, brings them back to the prouidence of God, which neuer so confounds things together, but that in the midst of such confusions he hath skill to discern betweene the euill and the good.

But this place is diuerly expounded. For some translate, *Say to the iust, because he is good, he shall eate the fruit of his hands*: and after their opinion, we should gather this sense; I will and commaund that the godly be of good courage: for howfocuer I doe sharply punish the sinnes of the people, yet notwithstanding it shall goe well with them. But this sense seemes to me more agreeable, *Say, that is, hold this for a sure principle. Because to say, is often taken in the Scriptures to think, and to haue been perswaded: as in Dauid, I said, I will take heed to my waies: and infinite other such places. He commaunds not then that one should tell the iust; but that euery godly man should rather be perswaded of this truth in his owne heart: namely, that his estate should be happie and blessed, howfocuer it seemed miserable for the time present. And so I take the word *Tou*; for an happie and prosperous estate: as in the former verse he vsed the word *Raab*, which is of a contrarie signification, & against which he now opposeth *Tou*. And thus I thinke that *Raab* should not be taken for wofull; but for a troublous estate.*

Also because word for word, it is, *Say, Surely it shall be well with the iust*, it seemes that the particle *Gi* should either be affirmatiue, as in many other places: or rather superfluous. Although it be very likely, it should be put by way of confirmation, as if he had said, Surely it shall be well to the iust, let all occasion of doubting therefore betaken away, and let it be held for certaine, that his condition shall be most blessed and happie. Now forasmuch as this is hard to perswade any of, he adds, that *he shall eate the fruit of his works*, that is, he shall not bee defrauded of the reward of his equitie. Whereas others take *To say*, to admonish, and translate these words

It shall be well, Admonish the iust that he do well; I reiect that exposition as beeing drawne too far off.

Verf. 11. Woe be to the wicked, it shall be euill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be giuen him.

HE opposeth this as a contrarie member to the former: from whence it is easie to gather the Prophets meaning: to wit, that his purpose was to comfort the good, and to terrifie the wicked by setting forth the righteous iudgement of God. For when any great calamitie falls out, by which all are alike afflicted hand ouer head, we begin to call it into question whether the world be guided by the prouidence of God or no, or rather by the turning of the wheele of blind fortue. Thus the faithfull feare to be wrapped vp in the same ruine with ſy wicked. Others againe think that it is all one whether a man bee godly or wicked, seeing aswell the one as the other are alike afflicted with pestilence, warre, famine, and other such corrections. And so from thence, this peruerse imagination entrench in the minde of man, that there is no difference betweene the reward of the godly, and the vngodly. Amongst such an heape of darke cogitations, many by the temptation of the flesh, are solicited to despair. The Prophet therefore shewes the vpright iudgement of God; to the end they might persevere in his feare; and might also know, that those shal not escape vnpunished, who perswade themselves that he will not correct them, though they prouoke him daylie to wrath and indignation.

Also he exhorts them to magnifie and extoll Gods iustice with high reuerence: as if he should say, Do not think that this world is governed by chaunce: or that God strikes he cares not how, without keeping measure: but resolute your selues assuredly that he will deale well with the iust: for the Lord will giue him that which he hath promised, and will not disappoint him of his hope. And on the other side, be you as verilie perswaded that the condition of the wicked shall be most accursed: because hee himselfe seekes his owne woe, and therefore shall it fall vpon his owne pate. And herewithall the Prophet also reprooues the blockishnes of the people who felt not the iudgement of God. For they suffred the punishment of their iniquities; and yet they hardened themselves against the blowes, as if they had bin altogether senselesse. Now there cannot a worse thing befall vs then when we harden our hearts against corrections, and seele not the hand that smiteth vs: when we perceau such a senselesse in vs, surely then we are almost past hope of amendment.

Verf. 12. Children are extortioners of my people: and women haue rule ouer them: O my people, they that leade thee, cause thee to erre, and destroy the way of thy pathes.

TH^e Prophet alſo reprooves the follic and blocktheſſe of this people who were ſtarke blind, euen at noone day. There is nothing which men beare more impatiently, then to endure the yoke to be laid vpon their ſhoulders: neither do they varie readilie ſubmit themſelues to the government of any that haue more power then themſelues. We muſt needes ſay that ſuch as obey delicate and eſtimate perſons, and ſuffer that ſuch folke ſhould oppreſſe them, are become ſottiſh, impotent, and faint hearted. Neither is it to be doubted alſo, but thoſe who thus willingly did offer their ſhoulders, like Aſſes to beare the burthen, were ſmitten from heauen with a ſpirit of amazednes, I graunt that thoſe who are couragious ought to beare the rule of a tyrant: but *Iſaiah* reprooueth the Iewes, who for that they had obſtinately ſhaken off the ſweete yoke of God, were now readie to yeeld themſelues vnder vilanous and baſe ſubiection, & that with moſt ſeruite conditions. They could not complaine that they were conſtrained to it by force, ſeing they obeyed them freely; to whome notwithstanding they needed not to haue bene ſubiect vnleſſe they would. Whereby it appears that they were ſtricken with the hand of God, and daunted with feare, ſo as they had neither ſtrength nor wit left in them.

And it is euen that ſame vengeance wherewith God had threatned the people with before by *Moſes*. For as we ſaid erwhile, the Prophets had ſtill an eye to this generall doctrine of *Moſes* in all their Sermons. For how can it bee that men hauing power to reſiſt, ſhould willingly put themſelues into bondage (which notwithstanding they naturally flee) vnleſſe that God hauing deprived them of all counſell and vnderſtanding, ſhould thus leaue them to themſelues to auenge himſelfe by this meanes of their rebellions? Wherefore as oft as the like befalls any of vs, let vs not think it is come to paſſe by chance: no, let vs on the contrary know, that when wiſeſſe men, and more feeble then *little children*, ſhall haue dominion ouer vs, that the wrath of God hath then ceaſed vpon vs: vnleſſe peraduenture we meane to be reprobud by the Prophet, of a much greater blocktheſſe.

They that lead ſee] He goes on ſtill with the ſame doctrine, to wit, that God is exceedingly angry with *ſe* Iewes, in that he hath let looſe the bridle to the wicked to trouble all. From hence alſo we may coniecture, that the common people fooliſhly ſuffered themſelues to be led hoodwinked by the Governours; ſo as they receiued their edicts and courſe of conuerſation as oracles. Now all the corruptions which raigned euery where, came frō thence. To the end that *ſe* contagion therfore ſhould not ſpread further by the ignorance of the people, *Iſaiah* cries to them that they ſhould take heede of the Governours themſelues who were carrying them away headlong into deſtruction. Others expound; Thoſe which make thee happy. But becauſe the participle which he vſeth may be deriued from the verb

laſar, which ſignifies to gouerne, I had rather follow this interpretation, becauſe we thinke it ſutes beſt with the ſcope of the text. I confeſſe indeede that the ſaſſe Prophets flattered the people: yet I ſce no reaſon why he ſhould mention their flatteries in this place. But it agrees very well to the heads and leaders: namely that they were the cauſe of ruine. For as the Princes are ordained for the common ſafety, ſo alſo is there not a more dangerous plague, then when they be men of no value; ruling all things as they liſt. He ſaith then, that thoſe which govern are the cauſe of the euill, and corrupt all; ſeing they ought to correct others, & to ſhew them the way by their examples.

Verſ. 15. *The Lord ſtanderth vp to plead, yea, he ſtanderth to iudge the people.*

14. *The Lord ſhall enter into iudgement with the ancients of his people, and the Princes thereof: for ye haue * eaten* * Or, conſumed. *vp the vineyard? the ſpoile of the poore is in your houſes.*

WHILEſt impiety runnes ouer the countrey with the rarnes in her neck, and that the Lord ſends no ſuccour from aboue, we either thinke that he is idle, or that he hath forgotten his charge. Therefore after he hath complained of the princes which did not their office, hee addes now that the Lord will do his; and that he will not ſuffer ſuch wicked ones to goe unpuniſhed. For there cannot be a greater offence, nor a thing that troubles our mindes more, then when Magiſtrates in the open ſight of all the people ſhall ſhew all manner of leude examples, and yet none muſt dare once to open his mouth: nay by your leaue they muſt be ſoothed and flattered. Then we begiame to aſke where is the Lord become? from whom (by this ouer great licentiousnes) the cheefeſt thing wherein his glorie ought to ſhine, to wit in good government, is taken away. *Iſaiah* meetes with this difficultie. As if he ſhould ſay, Albeit I confeſſe indeede that the common people are bad enough; yet becauſe *ſe* Princes themſelues are corrupt in the higheſt degree, yea ſo farre as by their euill examples to deſile the whole bodie of the comon wealth; know yet that God is gone vp into his heavenly throne, as a iuſt Iudge, who at the laſt wil cal them to account, and will giue euery one of them according to their workes. And yet he exempts nor the common people as if they were faultleſſe; but to *ſe* end we might know the fountaine whence all the euils proceeded, he chiefly applies himſelfe to *ſe* Governours in particular, and threatens them with that puniſhment which they had deſerued. Hee had ſet vp a iudgement ſeate for God before; from whence he ſhould plead: now he tels them againe that he ſhall come: but how? *with the ancients*. Now although it were not greatly from the purpoſe, that the Prophet ſhould allude to thoſe lawfull aſſemblies, where

the ancients are set with God, as being his lieutenants: yet notwithstanding I agree to the most receiued opinion: to wit, that God will euen plead against the *Ancients* of his people. This place then answers to that of *David*: God sits in y^e assembly of gods: *Pfal. 82.*
 2. In a word, his meaning is to say, Although the Princes haue libertie now to doe what they will without punishment, and that no man dares reprocue their disordered appetites; yet know ye that there is a day coming wherein they shall feele that God hath authoritie about them, wherein also they shall render vp an account to him of all their dooings.

No doubt but the Iudges of that time were very vnwilling to heare such reprehensions: for they could not endure to be handled so sharply; neither did they thinke it was lawfull so to doe: because they would haue all in their power; & would haue their fantasies held for law, that all things which please them should be lawfull for them; that euery man should glose and flatter them, by consenting to the things which they had wickedly done: they would bee iudged of none in their actions; no, they would not be subiect to God himselfe. Being growne to this vnrulnes then, so as they could neither beare admonitions nor threatnings, the Prophet euen summons them to appeare before the iudgement seate of God.

We must note also, that they are called honorable Princes of the people; but it is in title onely: for in respect of their great dignities they thought themselves exempt and discharged from all lawes, as by some speciall priuiledge: and thought that howsoeuer prophane Kings and Princes were indeed subiect to the iudgement of God; yet that they notwithstanding were exempt from it by means of their holines. They perswaded themselves then that they had nothing to doe with reprehensions, as being a matter needles to proceede against them by threats and terrors, as if they had been prophane persons. And therefore the Prophet expressly telleth them, that the Lord will not onely enter into iudgement with the Princes in general; but with these proude hypocrites, to whom he had committed the charge of his people.

And you haue consumed vp] The similitude of the vine is very common, specially when mention is made of the children of Israel. And by this word the Prophet redoubles their fault, because they had dealt no more fauourable with the people of God (whom he had loued with a singular affection) then if they had been some profane nation ouer which they had ruled. This pronoune *you*, also hath great vehemencie in it: because he speakes euen to the husbandmen themselves, who being set to dresse the vine, did deuoure it like wilde beasts. And therefore he greatly amplifies their crueltie in this behalfe. For what a disloyaltie was that to deuoure that which they should haue conferred and kept? Now the Lord shewes by this similitude, what a care he hath of his; and

how affectionately he loues them: not onely in regard that the Church is his vine and heritage; but also when he saith, that hee will not suffer the disloyaltie and wickednesse of them that gouerne by tyrannie.

When he ads, that the spoyles of the poore were in their houses, hee names one particular, by which the other parts of their life might be knowne. Now the Princes houses should rather haue been as the Lords house, in regard they supplied the place of God, which ought to haue been holy to all. It was an extreame sacrifice then, when of a sacred place they made it a theuifish den. Also this word *poore*, augments their fault. For it is the most barbarous crueltie of all others, to snatch from the poore and needie, who are not able to defend themselves, and therefore ought rather in deed to be succoured.

Verf. 15. What haue you to doe that you beate my people to peeces, and grinde the faces of the poore, saith the Lord, euen the Lord of hosts?

HE reckons vp some particulars, by which it appeares that the poore were proudly dealt withall by them; yea cruelly, and with all oppression and wrong. It was not needfull that the Prophet should recite by peccemeale al things which were to be reprocued in the Princes: because by this litle, it sufficiently appeares how vniust and tyrannicall their government was. But where shall the poore finde refuge, if not at the hands of the Magistrate, who ought to be the father of the countrie, and to be an helpe to miserable persons? Therefore hee vseth an interrogation with a kind of vehemencie, What? as if he should say, What boldnes is this? What barbarisme and crueltie is it thus to abuse the wretched estate of the poore, and to spare them nothing at all? So also by the two similitudes, he sets forth their pride, ioyned with crueltie.

Saith the Lord of hosts.] To the end this reprehension might haue such authoritie among them as was meete, he sets the person of God before them: for here is a close opposition: as if hee should say, You must not take these things as from the mouth of man, but it is God himselfe, who is the author of this accusation: it is he that pursues these injuries, who will also take vengeance of you for them in the end. And therefore because those who are set in any degree of honour do vsually so ouerflow with pride, that they despise the words and admonitions of all men, he opposeth against the pride of such, the *Majesty of God*, to the end they may not bee so conceited as to despise the sharpe threatnings which hee hath charged them with in good earnest. And yet let vs remember that wee take not this place as if the Prophet preached nothing but the mercie of God onlie. For hauing denounced vengeance in general to all, he toucheth the heads especially, to the end that neither the one nor the other might thinke to escape the hand of God.

God. Wherefore hee here vſeth the argument, which we call for the greater to the leſſe: How can it be that the Lord ſhould pardon the common people, ſeeing hee muſt euen puniſh the Princes, becauſe they haue deſtroyed the vine?

Verſ. 16. *The Lord alſo ſaith, becauſe the daughters of Zion are hautie, and walke with ſtretched out necks, and with wandring eyes, walking and minſing as they goe, and making a tinkling with their feete.*

HERE follows another threatning againſt the ambition, diſſolution, and pride of women. And in this the Prophet hath not followed any precise order, but reprooues now one vice, then another, as the matter required: and then hauing finiſhed his ſermon, hee comprehends a brieſe ſumme of it in few words, as hee did in the firſt Chapter. Hee ſpeakes then againſt ſumptuous apparrell, and ſuperfluous ornaments, which were euident ſignes of vaine oſtentation. For where there is this exceſſe in apparrell and ornaments, there is alwaies ambition ioyned with it: and ſo by conſequence, many other vices for the moſt part, doe goe hand in hand with it. For, from whence comes the ſuperſtutie both of men and women, but from pride? Firſt then hee juſtly taxeth this vice as the wellſpring of all the abuſe, and ſhewes it by the ſigne thereof, to wit, by their going; becauſe the women walked with *ſtretched out necks*. Now as it is an euident ſigne of modeſtie to bow the head (as alſo prophane authors doe witneſſe) ſo to liſt it vp too much, is a ſigne of arrogancie. And for a womans head *liſted up*, what can it ſhew elſe but pride? The Prophet therefore did wiſely, in beginning at the fountaine it ſelfe: for if he had begun at the outward ſignes; as at the garments, walking and ſuch like things, they would haue had their replies at hand, to wit, that their harts were vpright and innocent enough for all that: and that there was no ſuch great neceſſitie to crie ſo bitterly againſt them, and to ſummon them before the iudgement ſeate of God for putting on a little braue or light apparrell. To the end therefore that hee may meeete with their vaine obiections, hee firſt diſcouers y inward diſeaſe, which ſhewes it ſelfe euery way in all the outward attire.

That which hee addes of *wandring eyes*, ſhewes a ſhameles luſt, which is ofteneſt ſcene and eſpied (as certaine witneſſes thereof) in the eies: for bold and audacious *eies*, are the true meſſengers of a diſhoneſt heart. On the contrarie, chaſte women haue their eies ſtedfaſt and drawne in as it were, rather then rouing and wandring abroad. *Tinkling*. This geſture ſutes wel with an immodeſt and laſcivious countenance. It is vncertaine, whether the women had little belles to their pantables, which tinkled as they went: or rather whether in keeping meaſure they carried

their countenances as women danſers do, becauſe the manner of attire is much changed ſince that time. Notwithſtanding I willingly receiue this expoſition; that in going they made their ſteps to found: for the very words doe ſufficiently ſhew it.

Verſ. 17. *Therefore ſhall the Lord make the heads of the daughters of Zion bald, and the Lord ſhall diſcover their ſecret parts.*

18. *In that day ſhall the Lord take away the ornament of the ſippers, and the calles, and the round tires,*

19. *The ſweete balles, and the bracelets, and the bonets,*

20. *The tires of the head, and the ſtoppes, and the head bands, and tablets, and the earrings,*

21. *The rings and the muſſers,*

22. *The coſtly apparrell and the vailles, and the wimples, and the criſping pinnes,*

23. *And the glaſſes and the ſire linnen, and the hoodes, and the launnes.*

HERE is a coupling of things together, in ſtead of a particle that renders the cauſe. For he denounceth, that ſeeing they cannot be amended, neither by gentle admonitions, nor by any words; that the Lord will proceede otherwiſe with them, becauſe hee will no more vſe ſharpenes and rigor of ſpeech, but will come vpon them in great diſpleaſure and with his arme out ſtretched to take vengeance vpon them. And therefore euen as they had ſhewed their rebellion from the head vnto the feete, ſo he alſo giues them to vnderſtand, that the Lord will ſhew the ſignes of his vengeance vpon *all the parts* of their bodies. Wherefore he begins with the *head*, where the principall decking is; and afterwards deſcends to the other parts. Now we are to obſerue that the Prophet reprooues not the exceſſiue pompe of theſe women with this ſharpenes & vehemency without cauſe: for aboue all other vices, wherewith they are ſtained, they naturally burne with a ſond deſire to decke and trim themſelues brauely. And although they are prone enough by nature to couctouſnes; yet will they ſpare no coſt to make themſelues fine: yea, they will pinch their bellies, and offer violence to nature it ſelfe, that they may haue wherewith to attire themſelues the more coſtly & ſumptuouſly: ſo greatly are they corrupted with this vice, that it ſurmountes all others.

Hiſtories doe ſhew what vprotes women haue raifed at Rome, by reaſon of the law called *Oppie*, which was ordained concerning apparrell, becauſe one ſide would eſtabliſh it, and the other part would haue it aboliſhed: ſo that there could be no conſolution made hereabout by any graue and moderate courſe, becauſe of their riots. But we neede

What vice is moſt predominant in women.

Women made an vprore at Rome, becauſe of a law made for reſtraint of fine apparrell.

not goe so farre to seeke examples; for wee may find infinite numbers almost thoroughout all nations; so as it is a vice too common in all ages.

Now because we are alwaies sharpe witted to deuse excuses to couer our excessiue superfluities, therefore the Prophet pointes as it were with his finger at the fountaine of all the mischief: to wit, this furious *pride*, before spoken of, wherewith women are carried away when they are to fiew themselves, and appeare before others. For to the ende, they may be the better seene and discerned they will shine with deckings of their garments, that so the eies of euery one may be drawne vnto them. The Prophet then hauing touched the inward sore; hee reckons vp many particulars, that so he might bring the fottishnes of women into the open view of all the world to receiue disgrace. And therefore hee makes a long catalogue; because none are more curious then a woman about this matter of piling vp fashion vpon fashion, and tire vpon tire. She will heape ornaments one vpon another without nuber: and therefore it was not without cause that the ancients in times past called a womans cabinet, or chest, *A world*. For if all the pieces which are here mentioned, should be gathered together, and laid vpon an heape, a man should find as many fashions as there are parts of the world. And therefore it seemes the Prophet here rifles the chests of women to bring forth their paltrie packe ofiewels which were laid vp therein; to the ende that by how much the more they gloried in them, and tooke pleasure therein; by so much the more euery one might bee made y better acquainted with their follies. Therefore how focuer here bee a long catalogue, yet is nothing superfluous; seeing thereby their insatiable lusts are the better discerned.

As touching the particulars, I meane not to stand dilating vpon euery thing apart, seeing euen the best learned of the Hebrews themselves are doubtfull concerning some of them, neither can they make any true definition of the sundrie formes of these ornaments. It is sufficient for vs to know y summe of the words, and to vnderstand the Prophets drift; to wit, that he gathers together and reckons vp all these apish toys, to the end the ambition and dissolution, with the great varieties thereof, might be so manifest; that there might no excuse bee brought for defending of them. Also it were too great an impudencie to affirme that whatsoeuer women deuse in their foolish braine beyond the bounds of common honestie, should be counted and esteemed as necessarie for couering the bodie. For how many things are they which he here recites, which are neither required for nature, necessitie, nor for honestie? To what purpose serues these bracelets, earrings, chaines, and otheriewels? whence it appeares, that such a superfluous heape, could not bee excused with any pretence whatsoeuer. It is therefore an immoderate superfluitie which must either bee re-

pressed, or restrained; for that oft times they fall out to bee whorish intisements, wherby to weaken the heart, and to inflame it with wanton lusts. No inuaine therefore, if the Prophet be so earnest against this vice, and denounce such fearefull iudgements against it.

Vers. 24. And in stead of sweete savour, there shall be stincke, and in stead of a girdle, a rent, and in stead of a dressing of the haire, baldnes, and in stead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth, and burning in stead of beautie.

IT is certaine that this region abounded with sweete smells: and wee neede not doubt, but they were very inordinate in the vse of them, as in other things. Wee see that euen the nations very farre off from the *East*, did not abstaine from excessie herein: for there was no cost nor long distance of places which could hinder them from it. How much more did the excessie herein ouerflow then, thinke wee, in the place where such things were in abundance? whereby doubtles one might see lust enflamed, and dissolutions augmented more and more. He signifieth then that they did many waies abuse these ointments and perfumes. For men are ingenious in pursuing their lusts, and yet can neuer be satisfied.

In stead of a girdle, a rent.] Others translate, Ripping, or viloosing, that is to say, the Lord will *ungird* them. Now he meant to oppose two things greatly contrary one to another: to wit, that as the women walked being curiously girt and adorned, so they shall now walke torne and naked. He also opposeth to dressing of the haire *baldnes*: because they did not weare their heare modestly, but in all dissolutenes. Also against a *stomacher, a girding of sackcloth*: Now whether it were a belt or some other kind of girdle, it is certaine that the Prophet meant to decipher out some ornament which was in great estimation. Also he opposeth *burning, to beautie*: For delicate & braue women are afraid to go often into the sunne, for feare of being sunburnt: and yet he saith notwithstanding that this shall happen vnto them. In a word, as well men as women are here admonished how soberly they are to vse all the gifts of God, as well in their diet, and apparell, as in all their other behauiour. For the Lord cannot away with excessie, and it must needs be that he auenge himselfe vpon it by fore and grieuous punishments, when men will not be brought into order by light corrections.

Vers. 25. Thy men also shall fall by the sword, and thy strength in the battell.
26. Then shall her gates mourne and lament, and shee being desolate shall sit vpon the ground.

Now he turnes his speech towards *Ierusalem*, and to all the kingdomes of *Iudab*.
 Hauiing

A womans cabinet called a world by the Ancients.

Having therefore shewed, that the whole bodie is infected and corrupt, and that there is no part free frō contagion, & hath not spared so much as the very women, he returnes vnto a generall doctrine. Now yee know it were not conuenient that there should bee giuen to euery woman many husbands. Besides, that which follows in the next place did not appertaine to this people only. Now hee sets before them the manner of their chastisement, in telling them that al the strength of the people shall bee brought downe by warres. And from thence follows the mourning of the gates, which he foretelles shall come to passe when these discomfitures shall fall

out. We know that in that time they kept their assemblies in the gates. So then euen as the *gates* did (as you would say) reioyce in the multitude of the Citizens: so they are said also to *mourne* when there should be such an horrible wast and consumption of them. Notwithstanding, I denie not but that hee compares *Ierusalem* to a desolate woman bewailing her widowhood. For it was the manner of those that mourned, to sit vpon the ground: as also this people were addicted to many more ceremonies, then our manner of life will beare. The summe notwithstanding of his speech is, that the citie shall remaine without inhabitants.

THE IV. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *And in that day shall seuen Women take hold of one man, saying, Wee will eate our owne bread, and we will weare our owne garments: onely let vs be called by thy name, and take away our reproch.*



EE still follows the same matter; and no doubt but this Sermon was made together with the former. And therefore we must not separate this verse in any wise from it. By this circumstance hee more fully expresseth what that ruine and destruction which he had before threatened against the Jewes, should bee. For vnlesse threatnings be redoubled against hypocrits, either they will play the deafe men, or else they will extenuate them in such sort, as the feueritie of God shall not touch them to the quicke. He here shewes then by the effect what horror of imminent destruction shall come vpon them, to the ende they should not promise an escaping from it at their pleasure: as if he should say, Thinke not that a litle skimmish shall lessen your number in some part: but it is rather an extreame ruine which threatens you; so as there shall scarcely one husband bee found for *seuen women*. And hereunto appertaines the word, *shall take*. It is a thing contrarie to the modestie of a woman, to goe and offer her selfe of her owne accord to a man. Now the Prophet saith, that they shall not onely doe so: but that there shall be *seuen women*, which shall lay hands vpon a man to take hold of him; so small shall the number of men be.

That which immediatly follows doth yet amplify this extreame wast; when they say, *We will eate our owne bread*, &c. For seeing it is the proper office of the husband to provide for his wife and familie, the women doe seeke husbands with vnequall and base conditions, when they discharge them of all care of getting their maintenance: There must

needs bee a very small number of men left then, when many women hauing cast off all shames, are not onely constrained to content themselves with one husband, but doe also agree to get their owne liuing, and desire no more but that the husband will keepe the faith of marriage with them.

Let thy name be called vpon *ti*.] We may render it in another sense, Let vs beare thy name. For when the woman comes into the family of the husband, shee takes his name, and loseth her own: in as much as y husband is her head: and therefore her vaile is a signe of her subiection. As *Abimelech* said to *Sara*, *Abraham* thy husband shall be the covering of thine head: Genes 20.16. But if the woman marrie not, she remaineth couered vnder the name of her family. Now it sufficiently appears by the 48. chapter of Genesis, that this is the true sense of this manner of speech; where *Iacob* blessing his neplewes, saith, Let my name, and the name of my fathers, *Abraham* and *Isaac*, be called vpon them: that is to say, Let them be of our stocke, & partakers of the couenant, & neuer shut out thereof, as it came to passe in *Elsau* and *Ismael*. The prophane authors also speake after this manner: *Maria* desiring to returne againe to *Cato*, (as it is in the second booke of *Lucanus*) saith, Giue me onely the bare title of marriage; let it bee lawfull to write vpon my Tombe; *Maria* wife of *Cato*.

Now they say, *Take away our reproch*: because it seemes that they beare some reproch, when they find no husbands: not onely in that it seemeth they are despised as vnworthy, but because it was a singular blessing of God among the ancient people to haue posteritie: and therefore the Prophet saith, they shall not onely haue neede with care to bethinke them how to auoid this reproch; but shall vse all possible perswasions to attaine thereunto. Lastly, he signifies that the destruction shall bee such, that almost all husbands shall die.

Verf. 2. *And in that day shall the bud of the Lord be beautifull and glorious, and the fruit of the carib shall bee*
* excellent

1. Cor. 11. 3.

Gen 25. 23.
Cato and
Matth.

* Or, in excellencie, and renowne.

* excellent and pleasant for them that are escaped of Israel.

This consolation is added in very good season, in regard that the faithfull might have bene vterly discomfórted with the newes of such an horrible waste, and might doubt in themselves how the couenant of God could stand fast in this so great a ruine of the people. For there is great differéce betweene these two things, that the people shall be as the sand of the sea for multitude, and yet notwithstanding that they shall be so rooted out by an horrible ruine, that there shall be no dignitie nor glorie at all remaining in those that shall escape, no, not so much as a glimpse of any name. *Isaiah* therefore according to his custome, as also the rest of the Prophets, prevents the mischief in due time, and moderates the terror by adding this consolation, to the end that the faithfull should assure themselves, that notwithstanding all these things, the Church shall be saved, and that by this meanes they should fortifie their hearts in good hope. Euen as then in the second Chapter he disputed touching the restoring of mount Zion, so now also he promifeth, that a new Church shall spring vp, euen as a bud or sprig shooteth vp in the field, which was vnderrest before. They do commonly expound this place of Christ: and so much the rather is this opinion receiued, as it seemeth to haue some colour by the sentence of *Zachary*; Behold a man whose name is *Branch*, Which is also further confirmed, in that our Prophet speakes not barely of this branch, but with addition, of *honorable*: as if it had been the meaning of the Prophet to speake of the Diuinitie of Christ. And after when the Prophet adds *the fruit of the earth*, they referre that to his humane nature. But when we shall consider all things aduisedly, I doubt not but he taketh the *bud of the Lord*, and *the fruit of the earth*, for an abundance of most ample and vnwonted grace, which abundance shall recreate the assamished: for he speakes euen as if the earth after a waste should be so barren and dry, that it should neuer promise any bud to come out of it, thereby to cause the grace of God to be the more longed for in so sudden a fruitfulness, as if seared and barren fields should bring forth grasse beyond all hope.

This manner of speech also is much vled in the scriptures, to wit, that the gifts of God shall bud out of the earth, as the Psalmist saith, Truth shall bud out of the earth, and righteousnes shall looke downe from heauen. *Psal. 85. 12.* Also hereafter in the 45. Chap. The earth shall open, and saluation shall fructifie. It appears by the course of the text that this is the true meaning of the place: for *Isaiah* adds in the words following, that the deliuerance of Israel, to wit, this handfull yet remaining, which the Lord will saue from this destruction, shall be the glorie and beautie of this bud. Also the word *Pheltath* which they commonly turne *Deliueraunce*, is collectiue in this place as in many others.

But yet there may be a double exposition,

either that those which shall be deliuered shall be a fruit of glorie and a bud of honour: or that the graces of God shall bud amongst them. The first exposition likes me best, because it seemes the Prophet adds the explanation in the verse following, when he sayth, That those which shall remaine, shall be called holy. Questionlesse the Prophets meaning is to say, that the glorie of God shall appear clearly, when a new Church shall be borne, as if hee should create a people of nothing.

Those who draw and reſtraine this place vnto the person of Christ, make themselves a ſcorne to the Iewes; as if for want of testimonies of scripture they should pull in places by the eares to serue their turne. For there are other places of scripture, by which wee may more clearly prouoe that Christ is true God and man, so as it is no neede to coyne proofes thereof from hence. But yet I confesse that the kingdom of Christ is heere spoken of, vpon which the restauration of the Church is grounded. Neuertheless, let vs obserue y this consolation is not sent to all indifferently, but only to the *remnant* which should be drawne out of death as it were by wonderfull meanes. Againe, lest the consolation might seeme to bring but cold comfort if it had ben only sayd that a small number should be deliuered; he speaks of *an exceeding glorie*, and *excellent brightnes*, to the end the faithfull might assure themselves that they should receiue no hurt by this their demeriting, because the Church of God takes not her dignitie fró the multitude, but from puritie, which is, when God shall gloriously and excellently beautifie his faithfull ones with the gifts of his Spirit. Whence we ought to gather a most profitable doctrine; namely, that howsoeuer the faithfull be small in number, and that they be like brands taken out of the fire, yet notwithstanding that God will be glorified in the midst of them, and will no lesse shew a prooffe of his excellent greatnes amongst them, then if he were in the midst of many.

Verf. 3. *Then he that shall be left in Zion, and he that shall remaine in Ierusalem, shall be called holy, and every one shall be written among the liuing in Ierusalem.*

* Or, so life in Ierusalem.

HE holds on his former speech still, shewing, that when all the filth of the people shall be purged out, then that which remains shall be called *holy*. Whereas some thinke that those are called holy which shall be found written in the booke of life, it seemes to me an ouerstrict sense. We should rather reade these two members apart: *All those which shall be found in Zion, shall be holy; and all those which shall remaine in Ierusalem, shall be written in the booke of life.* And this repetition is very frequent, and much vled among the Hebrewes, namely, when the Prophet sets forth one benefit of God by many titles; as when it is said, There shall be saluation in Ierusalem, and remission

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miſſion of finnes in Zion; both which are to be referred to one end: yet neuertheleſſe the grace of God is the better manifeſted, when the cauſe of ſaluacion is placed in the free pardon.

There is the like reaſon in this place: for he ſaith, that the Church being waſhed from her filthineſſe, ſhall be cleane; and that all thoſe who haue place in her ſhall be truly the elect of God. But yet it is certaine that this appertains not to all the viſible Church, in the which there are oftentimes many mingled, which only cary the name of the faithfull, and yet haue not any true marke of their profeſſion: yea, theſe ſurmount the little flock in number for the moſt part, euen as the chaffe doth the good corne. And howſoeuer the Lord had clenſed them from the chaffe in their exile in Babylon, as if he had taken the fanne in his hand: yet wee know that the Church was very far off fro her right hewe notwithstanding. But in regard that the image of this puritie did then ſhine in ſome part, which truly appeared after the ſheepe were ſeparate from the goats, *Iſaiab* according to his accuſtomed maner, in ſpeaking of theſe beginnings, comprehends the continuall courſe of time euen to the end, whē God ſhould fully accompliſh that which he had then begun.

We ſee the very ſame thing effected euery day: for although the Church be not wholly purged from her ſpots by being exerciſed vnder the rod and correction, yet notwithstanding the recouers part of her puritie when the ſpots are taken away. So then the ſuſtaines no loſſe by her afflictions, becauſe that as ſhe is diminiſhed one way, ſo ſhe is much more comforted another way, by caſting out from her many hypocrites. For example, the health of a ſick body can not be recouered vnleſſe you firſt purge the rotten and corrupt humors away which is in it. From hence we gather a very fruitfull conſolation, for wee are wont to deſire a multitude, and would by that iudge of the good eſtate of the Church: but we ſhould rather deſire to be a ſmall number, that ſo the glory of God, rather then of a multitude, might ſhine in the miſt of vs. But becauſe our owne glorie carries vs away, from thence it comes to paſſe that wee more regard the number of men then the vertues of ſome few. Wee muſt alſo gather what the true glorie of the Church is, for it then truly flouriſheth, when the Saints haue place in her: and although they be few and deſpised of the world, yet they neuertheleſſe make the eſtate thereof flouriſhing and deſireable. But becauſe it will neuer be in this world that the Saints ſhould occupie the place alone in the Church, we muſt patiently beare the mingling, and in the meane while hold it for a ſingular benefit as oft as it approacheth any thing nie to this puritie.

We haue ſayd alreadie, that by thoſe which are written in the booke of life, we muſt vnderſtand the elect of God, as if he ſhould ſay, The prophane multitude ſhal be cut off, who only haue their names written in the earth. Now the Prophet alludes to the place in *Mo-*

ſes in the 32. of *Exod.* where he deſires rather to be blotted out of the booke of life, then that all the people ſhould periſh. But although God haue none other booke but his eternall Counſell, by which he hath predeſtinated vs to ſaluacion, in adopting vs for his children, yet this ſimilitude agrees very well to our weakneſſe, becauſe our vnderſtanding can not otherwiſe comprehend how God ſhould know his flock, in ſuch wiſe as none of the elect ſhould euer be deprived of eternall life. Seeing then that God hath his choſen written, the decree of adoption, by meanes wherof eternall felicitie is aſſured vnto them, is called *the booke of life*. As touching the reprobate, although for a time it ſeemes they be equal to the children of God, yet notwithstanding they are not enroled in this Catalogue, as we ſee how they are driuen away when he gathers together, and puts his owne apart. Now the accompliſhment hereof ſhall not be, till the laſt day: notwithstanding vnto Gods children, becauſe they are aſſured of their election, when they perſeure conſtantly, while the reprobate fall to reuolting, it is a great comfort in calamities, when being ſincken with temptations, we continue ſtedfaſt in our vocation.

Verſ. 4. When the Lord ſhall waſh the filthineſſe of the daughters of Zion, and purge the blood of Ieruſalem out of the miſt thereof by the ſpirit of iudgement, and by the ſpirit of burning.

HE ſtill goes on with the ſame doctrine: for in as much as we commonly thinke that the Church receiues great hurt through the afflictions by which ſhe is diminiſhed, the Prophet inſiſts more and more vpon the contrary ſentence. And now to beate back this error, he reaſoneth by the contrary, to wit, that God rather waſheth and purgeth out all the corruptions from his Church by meanes of afflictions. By *blood*. I vnderſtand not only murders, and ſuch other notorious crimes, but all maner of filthineſſe and vncleanneſſe whatſoeuer. Now there is a redoubling in this ſimilitude, by which he repeats one and the ſame thing twice, becauſe that which before he called filthineſſe in generall, now he calles it *blood* in particular, as the fluxe of blood, or ſome ſuch like thing. In ſumme, he ſhewes the fruites which theſe corrections bring, to wit, that by them our filthineſſe is cleaned. For whileſt vngodlineſſe ſpreades it ſelfe hither and thither without puniſhment, then we grow as corrupt as others, for which cauſe it is neceſſarie that the Lord ſhould awaken vs by admonitions, yea, as a good Phyſition, that he purge, lance, and ſometimes that he feare, and burne.

He takes *iudgement* for puritie, to wit, for the effect of iudgement, when the things which were declining are ſet againe in their firſt eſtate. He adds, *the ſpirit of burning*, by which their filthineſſes are purged and corrected. Wherein we are to note two things: Firſt, that the purgation of the Church is wrought

The Church ſuſtaines no loſſe by her afflictions.

Note.

The true glorie of the Church deſined.

Note.

2 wrought by the spirit. Secondly, that the name is imposed vpon the spirit by the effects; now of *iudgement*, now of *burning*. As if he should say, The iudgement of the spirit, and the burning of the spirit. As oft then as these manners of speech are met withall in the Scripture, to wit, The Lord will doe these things by the spirit of truth, power, and righteousnes, &c. we may turne this phrase of speech thus; In truth, in power, and in righteousnes of the spirit. For the spirit of God, from whom both the beginning and end of the worke of our saluation comes, workes thus in vs. From these epithites then we must obserue what the principall effects of the spirit are: the Lord purgerh out our drosse by his spirit, that he may amend and reforme vs. By the word *iudgement*, he sheweth what the chiefe vertue is in the restauration of the Church: to wit, when those good things which were confused & ouerthrowne are restored, and set in their right order againe. *Burning* also sheweth the maner and way which the Lord vseth to restore the Church to her first puritie.

Vers. 5. *And the Lord shall create vpon euery* place of mount Zion, and vpon the assemblies thereof, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for vpon all the glorie shall be a defence.*

6. *And a covering shall be for a shadow in the day for the heate, and a place of refuge, and a covert, for the storme and for the raine.*

[Vpon euery habitation.] As if he should say, There shall not bee the least corner in the mountaine of *Zion*, where the grace and fauour of God shall not appeare. I take *habitation* and *assembly*, for one and the same thing. For I take not *Assembly* for congregation, but for the place where men meete. Now to the end hee might describe and set forth a full blessing, he alludes to that which *Moses* recites; namely, that when the Lord would deliuer his people from the bondage of *Egypt*, hee sent a pillar of a cloud by day, and a pillar of a fire by night, *Exod. 13. 21*. It is an vsuall thing with the Prophets, that when they would set forth any excellent benefit, they then call to remembrance this most glorious worke of God, to wit, The deliuerance out of *Egypt*. Because then did the Lord wonderfully display the infinite treasures of his grace, to the end hee might establish his Church; not omitting in that worke any testimonie of his bountie and goodnes, that the felicitie of his chosen people might be famous thorowout the whole world. But aboue all things, this was most memorable, that they should be preserued by day, by the covering of a cloud from the annoyance of too much heate, and that the pillar of fire should goe before them in the night, to the end they should not wander or

goe astray. The summe is this; that when God will gather home his Church from out of *Babylon*, that the manner of it shall bee no lesse admirable, then that by which the people were in times past deliuered out of *Egypt*. Not that they should be accompanied in the midst of their iourne betwene *Babylon* and *Iudea*, with the cloud and the pillar of fire, as in the wildernes: but because he shewed testimonies of his fauour towards them by meanes no way lesse excellent then they. As if any should say at this day, The Lord will illuminate vs by the light of his holy spirit; he will giue clouen tongues, by which his Gospell shall be spread thorowout the world. No man would take this literally, as if the Holy Ghost should be sent downe from heauen in a visible forme: but this miracle should bee remembered only, to the end the faithful might learne to rest at this day vpon y same power of God in the restauration of the Church, as the Apostles had experience of in their time. And withall, that by this manner of speech the Prophet mentioneth a continuall succession of blessing; as if he should say, God will not stretch forth his hand to deliuer you for a moment only, but euen as he hath alwaies assisted our fathers in the desert; so after he hath deliuered you, he will defend you vnto the end.

That which he addes, vpon *All glorie*, depends vpon that which he said before, to wit, that the bud which should againe sprout forth, should be glorious. It is as much then as if he had said, Vpon those which shall beare the signes and markes of their deliuerance. It may be also that he alludes to that place of *Exodus*: where it is said, that the houses which the destroying Angell had marked, were not hurt: *Exod. 12. 23*. For as then the sprinkling of the blood was a safekeeper of their saluation; so also *Isaiab* promiseth that the faithfull shall be in safetie, when God shall haue marked them. And this ought to be diligently obserued. For wee are admonished, that we cannot otherwise bee partakers of the grace of God, vnlesse wee beare his image, and that his glorie doe shine in vs.

[And a covering] &c. Although the Prophet confirms that which wee haue touched already, to wit, that God will leade his chosen perpetually, vntill he haue brought vs to our wished end: yet notwithstanding we are admonished that the faithfull shall bee alwaies subiect to many troubles. For *heate* and *cold*, and other sharper euils then those doe still fiercely pursue them: so as when they are deliuered out of one danger, they fall againe into another. But behold here a most sweet consolation, to wit, that against all *stormes*, the only shadow of the Lord shall suffice vs: because by it we shall be so couered, that nothing shall hurt vs, or bring vs the least damage. Although then that diuers afflictions and troubles doe enuiron vs on all sides, yet the Lord promiseth that hee will assist vs: as it is spoken in the *Psalm*: The sunne shall not smite thee by day, nor the Moone by night: *Psalm. 121. 6*. For the Lord shall preserue thy going out, &c. It onely remains that wee follow

* Or, habitation.

follow our vocation, and diſcharge our duties faithfully. It beſalles alike to faithfull and vnfaithfull, to endure many troubles: but the wicked haue no refuge nor couert vnder which they may ſhroud themſelues; they muſt of neceſſitie be overwhelmed. But the condition of the faithfull is bleſſed. For although they be cumbered with *heate* and *cold*, yet they

haue a ſure refuge vnder the protection of God. Only let vs be mindfull that that glorie wherof wee ſpake before doe thine in vs: otherwiſe theſe things doe nothing at all appertaine vnto vs. But if we beare the marke of God, let vs be aſſured that he will be our helpe as eſt. as any tempeſt ſhall fall vpon vs.

THE V. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. Now will I ſing* to my beloved, a ſong of my beloved to his vineyard. My beloved had a vineyard in a *very fruitfull hill*.

* Or, for.

* Heb. Sonne of the eye, or of the fat.



The argument of this Chapter differs from the former. For the Prophets purpose is to ſet forth the eſtate of the children of Iſrael as it then was: to the ende euerie one might take know-

ledge of his faults, and that by this meanes, ſhame and diſpleaſure in themſelues for their finnes might prouoke them to come to true and earneſt repentance: as alſo that hereby they might behold their miſerable condition as in a glaſſe. For otherwiſe they would haue flattered themſelues too much in their vices, and would not haue borne any admonitions at all. It was needfull therefore that their brutiſhnes ſhould be painted out before them as in liuely colours. But to the end he might procure himſelfe the greater authoritie he verſh this preface: for they were wont to write excellent and memorable things in verſe; to the end euerie one might haue it in their mouth, that ſo there might remaine a perpetuall remembrance of them. According as wee ſee that ſong which *Moſes* wrote, Deut. 32. and many others after him who did the like; that as well in publike as in priuate, one might heare all things ſounded forth by ſuch voices. For the doctrine is thereby more highly aduanced, then if it ſhould be taught onely. For this cauſe *Iſaiab* compoſed this ſong, that ſo the people might take a more cleare view of their filthines. Neither is it to be doubted, but theſe things were handled excellentlie, both for art and voice, as the cuſtome is, wee know, to compoſe verſe with the moſt exquisite ſkill that may be.

Exod. 15.

To my beloved.] It is certaine that he meaneth God; as if he ſhould ſay, I will make a ſong on Gods behalfe, by which hee complains of the ingratitude of the people: becauſe there was much more velenencie in it to bring God in ſpeaking. But ſome may aſke wherefore *Iſaiab* calles him *his beloved*. Some doe anſwer; it was becauſe hee was of the kindred of Chriſt. And the truth is indeede, that hee deſcended from *Dauid*: but this ſeemes to be conſtrained. It ſhall be more

plaine and agreeable, if according to the ſentence of *S. Iohn*, we ſay, that the Church is committed to the friend of the bridegrome: and that we put the Prophets in this number. For no doubt but this title is fitting for them, ſeeing the charge of the auncient people was committed vnto them, to the ende they might be maintained vnder their head. It is no meruaile then, if they were ieaalous and diſpleaſed, when the people turned away their hearts from him. *Iſaiab* then puts himſelfe in the perſon of the bridegrome; and as one grieued and perplexed in regard of the Church committed to his charge, hee complains that ſhe hath broken the covenant of wedlocke: and withall laments and bewailes her d. ſoyaltie and ingratitude.

John 3. 29.

And hereby wee may ſee that it was not *S. Paul* alone who was ieaalous ouer the ſpouſe of God, but alſo all the Prophets and Teachers, as much as in them lay, had the like care; to wit, ſo many as were faithfull to the Lord. And this title of Spouſe ought to touch all the ſeruants of God to the heart; and to quicken vp their ſpirits. For what doth a man hold more deare vnto him then his wife? Surely euerie honeſt man will prefer her before all treasures; and will more readily hazard his goods to other mens cuſtodie, then his wife. And therefore he muſt needes be eſteemed very faithfull to whoſe keeping a man will commit his beſt beloved. Now the Lord commits this truſt to the Paſtors and Miniſters, and puts his Church which is as his deare wife into their hands. What wickednes were it then to betray her by our ſloth and negligence? Whoſeuer is not inflamed with the care of her preſeruatiou, he cannot couer himſelfe vnder any pretence whatſoeuer. Whereas in the ſecond place, he adds the word *Dodi*, which he vſed before; although he chaſgeth the fiſt ſyllable, yet notwithstanding it is of the ſame ſignification with the fiſt. Be it then that ſome turne it, Vncle; others Coſine, I am rather of their opinion who take it by way of alluſion. For we muſt giue more liberty to Poets then to other writers. He hath then thus garniſhed theſe words, and come ouer them (as you would ſay) to the end that by ſ rhythmie, and tuning of the verſe, he might helpe their memorie, and quicken their vnderſtandings.

My beloved had a vine.] The ſimilitude of the vine is much vſed in the Prophets: and there is no compariſon more fitting his purpoſe then this. For he ſhewes by it two waies how much the Lord eſteemes his Church.

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There is no possession that a man holds more deare to him then his vine : neither is there any thing that requires more daily and continuall labour and diligence. The Lord then not onely teacheth that we are as a precious heritage vnto him ; but would also haue vs take knowledge of the continuall care and thought he takes for vs. In the beginning of the song, the Prophet remembers the benefits which the Lord had bestowed vpon his people the Iewes ; then he shewes how great the ingratitude of this people was : thirdly, the punishment and correction which will follow : lastly, he makes a catalogue of their finnes : because men will not acknowledge their offences, but by maine force. ◊

In a *very fruitfull*.] In the entrance hee shewes that God had seated this people in a happie dwelling place, as if a man should plant a vine in a pleasant and fruitfull hill. For by the word which he vseth, I vnderstand an high place, which is exalted about the plaine : we commonly call it a *hill*. Whereas some referre it to *Ierusalem*, as if he should describe the situation thereof, I thinke it to be farre fetched and constrained. It seemes to me rather, that the Prophet pursues his allegoric. And because God had vouchsafed to take this people into his care and safeguard, he compares this grace to the planting of a vine. For vines are more easily planted in hills and high places, then in vallies. And as one saith, The vine loues the high hills, the West, and the side of a wood. He alluded then to the common custome of planting vines. Afterwards hee follows the similitude, saying, that the feate of *this* place was not common as others were. For in calling it, *The sonne of the oyle, or of the fat*, in his language ; he means a fat and fruitfull place. I approue not of their exposition who restraine it to the fruitfulness of *Iudeah*. For the Prophet meant to describe the happie and blessed estate of the people by this similitude.

Verf. 2. *And he hedged it, and gathered out the stones of it, and he planted it with the best plants, and he built a tower in the midst thereof, and made a winepresse therein : then hee looked that it should bring forth grapes : but it brought forth wild grapes.*

HE shewes the continuall care and diligence of the Lord in dressing his vine : as if he should say, He omitted nothing of that which is required to be in a good husbandman, who about all things watcheth vpon his charge. Notwithstanding wee are not here curiously to examine the text, word by word as many doe ; saying, That the Church was inuironed with *hedges*, to wit, with the protection of the holy Ghost ; to the end it might be secured against all the assaults of the diuel : that the *presse* signifies the doctrine : and that the *stones* signifie all troublesome errors. The Prophets meaning, as I haue shewed, was

more plaine and simple ; to wit, that God diligently performed the office of an husbandman, sparing nether paines nor cost. But in the meane while, the Iewes had great cause to consider in themselves with how many great and diuers sorts of benefits the Lord had enriched them. When the Church at this day is set forth vnto vs vnder the similitude of a vine, wee ought to referre these figuratiue speeces to the benefits of God, by which he assures vs of his loue towards vs, and also of the care he hath for our saluation. It seemes that in the word of *planting*, order should not be obserued : for a man should rather plant first, and then close it with an hedge afterward. But thus I vnderstand it, that he no sooner planted his vine, but he forthwith provided all things belonging vnto it. And therefore he iustly accuseth them of ingratitude and disloyaltie, that they brought not forth fruit worthie the cost and paines bestowed vpon them.

And we are greatly to feare lest the Lord take not vp the like complaint against vs. For by how much the more the Lord shall haue enriched vs with greater benefits then they ; so much the more abominable shall our vnthankfulness be, if we abuse them. The Lord neuer beautifies and adorns his Church in vaine ; or that she should onely make outward vnprofitable shewes ; but to the end the might bring forth *grapes*, that is to say, good fruits. But if we disappoint the Lord of his expectation, the punishment which the Prophet here foretelles, will certainly follow. Wherefore the remembrance of his benefits ought to moue and pricke vs forward with all diligence to yeeld him thanks. Moreover, there is here a close opposition in the word *vine*, thus greatly husbanded : because that by so much the more we are bound to make pretious account of God his benefits, as they are more rare and excellent ; as being pledges of his particular loue towards vs. That hee causeth the sunne to shine as well vpon the wicked as the good, and bestowes all things necessarie vpon them for to feede and cloth them ; these are common gifts. But how much more ought wee to prize and esteeme this covenant of grace, which hee hath contracted with vs ; by meanes whereof he illuminates vs by the light of his Gospell ; which grace he onely bestowes vpon his beloued. We are therefore about all things to waigh & consider of this care and diligence, which the Lord bestowes, in working daily vpon our minds, and in framing vs to his owne image.

[*Now he looked*.] He heere complains that the people who had beene indued with so great excellencie of gifts, were wickedly and vnthankfully become degenerate ; and accuseth them for contempt of the louing kindnesse of God. For he saith, that in stead of good grapes, *this Vine brought forth sowre and wild grapes*. Now, we must not imagin \hat{y} God (before whose eyes all things are naked) can be deceiued of his hope, as a mortall man may be : for in the song of *Moses* he publisheth with a loud voyce, what the perversitie of this people would be, and that it was appar-

rant to him euen from the beginning. My beloved, ſaith he, will kick with the heele againſt me, after the ſhall become fat and luſue, Deut. 32. 15. There is then no more vn-cercentie of hope in God, then of repentance: neither doth Iſaiaſ ſubtiltie diſpute here what God waited for in himſelte, but how the people ought to behaue themſelues, leaſt they receiue lo great fauours in vayne. And thus God commaunds that his Goſpell ſhould be publiſhed for the obedience of faith; not that he looks that all ſhould yeeld their obedience thereunto; but becauſe the vnbelieuers might be left without excuſe by the onely hearing of it. To conclude, there is nothing which ſhould more prouoke vs to liue holily and according to God, then when the Holy Ghoſt compares the obedience which we yeeld vnto God, to ſweet and pleaſant fruit.

Verſ. 3. Now therefore O inhabitants of Ieruſalem, and men of Iudab, iudge, I pray you, betweene me, and my Vineyard.

4. What could I haue done any more to my Vineyard, that I haue not done vnto it? Why haue I looked that it ſhould bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes?

Now he appoints euen thoſe to be Iudges of his cauſe, with whom he pleades: as men are wont to do in things ſo plaine and apparant, that the aduerſe partie can haue no euafion. It is a ſigne then that God hath gotten the better end of the ſtaffe, whē he permits thoſe who are guilty, to ſhew whether the matter be ſo or no. Now he firſt demaunds, *What could be more deſired of a huſbandman or good houſholder then that which hee did to his Vine.* From thence hee concludes, that they are vtterly without excuſe, in that he ſhould be ſo wickedly defrauded of the frutes of his labours: although it ſeemes in the ſecond member, that he complains in himſelte that he waited for any pleaſing or deſireable frute of ſo wicked a people. As it will often come to paſſe that we ſhal complain by our ſelues, when the euent of a thing doth not anſwere our hope: and we are ſory to haue beſtowed our labour and coſt vpon ſo vnthankfull perſons, whoſe peruerſitie ſhould rather haue kept back ſuch benefits from them. And we wil confeſſe that we were indeed iuſtly deceiued, becauſe we were too eaſie and light of believe. Yet notwithstanding, this ſence will be more plaine; to wit, ſeeing I haue fully diſcharged my dutie, and haue done aboue all that could haue bene expected in huſbanding my Vine, whence comes it that it yeelds me ſo euill recompence? and that in ſtead of the frute which I looked for, it only brings forth bitter fruit?

If any ſhall obiect now, that the remedie was in Gods hand, if he had but only bowed the heart of the people; This is but a friuolous cauill to excuſe them: for their

conſciences pricked them in ſuch wiſe, that they could not eſcape by laying the fault vpon another. For although God doe not pearce with efficacy into the hearts of men by his holy ſpirit, to make them teachable; yet ſhall it be in vaine for any notwithstanding, to mutter that this was wanting vnto them, ſeeing that their externall vocation doth ſufficiently cut off all pretext and ſhew of ignorance. Alſo, God ſpeakes not here of his power, but he denies that he was bound to do more for them then hee did.

Verſ. 5. And now I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof, and it ſhall be eaten vp: I will breake the wall thereof, and it ſhall be troden downe.

6. And I will lay it waſte: it ſhall not be cut, nor digged; but briars and thornes ſhall grow vp: I will alſo command the cloudes that they raine no raine vpon it.

Becauſe he holds the Iewes as good as condemned perſons by their owne mouth, he by and by addes that he will be the auenger of the contempt of this grace, ſo as they ſhall not eſcape without puniſhment. For this reproch would not haue bin ſufficient to haue moued the, vnleſſe he had forthwith threatened the with correction. He giues them now to vnderſtand then, that ſo great wickednes whereby they haue diſloyally mocked him, ſhall not eſcape ſcot-free. Now the ſumme of the vengeance is, that they ſhall be deprived of the gifts which they had abuſed; not only when God ſhall withdraw himſelfe fro them, but alſo that they ſhall be laid open to the ſpoile of the enemies. In the meane while he ſhewes how miſerable their condition ſhall be, when he ſhall once ceaſe to beſtow his liberalitie vpon them. Whence it follows, that it ought to bee attributed to the ſingular goodnes of God, that this Vine continued ſafe and ſound till then: yea he admoniſheth by how many ſundry waies it was preſerued; and alſo how many meanes God hath in his hand to deſtroy and lay it waſte, both within and without. For his ſuccour being withheld from it, it muſt needs lie open to be deuoured of all that ſhould paſſe by, whether men or beaſts. After (ſaith he) that I ſhall take away my hedge, the beaſts ſhall tread it vnder ſecte, and it ſhall be eaten vp, and the robbers ſhall rob and ſpoile it, and ſo it ſhall be laid fallow. And further, becauſe the Lord ſhall ceaſe to prune and deck it, it ſhall bring forth no more fruit, in regard it wants huſbanding: but briars and thornes ſhall grow vp, which will choke the plants; yea, God will cauſe ſo very rootes to wither away by withholding raine.

Now we may perceiue by this, with how many weapons God is furniſhed to reuenge himſelfe vpon our ingratitude, when he ſhall ſee that wee deſpiſe his benefits. True it is that the Prophet continues the ſimilitude: and to the end he may win the better audi-

ence, he enricheth his speech with figures; notwithstanding it behoues vs simple to gather, that euen as God dayly bestowes infinite blessings vpon vs, so wee also giue diligent heed, that by taking away now this, and afterward that, he auenge not himselfe vpon our contempt of them. And as touching the gouernment of y^e Church, by how much the more it hath need of many helps, so much the more shall she be subiect to many chastisements, if the wickedly corrupt the things that God hath ordained for her saluation. And therefore it is no wonder if so many calamities threaten vs at this day, with wast and destruction. For we ought to attribute all the euils that shall befall vs (whether the decay of vision; or that the wicked haue their swinge; or that wolues and foxes doe creepe into the Church) to our owne vnthankfulness: because wee haue not yeelded such fruit as we should, but haue been slothfull and idle. Let vs acknowledge the wrath of God then as oft as we are iustly deprived of so many benefits as hee doth willingly offer vs.

Note.

Verf. 7. Surely the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Iudah are his pleasant * plant: and he looked for iudgement, but behold oppression: for righteousness, but behold a crying.

* Or, branches.

Hitherto hee hath spoken figuratiuely: Now he sets downe the drift of his song. Heretofore he hath only charged the Iewes with iudgement: Now he shewes that they are not only guiltie, but also that hee holds them as conuicted persons. For they could not bee ignorant of the benefits which they had received from God. Thou (saith the Psalmist) broughtest a vine out of Egypt, and hauing driuen out the nations, didst plant them in, Psalm. 80. 9. *Isaiah* follows not all the parts of the similitude neither was it needfull: It was sufficient to haue shewed the scope and drift of it. The whole people were the *vine*: the particular persons the *branches*: thus hee first accuseth the whole body in generall; and lastly euery one in particular: so as none could exempt himselfe from this condemnation, as not hauing iustly deserued the same before.

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It sufficiently appears wherefore the people is called a *vine*. Because God had chosen them, and made the couenant of grace and of eternall saluation with them, and had enriched them with infinite benefits. The beginning is the plant; the labour afterwards followeth. This people was adopted of God, and husbanded by him diuers waies. For their adoption had not been sufficient, if the Lord had not wrought vpon them and framed and enriched them with his graces from day to day. We ought at this day to be much vrged with this doctrine. Christ affirms, that he is the vine, and that being ingrafted into him, the father will purge vs, for as much as

Ioh. 15. 1.

God vouchsafeth to performe the office of a husband man in this behalfe, and carefully bestowes all those things vpon vs which hee (in reproach) saith he, bestowed vpon the ancient people. Is it any matuaile then if he be grieuouly offended, when he bestowes his labour in vaine, and without profit? From hence comes that threatening; Euery branch that beares not fruite in me, shall he wened downe and cast into the fire.

[He looked for iudgement.] He begins plainelie to shew how wickedly the Iewes are degenerate, amongst whom all kind of violence and of iniustice had place, hauing reiected all equitie and righteousness. In the words, hee vseth a meeting together; which hath great elegancie: and although they found almost one of them like another: yet they are of contrarie signification. For *Mischap* signifieth iudgement: *Mispach* conspiracie, or oppression: *Tjedaca* iustice: and *Tseacs* the crye and complaint of those which were oppressed by violence: which things were not wont to be heard, when euery man had his due. Moreouer he makes mention of two things which God requires principally of his people, as being indeede the true fruites of the feare of God. Although notwithstanding the seruice of God be first in order: yet it is not inconuenient that it should be described by the duties of the second Table. They are rightly conuincid to haue contemned God; because they exercised crueltie against men: for where inhumanity beares sway; there religion is quenched.

Let vs know that the same is now said vnto vs: for as this people was planted; so also haue we ben. We ought also to call to mind that which *S. Paul* saith, that we were but wild Oliues, and they were the true and naturall Oliue. We then which were strangers are grafted into the true Oliue, and are purged and adorned with a continuall care of the Lord. But what fruites bring we forth? truly not onely vnprofitable, but also bitter. And therefore we are guiltie of greater ingratitude, in regard that we are enriched and abound in benefits, much more excellent. And iustly is this complaint commenced against vs, seeing that violence and wrongs doe reigne euery where, but because the general doctrine did not sufficiently prick their hearts; he describes two kinds particularly: to the end hee might shew them as with the finger how far off this people were from the fruite that a good vine should bring forth.

Rom. 11. 24.

Verf. 8. Woe be vnto them that ioine house to house, and lay field to field, till there be no place, that ye may be placed by your selues in the midst of the earth.

NOW he reprooues their insatiable avarice and couetousnes; from whence frauds, iniuries, and violences do commonly arise. For it is not a thing vnlawfull in it selfe to ioine one field to another, nor one house to another; but he aims at the heart; which by no means whatsoever can bee satisfied, when

when it is once ſet on fire with deſire of ha-
ving. Hee deſcribes the affection of thoſe
then which thinke they have never enough:
neither are content, how rich ſoever they be.
We may ſee that the covetous are poſſeſſed
with ſuch a greedy luſting, that they deſire to
have all to themſelves alone; & thinke that
which others have, is their want, or is taken
from them. And therefore *Chryſoſtome* hath an
elegant ſpeech to this purpoſe: That the
covetous would gladly take away the ſunne
from the poore; if it were in their power.
For they grutch their brethren, the very ele-
ments which yet are common, and would
gladly ſwalow them vp: not to enjoy them;
but becauſe their luſt deprives them of va-
derſtanding in this behalfe. In the mean
while they conſider not that themſelves are
not able to doe any thing without the helpe
of others, & that aman being alone by him-
ſelfe is vnprofitable; they onely earke and
care how to gather much together; and
therefore they deuoure all by their covet-
ouſneſſe.

He chargerh the covetous and proud with
ſuch a furie, that they would have all others
cut off from the face of the earth, to the end
themſelves alone might haue it in poſſeſſion:
and therefore there is neither end nor mea-
ſure in their luſt. What folly and madnes is
it to driue thoſe from of the earth, whom
God hath placed therein with vs, and to
whom he giues a dwelling place common
with vs? *Queſtionleſſe* a worſe thing could
not befall them then to haue their wiſh. Nei-
ther could they alone till the ground, reape;
and performe other neceſſarie duties of this
life; nor yet could they adminiſter things
neceſſarie to themſelves. Alſo God hath lo-
vited men together; that one hath neede
of the helpe and induſtrie of another: and
there is no man, vnleſſe he be out of his wits,
who will reiect his brethren; as though they
were hurtfull or vnprofitable. The proud
alſo cannot inioy their glorie, if they ſhould
be left alone. How blind are they then who
would chaſe and driue men away to reigne
by themſelves.

Now as touching the length and great-
nes of houſes: the like is to be ſaid of them;
as was heretofore ſaid of ſcilds: becauſe the
ambition of thoſe is alſo reprooued, who de-
ſire to dwell in goodly palaces and ſpacious
houſes. It is not vnlawfull for him who hath
a great family to haue alſo a large houſe: but
when men (puffed vp with pride) will adde to
their houſes without cauſe, onely to be at
more libertie, and that one alone takes vp
the dwelling places which would ſuffice a
great many; then it is meere ambition and
vaine glorie, which ought worthily to be re-
prooued. For it is all one, as if having con-
tented others; they onely ſhould be lod-
ged: and that their poore brethren were
worth of no more but the covering of the
firmament; or that they ought to goe ſeeke
out ſonie other habitation.

Verſ. 9. *This is in mine eares ſaith
the Lord of houſes: * ſurely many houſes*

*ſhall be deſolate, euen great and faire
without inhabitant.*

Something muſt be heere ſupplied; for his
meaning is that the Lord is ſet downe as
the Iudge, hauing the knowledge of all theſe
things. When the covetous rappe and ſerape
their riches together, they are blinded by
their luſt, and thinke not that they muſt one
day be called to an account. True it is that
men are neuer ſo befoted, but they attri-
bute ſonie kinde of iudgement to God; but
they flatter themſelves in ſuch wiſe, as that
they thinke ſurely God regardeth not. So
they acknowledge a iudgement of God in
generall, but when it comes to the particu-
lar, there they lay the raines in the neck, and
ſuppoſe they ſhould not be kept ſo ſhort.
Alſo in this particule, *if there be nois*, wee ſee a
forme and maner of oath often vſed in the
ſcripture. For to the end he might the more
aſtoniſh them, hee ſpeakes doubtfully as it
were by ſentence broken off in the mid way.
He might haue expreſſed this threatning by
a full ſentence; but being imperfekt, it holds
the hearer more in ſuſpence, and ſo it brings
the greater feare with it. Moreover, by this
maner of oath (halfe pronounced as we ſay)
the Lord would teach vs to accuſtome our
ſelves to modeſtie, to the end we take not li-
bertie in vſing execrations.

What is it then that he threatneth? *That
many houſes ſhall be deſolate.* This is a juſt pu-
niſhment, whereby the Lord corrects the co-
uetouſnes and ambition of men, which would
not be brought to conſider their end, that
they might haue contented themſelves with
a little. As he, who derided the inſatiable co-
uetouſnes of *Alexander*, who becauſe he vn-
derſtood by the philoſophie of *Anachariſis*
that there were many worlds, ſighed in him-
ſelfe, becauſe with ſo much labour he had
not yet conquered the government of one.
A world (ſaith he) will not ſuffice *Alexander*, ſufficit or-
bis etc. he is as diſcontented as if he were pinnd vp
in a very narrow roome; or as if hee were
bounded within ſonie certaine Iland; and
yet when his time comes to be buried, he
muſt content himſelfe with a coffin. For it is
death onely which teacheth and conſtreineth
vs to confeſſe how vaine a thing the bodie
of man is.

We ſee euery day examples thereof, and yet
who is inſtructed by it? For y Lord ſheweth vs
in a glaſſe how ridiculous the vanitie of men
is, who lay out an infinite maſſe of money to
build pallaces, which yet will one day bee
neſts and dens for nightcrows, owles, miſe;
and ſuch like beaſts. Theſe things are dayly
before our eyes, and yet wee take none of
them to heart, to grow the wiſer by them;
There fall out ſo many and ſodaine changes,
ſo many houſes deſolate, ſo many cities wa-
ſted and laid on heapes, laſtly, ſo many other
and ſo euident ſignes of God his iudgements,
and yet notwithstanding men can not bee
withdrawne nor weaned from this inſatiable
greedineſſe of coueting. The Lord threat-
neth by the Prophet *Amos*, You haue build
you houſes of hewen ſtone, but you ſhall not

Chryſoſtom.

The coue-
tous d. fire
to dwell a-
lone. But
a worſe
thing could
not befall
them, then
to haue their
wiſh.

Alexander.
Anachariſis
Unuſſelled
Iumeni non
ſufficit or-
bis etc.

* Or, if there
be not ma-
ny, &c.

dwell in them. Also, he shall smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts, Amos 5. 11. and 6. 11. This falls out day by day, and yet the inordinate affections of men can not be awaged.

Verf. 10. For ten acres of vines shall yeeld one bath, and the seed of an omer shall yeeld an epha.

HE teacheth, that the like shall befall to the fields and vines, namely, that the covetous shall not enjoy their revenues which they desire, because their lust is insatiable; yea so as by their ravening they shall destroy the fruits of the earth, even as certaine beasts doe cause the buds of the vine, and eares of corne to burne and moulder away by their breath. The fields therefore shall be so barren, that they shall hardly yeeld againe the tenth part of their seed. The vines also shall yeeld very little wine. A *bath*, is a certaine measure of moist things, as *Iosephus* witnesseth; now it containes 72. english halfe pints, which measure is very little for ten acres, and principallie in a fat soyle. An *omer*, is a certaine measure of drie things, and also containes (as the same Author saith) 31. bushels. *Epha*, is the tenth part thereof, whereby it appears that it containes a little more then three bushels. And yet notwithstanding in good ground one doth not only gather ten times as much, but thirtie times more then was sown, and in ordinarie ground much more then it receiued; when it comes otherwise to passe, no doubt it is a certain signe of the curse of God, who auengeth himselfe of the insatiable covetousnes of men, and they notwithstanding lay the fault in the badnes of the soyle, as if that were the cause; but all in vaine, because we shall not want ouerplus, if the Lord do not curse the earth for the covetousnes of them that dwell in it. When they gather together, and heape vp so carefully, what doe they else but swallow vp the benefits of God by their greedinesse? And though this vice be not seene in all, because they are not able; yet the affection thereof is not wanting; for the world was neuer more set on fire with this coucting. Is it any wonder then if it haue experience of this punishment of God?

Verf. 11. Woe vnto them that rise vp early to follow drunckenes, and to them that continue until the night, till the wine do inflame them.

IT was not the Prophets meaning to reckon vp all the sinnes here which then raigned, but he only toucheth some particulars vnto the which they were most addicted: and hauing handled the generall doctrine, it was necessarie to come to application; yea and to touch those things which were chiefest, because there would haue been no end if he should haue prosecuted them all, one after another. After that he hath reprobud the vice of covetousnes, he speakes against gurma-

mandizing, which was then a very common sinne among them; for he makes choise not only of such perticular vices which were in one or two personages, but of such as reigned commonly euery where. And the truth is, that these vices are so contagious that they infect the whole body. *To rise betimes*, signifies as much as to do some thing carefully, as it is sayd in *Salomon*, Woe to the people whose Princes eate in the morning, that is to say, who place their chiefe care in feeding their belly, and in inioying their voluptuousnes; *Eccle. 10. 16.* now this is nothing else but to ouerturne the whole order of nature. For as *David* saith, Man ought to rise in the morning to goe to his worke, and to wait vpon his busines till the euening, *Psal. 104. 23.* But if he rise to do nothing but to take his pleasures, and to giue himselfe to follow drunckennes, it is monstrous. He addes, that *they continue till the euening*. As if he should say, from morning to night, they continued in their drinkings, and were neuer weary in gouzelling in of wine. Now *abundance* and *excesse* are ioyned together, because where all things abound, there men abuse them to excesse and intemperancie.

Men must not rise in the morning to be idle, but to labor.

Verf. 12. And the harp and the violl, timbrill and pipe, and wine are in their feasts: but they regard not the Worke of the Lord, neither consider the Worke of his hands.

HE addes *Instruments* with voluptuousnes, by which, men giuen to gurmaandise, prouoked their appetit. It may be these Instruments were differing from ours, yet notwithstanding they appertained to Muffick, which *Isaiah* condemnes not; for it is an arte in no wise to be contemned; but he painteth forth a people ouerflowing in all sorts of superfluitie, and who gaue themselues libertie to take all their delights: which sufficientlie appears by that which followes, *But they regard not*. As if he should say, they so wallowed themselues in their delights, and were so glued to their pleasures, that it seemed they were begotten and brought vp in them; neuer thinking wherefore God gaue them things conuenient. For men were not sent into the world to eate and drink, & to plunge themselues in dissolutions; but to obey God, and to serue him in reuerence, to acknowledge his benefits, and to studie how to please him in all things; but when they ouerflow in excesse, daunting and singing, without any other drift then to passe their life in iolitic, they are worse then brute beasts; for they consider not to what end God created them, neither how he gouernes the world by his providence, vnto which marke all that we do in our life ought to tend.

Musick in it selfe not to be condemned.

We are not put into this world to plunge our selues in delights, but rather that we should studie how to please God.

I thinke it enough that I haue laid forth that sence which I take to be the most plaine: because I cannot receiue other mens acute interpretations: Among others, theirs who by the worke of the Lord, vnderstand the law. Neither am I purposed to recite euery mans opinion,

opinion. It ſufficieth to hold that the Prophet laies this reproch vpon ſuch as gaue themſelues to ſurſetting, ſo as they willingly became brutiſh; when they withdrew their minds from God, who was the author of liſe.

Verſ. 13. *Therefore my people is gone into captiuitie, becauſe they had no knowledge, and the glorie thereof are men ſummed, and the multitude is dried vp with thirſt.*

IAllow not the expoſition of ſome interpreters; namely, as if the people fell into many vices through ignorance and error, becauſe the teachers had their mouths ſhut vp: which in the end was the cauſe of their ruine. No, he rather ſets himſelfe againſt a groſſe and voluntarie ignorance: as if hee ſhould ſay, They drew their deſtruction vpon themſelues by their owne follie. The ſence is then, that the people ſhall periſh becauſe they had deſpised inſtruction; whereas they might haue been at their eaſe, if they would haue beleued good counſell. And therefore the Prophet expreſely ſaith, *My people*: becauſe they were ſeperate from other nations by a ſingular prouidedge; to the end they being kept and guided vnder God, might hold a right manner of good liſe. As it is ſaid in Deut. 4.7. What nation is ſo great that hath ordinances and lawes ſo righteous, or to whom the gods come ſo neere vnto them, as the Lord thy God is neere (at this day) vnto thee? This ſhall be your wiſedome and vnderſtanding in the ſight of all the people to heare your God. Such profaneneſſe therefore greatlie agrauates the crime; that this people ſhould bee ſtarke blind in the miſt of ſo great light. And therefore this accuſation, namely, That the people which God had taken into his charge ſhould bee without knowledge, was very grieuous. For the law was euen way ſufficient for the direction of their whole liſe: ſeeing it is a ſhining light amidſt the common darkenes of this world. And therefore it was a mouſtrous thing that the people would not giue themſelues to walke in the way which was ſet before them, but rather wilfully caſt themſelues headlong into deſtruction. The Prophet now to their reproch telles them that they ought to impute all the calamities which they indured, to their owne default, becauſe they refuſed to bend their eare to God, who would ſo faithfully haue taught them.

Whereas ſome expoſund the word *Captiuitie* by a metaphor, it ſeemes too ſtriſt: becauſe the Prophet here deſcribes the puniſhment, wherewith God did ſmite this people in part, and wherewith hee determined to ſmite them afterward: to the end hee might plainly ſhew that the people was miſerable by reaſon of their ſin; as if they had in a manner wiſhed the curſe of God to fall vpo them. When the Prophet made this Sermon, there were ſome of the tribes gone into captiuitie already. Alſo the deſtructions of both king-

domes did approach. And therefore the Prophet ſpeakes as if they had been all *now preſently in Babilon*. Laſtly, he addes another ſcourge, to wit, that not onely the common people, but alſo the moſt excellent among them ſhould be dried vp *with famine and want*: wherein the vengeance of God would be the more apparant. For it was an horrible ſpectacle to ſee the rich and chiefe men in whom conſiſted the credit of the whole nation to wander vp and downe; dying for hunger. And yet God paſſed not meaſure in executing ſo rigorous a iudgement vpon them: becauſe wee muſt alwaies haue an eie to the roote of their ignorance, to wit, that the Iewes were become wholly deſperate, ſo as they obſtinately reiected the light of the heavenly doctrine. Yea, they ſtopped their eares againſt the Lord, when he was readie to perſorme the office of a good maſter in teaching them. From hence wee gather a very profitable doctrine: namely, that the fountain from whence all plagues doe flow, is, becauſe we cannot endure to bee taught by the word of God. And that is the principall thing which the Prophet would haue vs to marke.

But ſome may aſke whether ignorance be the cauſe of all ſin: For wee ſee that many offer'd not ſo much of ignorance, as of rebellion: and although they ſee what is right, yet notwithstanding they will not follow it. Whence it followes that they ſinne wittingly; and not onely of ouerſight. I anſwere that ignorance is ſometime neere, and ſometime further off; that is, This man wants the meanes; and the other hath the meanes, as they ſay. Ignorance is ſaid to bee neere, when men deciuie themſelues vnder ſome pretence; and do wittingly blindfold themſelues. That which is farre off, is when men reiect the principles whereby they ought to take direction for the rule of their liſe. For they ought to looke directly vnto God and his will. But when they deſpise it, they are rebellious and obſtinate: yet notwithstanding ſuch are ignorant, becauſe they will not learne, but reuolt from the foundation. And yet that ignorance excuſeth them not, which they willingly imbrace, in reiecting ſuch a teacher. Wherefore this ſentence remains ſure, that the people are diuers waies afflicted; becauſe they knew not God, neither would ſuffer themſelues to bee taught by him.

Verſ. 14. *Therefore hell hath enlarged* it ſelfe, and hath opened his mouth* Or, his without meaſure, and their glorie, and ſoule. that multitude, and their pompe, and hee that reioyceth among them, ſhall deſcend into it.*

BY this verſe the Prophet ment to preſſe thoſe with feare which were growne too ſecure, and were nothing moued with any threatening whatſoeuer. For although the captiuitie was an horrible thing, and the fa-

mine also; yet was the stubbornnes and blockhithnes of this people so great, that they laid not these fearefull signes of God his anger nigh their hearts in good earnest, as they ought to haue done. And therefore *Isaiah* threatens some thing yet more fearefull; to wit, that *hell had opened his throate* to deuour them all. I said erewhile, that this which is here said of the time present, ought partly to be referred to the time to come. The Prophet also speaks not rashly, as of things cleere and manifest. And he would present the thing as it were before the sight of the people, to the end they might behold that with their eies, which they could not see brought to belecue. Moreouer, as in comparing *hell* for the graue to an insatiable beast; so by *the soule*, he means the belly, whereinto the meate descends. The summe is, that the graue is as a large and deepe gulfe, which by the com mandement of God, opens her throate to deuour men adiuaged to death. You see then that this prosopopei, or faining of persons, hath much greater vehemencie in it, then if he had said, that all were iudged to die.

The multitude.] He ioyneth the base and noble together, to the end none should flatter himselfe with hope of escape: as if he should say; death shall consume you, with all that you haue, namely, *pleasures, riches and pompe*, together with all things else, wherein you place your confidence. This then is a confirmation of y former sentence. And this particle *Therefore*. Or, for this cause, is alwaies to be obserued. For y people imputed the cause of their calamities to fortune; or rather howsoever it were, they were hardened vnder the corrections of the Lord. *Isaiah* giues them to vnderstand therefore that these things fel not out by hap hazzard. Moreouer, men are wont to quarrell with God, yea, they are so proud and shamelesse, that they feare not to make head against him. Therefore to the end this pride might be beaten downe, hee shewes that the chastisements wherewith they are punished, are most iust: and that they were wholly to blame themselves, for being euery way so miserable.

Vers. 15. And man shall be brought downe, and man shall be humbled, even the eies of the proud shall be humbled.

THIS is as it were in the shutting vp of his speech; in which he shewes to what end and issue these scourges would come vnto: to wit, that *all should be humbled; and that the Lord only should be exalted*. We haue scene the like sentence heretofore, and haue there declared the Prophets meaning: to wit, the end why we are chastised of God. For aduertities are so odious vnto vs, that for the most part we can conceiue no good thing to proceed from them. When we heare of punishments, wee haue them in horror and detestation, because we consider not that the Lord is iust. But the Prophets call vs to another consideration, to wit, that whilst men sport themselves in their

sinnes, they smother as it were the iustice of God, which shineth not clearely, vnlesse when hee takes vengeance vpon our iniquities. Behold indeede an excellent fruite, and such a one as is to be preferred before the saluation of all men. For we ought to let all things giue place to the glorie of God, which shineth no lesse in his iustice then in his mercie.

There is no cause then, why we should so much feare the rods of God wherewithall we are corrected: but ought rather in all humilitie to embrace whatsoever the Prophets pronounce against vs. Although in this kind of speech the Prophet hath also touched the pride of the hypocrits to the quicke; who euer become the more wicked when they escape still vnpunished: as if he should say, do yee thinke it is possible that after God hath forborne you so long, yet at the last you should tread him vnder your feete? no, assure your selues he will arise, *and will be exalted in your destruction*. Because the Prophet hath put the word *Adam* in the first place, and after *Aisch*; some thinke he ment to comprehend as well noble as base; as if he should say, It shall not be the common people only which shall perish, but also all those who are noted for their honour, riches and dignitie. And I willingly receiue this sence, because *Aisch* is deriued from force; and *Adam* from earth. If any will expound it more simplie, I leaue him to his owne iudgement. Howsoever it be, the Prophet hath here comprehended all mortall men; as well great as small.

Vers. 16. And the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in iudgement, and the holy God shall be sanctified in iustice.

HE shewes the manner of the excellencie; or the formall cause, as they say, of this exaltation, whereof he spake before: and it is as much as if he had said, That the Lord of hosts (whom the wicked doe proudly treade vnder foote) *shall be exalted, when he shall shew himselfe the iudge of the world*. And thus hee scornes the sottish confidence, wherewith the wicked were swollen. For if iudgement and iustice must haue the vpper hand; there ruine must needs follow: seeing their pride was nothing else but an ouerturning of the whole course of nature. Now we must diligently note, that it is no more possible for the wicked to remaine alwaies in a happie estate, then that God should suffer his glorie to be abolished. Although iudgement and iustice doe differ in nothing one from the other, yet the repetition is not superfluous. The vehemencie also of the speecli is further enlarged, when hee addes in the second member, *and the holy God shall be sanctified*, to the end the wicked should not through a false imagination promise a lasting felicitie by force, or without cause; which they cannot doe, but that the holines of God shall thereby be abolished. But seeing God is holy of his owne nature, it must needs be that he must be sanctified. Whence it follows that

ruine

ruine is prepared for the wicked, that ſo their obſtinacie and rebellion may be brought vnder, becauſe God can not denie himſelfe.

Verſ. 17. Then ſhall the lambs feede, after their maner, and the ſtrangers ſhall eate the deſolate places of the ſat.

Some translate, The lambs ſhall feede according to their maner; others, according to their portion; but hee meanes, according to their cuſtome. This verſe is diuerſly expounded; but we are to note in the firſt place, that it is the Prophets meaning to giue conſolation to the faithfull which were terrified by the hearing of ſuch fearefull iudgements of God: for looke how much the more a man is of a good and tender conſcience, ſo much the more feelles he the preſent hand of God, and the more neerely is he touched to the quick with his iudgements: laſtly, the feare and reuerence of God cauſeth vs to be rouch- ed in good earnest with whatſoever it be that is ſet before vs in his name; wherefore they could not haue bene withheld from diſ- paire in hearing ſo terrible threatnings, vn- leſſe this conſolation had bin added there- unto as a ſweet ſauce to giue them occaſion to reſiſh and take a ſweet taſte in the mercie of God. And this is a thing much vſed in the Prophets, to wit, ſtill to haue an eye alwayes to the faithfull, to furniſh them with com- fort. Although then ſaith Iſaiah it ſeemes God is minded to deſtroy all this people, yet not- withſtanding he will ſhew himſelfe a faith- full ſhepherd toward his lambs, and will feed them as he was wont to doe; marke that for one point.

Alſo the meaning of the Prophet was to beate back the pride of the great ones, who in oppreſſing the faithfull and ſimple by an vniuſt tyranny, boated notwithstanding that they were the Church of God ſtill; he tels them therefore that this their boaiſting is full of lying and vanitie, thus to adorne them- ſelues with the title of the flock or ſheepfold of God, becauſe they are goates, and not lambs; and therefore when they ſhall be cut off, God will ſtill haue meanes in his hand to feede his flock; but yet by the way, that the lambs ſhall neuer thriue, nor be in good plight, till they be ſeperated and deliuered from the goats.

The deſolate places.] The expoſitors do yet againe vary vpon this place alſo: but I thinke the true ſence is, that after the children of God haue been driuen away for a time as ban- niſhed men, they ſhall be reſtored to their right, and ſhall then recouer that which was deſert, or which was trampled and ſpoyled by the ſat beaſts; that is to ſay, by the proud and cruel which had ſpoiled them of their goods. By the deſerts, he meanes the poſſeſſions which they had left, and which others had occupied, in as much as he hath regard to the cuſtome which was then well knowne and commonly vſed amongſt them, to wit, that if any poſſeſ- ſed fields or houſes, he had his hand (as it were) in ſuch wife ſtretched forth vpon them, that no man durſt touch ſo much as a clod of

earth, but and if he left them, an other occu- pied them. The people then had ſo left their inheritances, out of which they had bin dri- uen, that they had no hope euer to recouer the ſame againe; ſo as in regard of them, they might well be called deſerts, yea, deſerts of the ſat, becauſe the ſtrong and men of power poſ- ſeſſed them. Now although it may ſimply be taken for ſat deſerts, yet notwithstanding it is more probable that the tyrants are here called the ſat.

Verſ. 18. Woe vnto them that drawe iniquitie With cords of vanitie, and ſinne as With cartropes.

Having inſerted a brieſe conſolation to aſuage the ſharpnets of the puniſhments in regard of the faithfull, he returns to the threatnings, and goes on to ſtrike them thro- row with theſe thundring ſpeeches, which at the leaſt might terrifie them in ſome ſort. By cords, hee meanes nothing elſe but the al- lurements of ſinne, by which men ſuffer them- ſelues to be deceiued, and thereby to become hardened in their hearts in wickednes, be- cauſe lightly they either containe the iudg- ments of God, or frame vaine excuſes; or elſe pretend they can do no otherwiſe; what vaile then ſocuer it be which they put before the, that the Prophet calleth cords. For as often as men are led away to ſinning by the concu- piſcence of their fleſh, in the beginning ther- of they conſult in themſelues, and feele ſome bridle which reſtrains them, and which dgbtleſſe would hinder them from commit- ting of euill, if that they were not ouercated by a contrarie tempeſt, which ſhakes off and puts away all remorſe of conſcience. When any man is enticed or ſtirred vp to euill, his conſcience by a ſecret inſtinct aſketh him, What doeſt thou? And ſinne neuer creepeth thus vpon vs, but we feele ſome remorſe. And God hath thus in deed preuented men, to the end all ſhould not giue ouer themſelues with an vnbridled licentiousnes to commit euill. Whence cometh it then that men are ſo obſtinate in their naughtineſſe? To ſay the truth, they ſuffer themſelues to be begu- led by allurements, and do ſo drench their minds with delighting themſelues therein, that they deſpiſe the iudgements of God, and all to purſue their owne ſinnes with gree- dines. They ſlatter themſelues, in beleeuing that which is ſinne, to be no ſinne; or elſe they mince them, making the leſſe then they be; or, excuſe themſelues in them vnder one pretence or other. Theſe are then the cords and wicked bands by which they draw iniquitie to them. Whence it appears, that God did not threaten them in vaine; for they not only ſinned wittingly, but obſtinatly and rebellouſly. To conclude, they ſo pulled and halled ſinne vnto them, that they were left without excuſe.

Verſ. 19. Which ſay, let him make ſpede: let him haſten his worke that we may ſee it: and let the counſell of the holy

1
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one of Israel draw neere, and come, that we may know it.

HE notes out one perticular, by which he shewes how they drew sinne vnto them as with cartropes. There is nothing so dangerous as to reiect all thought of God his iudgement, and not only that, but also to contemne whatsoeuer he saith as a fable. *Isaiab* meant therefore to expresse an extreme contempt, when as men hauing been forewardnes of God his iudgements, shall in scorne say, that they would gladly see them, and deride at them, as at some bug-bear, which these words so full of contempt and presumption do euidently shew; *Let him come: let him come.*

Worke heere (by a kind of excellencie) is taken for iudgement. For it seemes in deepe that the Lord regards not when he deferses to take vengeance vpon the iniquities of the vngodly: but when he ariseth to giue iudgement, and to execute punishment, then his worke appeares, and is manifest in deed (as they say) becaufe we perceiue by the effects that the world is gouerned by his power and authoritie. *Worke* then in this place is specially taken for iudgement, becaufe thereby it something appeares vnto vs that God is not idle, but doth his office. Now the wicked speake of him in derision and scorne, and we haue experience of this frowardnes and obstinacie at this day more then is meete, and wee must wage the like warre against them which the Prophets did. The wicked thinke that God takes his ease in heauen, and cares not for mens matters, as certaine epicures, who placed God his chiefest happines in this, that he had nothing to doe. And although they imagin that there is some God, yet they acknowledge him not in his iudgement, but in the meane while they make good cheere, and neuer pine away themselues with such thoughts. Let the Prophets and Ministers crie, and that with open mouth, let them threaten and terrifie vs whilst they list, we will securely lye still, waiting till that which they threaten come to passe, and in the whilst we will make merie. Thus the Prophet recounts the speeches of the wicked, whereby they shewed in what contempt and disdain they had his word, not only saying *let it be worke come: but let it come quickly, and let it draw neere:* for in regard it came not suddenly, they concluded, that whatsoeuer he executes not as soone as he hath spoken the word, is but smoke.

2. Pet. 3. 4.

In the second Epistle of *S. Peter* he brings in the wicked speaking thus and saying, that since the world was created all things haue continued alike; there is still one continuall course of nature, and therefore it is but a mockerie to looke for a day of iudgement after so many ages. In the meane while they prouoke God and that of set purpose, to the end he should forthwith shew his power. They adde *Counsell*, to his worke: as if they should say, how long wil God deliberate vpon it, eare he tell what he will do: let him rather shew vs by effect what he hath decreed. Their fault also is greatly amplified in that they

dare to mock so wickedly at the doctrine which was so familiarly taught them: being herein more wicked then the very prophane heathen; becaufe they despised that word whereby God had adopted them as a peculiar people vnto himselfe.

That we may know it.] See heere manifest signes of infidelitie. For the wicked wil not acknowledge God, vnlesse they presently feele him: neither wil they beleue his words. But if the holy Ghost by this marke brandeth them for abominable wicked ones, it behoeth vs by a contrary marke to let our faith and godlines appeare: to wit, that we rest in the bare and naked word of the Lord, although the euent doe not by and by shew it selfe, seeing it is the propertie of faith to hold vs fast glued to the mouth of God. The confirmation is added indeed by the works, but we must not begin at them. For thus stands the difference betweene the elect, and the reprobate: the elect rest simplie vpon the word of God, and yet in the meane while despise it not: but the wicked despise his word though he should speake a thousand times; and are infortunate vpon him still to see his works; and when iudgement is threatened, they aske, where is it? and thus they can not indure that one should mention it vnto them, vnlesse it doe by and by appeare by effects. Where there is so little moderation, it follows that there is no faith, but rather a rebellious obstinacie, which turnes a man out of the way, and estrangeth him more and more from God.

Verf. 20. Woe vnto them that speake good of euill, and euill of good; which put darkenes for light, and light for darkenes; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for soure.

ALTHOUGH many restraints this sentence to Iudges, yet if we obserue the words a little more narrowly, it shall be easie to gather from the whole context, that this is a generall sentence. For hauing before cried out against those who could not endure any admonitions, he still goes on with the same reprehension. Now it appeares that such kind of people haue alwayes some pretence or other wherewithall to deceiue themselves. And therefore they neuer cease to make replies as oft as their vices are set before them: but he expressly reproues the shamelesse impudencie of those who of set purpose endeouored to ouerthrow all difference betweene good and euill. And the letter *Lamed* placed before these two words *euill*, and *good*, shewes the sence to be thus; namely, thoe that make *euill of good, and of good euill:* that is to say, who by craftinesse full of vanitie couer, excuse, and disguise wicked matters, minding by their subtilties to change the nature of euery thing: but on the contrary by lyes and flanders they ouerthrow that which is good. For whosoever hath the feare of God, he is withheld by conscience and shamefastnes from excusing his sinnes, or enterprising to con-

demne

demne that which is juſt and right. But they who are voyd of this feare, are alſo impudent to commend vices, and make no bones of it at all to condemne vertues, the which in whomſoeuer it be, is an euident ſigne of deſperate wickednes.

We may alſo applie this ſentence to diuers particulars. For if priuate perſons are here accuſed when they ſay, euill is good, and good euill: much more is it true of thoſe, who are aduanced into high place, and haue publike office; whoſe dutie is to vphold and maintaine all that is lawfull and right. But hee rebukes all ſuch in generall who flatter themſelues in euill doing; and for hatred which they beare to vertue, condemne that which is done vprightly; yea, who to couer their filthines, vſe cauſling ſhifts; and become altogether obdurate in themſelues. The Prophet ſaith, that ſuch folke do all one, as if they ſhould *turne light into darknes, and ſweete into ſower*: For thus they ſhew themſelues to be poſſeſſed with a diabollicall rage; when they ſo mingle and confound all principles of nature.

Verſ. 21. Woe vnto them that are Wiſe in their owne eyes, and prudent in their owne ſight.

HE goes on ſtill in rebuking ſuch as could not bee reclaimed by any perſwaſion whatſoeuer, who ſhut the gate againſt all good counſell and holy admonitions which are made vnto them. Laſtly, he pronounceth a woe againſt all deſperate contemners, who oppoſe and ſet the luſts of their fleſh, or the peruerſe confidence of their owne wiſedome, againſt God his doctrine, and admonitions. And not onely reprooues thoſe which are ſo puſſed vp with a falſe opinion of their wit, that they are aſhamed to learne of others: but he alſo condemnes all ſuch in generall, who being wiſe in their owne conceit, reſuſe to heare God ſpeaking, and to obey his holie counſels. This vice hath been too common in all times, and is to be ſcene at this day in many: who although they make conſcience to reiect all the doctrine of godlines openly, yet are ſo farre off from any true teachablenes and obedience, that they proudly reiect whatſoeuer likes them not. They grant there ought to be ſome bridle to hold them in: but on the otherſide, arrogancie ſoblinds them that they quickly murmure againſt God, when he ſhewes them but the way wherein they ſhould walke. And not content with that; but with furious indignation gnaw their teeth when any reprooueth that which they doe. For where ſhall we finde that man who renouncing all his owne reaſon, will be readie to learne, from God his mouth onely? Now there is not a more dangerous peſtilence then this lying ſhew of wiſedome, ſeeing teachablenes is the beginning of godlines; when renouncing our owne wiſedome, we goe thither where God calles vs. But this falſe perſwaſion, is not condemned onely, for that it makes men diſobedient to God, and ſo

cauſeth their ruine: but alſo becauſe it is intolerable in it ſelfe. For we muſt become 1. Cor. 3. 18. fooles, if we will be the diſciples of God. It is alſo certaine, that whereſoeuer this modeſtie and humilitie beares not ſway, by meanes whereof men do voluntarily yeeld their obedience; there reignes a furious rebellion. *In their owne eyes*, is as much as when we ſay in our French tongue, In their owne opinion, or conceit.

Verſ. 22. Woe be to them which are mightie to drinke Wine, and to them that are ſtrong to powre in ſtrong drinke.

Now the Prophet reprooues another vice: to wit, *drunkennes* and *intemperancie* of life, whereof he had ſpoken before. And thus it is very likely this chapter was gathered out of diuers ſermons; and that the heads of them are ſummarily touched onely. For in regard the Prophet ſaw no repentence, he was conſtrained to repeate & beat into their minds one and the ſame thing often. He returns then to the ſame reprehentions which he had touched before: and preacheth againe againſt drunkenneſſe, exceſſe, couetouſneſſe and other corruptions. Whence we may gather, that when admonitions profit nothing, we ought to vſe the greater vehemencie againſt the ſubberne and vnteachable. Neither truelie are we to feare, leſt this importunitie ſhould be wearifome; but often to repeate the reprehentions till they bow vnder them; or elſe till they ſhew an incurable malice.

He taunteth them pleaſantly, telling them that they are luſtie and *ſtrong to drinke*; becauſe they ſpend and conſume their ſtrength in fighting with the pot and glaſſe. But what a brutiſhnes is this, for a man being of a good conſtitution of body, to make ſhew of his ſtrength, in drinking exceſſiuely. Alſo becauſe the figure Synecdoche is vſed of the Prophets in all the Scripture; he takes the ſpeciall for the generall, as if he ſhould ſay, Woe to drunkenneſſe, woe to intemperance, &c. But hee hath of purpoſe ſet forth that which was the moſt ſhamefull, that ſo hee might make this vice generally abhorred and deteſted. For there is nothing more vile and baſe (as we haue ſaid) then for a man to proue his force, in deuouring and ſwallowing in meates and drinks, and thus to wreſtle againſt himſelfe by cramming in as much meat as his belly will hold. Such men hold no rules of ſobrietie, neither do they know why God nourriſheth them. We eate and drinke to vphold the body, and not to ouerthrow it. We liue to ſerue God, and to beſtow our ſtrength in the helping of our neighbours turne: but when men endeavour not to preferue their ſtrength by theſe meanes, but rather ourturne it by prouing how much they can beare, it is certaine they are become worſe then brute beaſts.

Verſe 23. Which iuſtifie the wicked for a reward, and take away the right-

righteousnesse of the righteous from
him.

Exod. 13 8.
Deut. 16. 19.

Obiect.

Ans.

HE reproves a corruption which was then
rise in iudgement seates, and shewes the
cause why there was no iustice kept in them,
to wit, for that gifts had place and were in
account. For auarice blinds the eyes of the
wife, and perueris all order of iustice and
right, yea euen in those who otherwise beare
some good affection thereunto. But some
may obiekt, that iudgements are perueried
by many other meanes then by presents on-
ly, seeing that hatred, friendship, loue, and
other sinister affections doe very often blind
the vnderstanding. This is very true, but the
Prophet aimed at that which falls out for the
most part, & yet notwithstanding meant not
to spare the vices which he expressed not. By
whose example good Teachers ought to be
wise and well aduised in considering and cor-
recting those vices which carrie the chiefe
swinge among the people, and about all to
insist vpon those which they see to be most
in vse by wicked custome.

Now this corruption whereof mention is
made in this place, is the most frequent of all
others in iudgement seates, and therefore
the Iudges which would iudge iustly, ought
to take diligent heed they auoid it. Neither
must we giue care to those Iudges who denie
that presents are giuen them to that end: or
who say, that although they receive them,
yet notwithstanding they will giue vpright
iudgement: for where gifts haue place, there
needs must all affection of equitie and iustice
be corrupted, neither can it be possible that
thine affection should not be most inclined
to him of whom thou hast received thy re-
ward. To conclude, let vs giue care vnto the
Lord, who saith, that rewards blind the eyes
of the iust, lest in doing otherwise we will seeme
to be wiser then God himselfe.

Where gifts
haue place,
there all loue
of iustice
must needs
be corrupted.

Deut. 16. 19.

Verf. 24. *Therefore as the flame of
fire deuoureth the stubble, and as the
chaffe is consumed of the flame, so their
roote shall be as rottennes, and their bud
shall rise up like dust, because they haue
cast off the law of the Lord of hostes, and
contemned the word of the holy one of
Israel.*

THAT it might not seeme he hath cried out
so oft without cause, he shewes againe
how great and horrible punishment is nere
to this people, and denouneeth an extreme
ruine against the obstinate, because they
would not be brought into the way, but ob-
stinately resisted against the heavenly do-
ctrine: now he vseth such figures as were fit
to expresse his meaning, and also such as tou-
ched them nearer to the quick, then if he had
spoken plainly without them. He begins
with a similitude, and forthwith ends with a
metaphor, in attributing a *roote* and *bud* to
the people, as to a tree: for by these two

words he comprehends whatsoever force
was in the people; were it open, or hid: and
saith, that all of it should perish. For euen as
when the *roote* which giues strength vnto the
tree and susteineth it begins once to rot,
then the tree decayeth: so he threatens de-
struction to this people, and tels them that
all their strength is wasted and consumed.
But he shewes not now, as heretofore, the
particular kinds of wickedneses by which
they had prouoked the wrath of God. He on-
ly adds the generall cause, to wit, the *con-
tempt of the law of God*, because, as we all know,
that is the fountaine of all euils. He also am-
plifies the fault greatly, that in as much as
the will of God was manifested vnto them in
the *law*, they could not say it was by igno-
rance or error, but of set iustice, that (in sha-
king off the yoke of God) they gaue them-
selves the raines to all licentious libertie,
which was all one, as if in reiecting a most lo-
uing father, they should giue ouer themselues
to be vassals and slaues to the diuell. Adde
withall, that he accuseth them of a generall
reuolt, as if he should say, they were not re-
bellious against God in one kind only, but
they wholly forooke the Lord as disloyall
apostataes. Moreouer, that they did not only
despise the word of God, but he complains
of a thing more horrible, to wit, that the
word was become abominable vnto them,
or, that they reiected it with a wicked de-
spitefulnesse. If so be then that the contempt
of the law of God be the wellspring, head,
and perfection of all euils, there is nothing
we are more to feare, then that Satan should
so preuaile as to turne vs aside from the
reuerence of it. And if we be subiect to some
faults, yet let vs suffer at the least that the
medicine may be applied vnto them; vnlesse
in reiecting thereof proudly and maliciously
we meane to draw eternall perdition vpon
our owne heads.

Verf. 25. *Therefore is the Wrath of
the Lord kindled against his people, and
he hath stretched out his hand vpon them,
and hath smitten them that the moun-
taines did tremble, and their carcases
were torne in the midst of the streets: and
for all this his Wrath is not turned away,
but his hand is stretched out still.*

IN this verse the Prophet repeats the for-
mer iudgements whereof the Iewes had ex-
perience already, and shewes, that they be
not yet at an end, but that far worse punish-
ments are prepared for them, vnlesse they
returne into the right way. I confesse indeed
that the time past is often changed for that
which is to come, but the words of this text
will best agree so; for he propounds two di-
stinct things concerning y^e obstinat rebellie
of this people: first, how God had already cha-
stised their iniquities. Secondly, seeing there
was no signe of repentance, that he hath yet
other scourges readie to correct their wicked-
neses. Thirdly, hee shewes what these
scourges are, and tels them that the Assyrians
shall

ſhall come as ſoone as the Lord ſhall but hold vp his finger, yea that they ſhall come at his only huſſing. This is the Prophets meaning. Whence we may gather, that as ſoone as a people hath eſcaped one calamitie, they forget their chaſtiſements, and neuer thinke more of the iudgements of God: and although experience ſhould alſo be the miſtis of fooles, yet they harden their hearts vnder the blowes. *Iſaiab* ſtrikes at this ſenſeleſnes, as if he ſhould ſay, Haue you ſo ſoone forgotten the calamities vnder which you groined not long ſince? Whence came it that the *dead bodies* were caſt here and there, but becauſe the Lord had ſtretched forth his hand vpon you? And if God dealt with you as a Iudge, what is the cauſe that the wounds which do yet bleed, do not worke a reuerent feare in you to preſerue you from heaping ſinne vpon ſinne thus freſhly againe on all ſides? And to this end doth he repeat the particule *Therefore*, wherein he yekis a reaſon of his ſpeech, as if he ſhould ſay, Theſe are not afflictions that come at aduenture, but are manifeſt ſignes of God his diſpleaſure. He alſo ſaith expreſly, that God was *angrie* with his people: for had not the Iewes fallen from their dignitie, their condition had beene more happie then that of all ſeuerall nations of the world beſides. When God therefore deales ſo ſharply & ſeuerely with his choſen people, no doubt but they had grieuouſly prouoked him by their rebellions. And withall he refutes the falſe brag of the Iewes wherewith they were wont to aduance and boaſt themſelues, as if they forthwith ought to be exempt from all corrections, becauſe they were the *peculiar people of God*. Alſo when he ſaith that *the mountains trembled*: by this compariſon he expreſſeth the weight of the puniſhments vnder which they hardened themſelues, to the end he might yet more ſharply reprove their ſenſeleſnes, as being more blockiſh then things without feeling if they felt not the wrath of God, and the horrible vengeance wherewith the kingdome of Iſrael had been chaſtiſed.

And for all theſe things.] Hee threatens more heauie plagues to come, as hath been ſayd. For although the wicked know they are corrected of the Lord, yet they thinke all is paſt, as ſoone as they haue receiued but two or three blowes. And therefore they wrap themſelues vp as it were in a vaine confidence, as though the worſt were paſt, and that the powers of the Almighty were ſpent. This is the cauſe why he cries out, that *the wrath of the Lord is not yet appeaſed*; and that although they haue ſuffered many calamities, yet notwithstanding hee is furniſhed with varietie of darts, from whence they were to looke for infinite wounds.

The Coniunction Copulative may be reſolued into the Diſiunctiue, as if he would ſay, Be ſure that *the hand of God is yet ſtretched out*. Now he hath regard to that which he had ſayd before, namely, that the hand of God was liſted vp. He ſaith now, that it is not pulled in, but that he will yet purſue and ſmite them with wounds, yea, yet more feate-

full and terrible. We ought to meditate vpon theſe ſentences diligentlie, to awaken ſuch men who feare not to lie ſnoring, and that after they haue been humbled and chaſtiſed of God.

Verſ. 26. And I will liſt vp a ſigne vnto the Nations a ſarre, and will hiſſe vnto them from the ends of the earth: Or, a people and behold, they ſhall come haſtely with ſpede.

IN this, and in the verſes following, he ſhewes what puniſhment the Lord would inflict vpon this people, to wit, that they ſhall be ſo ſpoyled by the Aſſyrians, as the Iſraelites their brethren had been a little before them, yea much more grieuouſly: for howſoever the Aſſyrians in times paſt had much waſted them, the kingdome of Iudah neuertheleſſe was not yet brought to ruine. Adde herunto, that the deſtruction of the kingdome of Iſrael was as a looking-glaſſe, wherein they might behold the wrath of God, and the iuſt iudgement which hee had brought vpon them: and yet no queſtion but this prophete ſeemed incredible to them of Iudea, although there were many good likelihoods of it, and alſo becauſe the ſtate was quiet; and they no ſooner had the leaſt ſhew of truce, but they forthwith grew careleſſe: therefore hee ſaith, that this deſtruction ſhould come *from ſarre*, wherof they did not ſo much as dreame. And thus he ſounds the Alarm as if the enemies had bin already at the gates. For he puts not theſe words *from ſarre*, and *from the ends of the earth*, to put them in any hope, but rather of ſet purpoſe he thus ſpeakes, to the end they ſhould not iudge of the wrath of God by things apparent to the eye.

We are wont to eſteeme of dangers according to the outward appearance of things; when the enemies are farre off, or that they be hindred by other impediments to moleſt vs, we thinke we are ſafe. Thus the people ſlept, as they ſay, on both ſides, no otherwiſe then as if they had been out of all danger. But *Iſaiab* declareth, that all this ſhall not hinder the Lord from ſending the Aſſyrians with banners diſplayed to cut them in pieces. This *liſting vp a ſigne*, is a figuratiue kind of ſpeech, becauſe when the banner is diſplayed and the Captaine giues the ſigne, then the ſouldiers are wont to arme themſelues and to begin the fight.

He ſhall hiſſe.] Although the change of the number be a thing much vſed in the Scripture, yet it is not without reaſon, I take it, that the Prophet of many nations makes but one people, for he ſhewes that when God ſhould aſſemble many peoples & ioine them to one body, that this ſhall be no conſiſted multitude, but ſhould be as an inire body, hauing one head which ſhould rule and haue the ſoueraigntie ouer them. He rather vſed ſeuerall words of *hiſſing* then ſome other that ſounded more terrible, as of ſounding the Trumpet, or ſuch like; to ſhew, that God had no neede

As in verſe the 26.

Verſe 25.

of any great noyse to assemble the enemies together, and that it is no hard matter for him to be reuenged on them which haue offended when the time appointed is come, for he can finish all things by the least signe that may be.

And behold he shall come.] He heere yet further confirms that which I haue noted, to wit, that the wrath of the Lord must not be esteemed according to outward objects: for although it seemes that all things do promise peace, yet shall warre come notwithstanding sodainly fro thence whence we looked not for it: yea and although it may seeme we be enuironed with friends round about vs, yet shall God raise vp enemies from the ends of the earth, which shall come easily vpon vs (all lets whatsoeuer to the contrary) as if a plaine and smooth way were prepared for them, Which we ought to beare well in mind, lest we suffer our selues to be blinded by some false trust and confidence.

We are also to obserue, that warres fall not out by chance, nor at mens appointments, but by the commandement of God, euen as if he sounded the Trumpet to assemble the souldiers. Be it by warre then, by famine, or pestilence that we are afflicted, let vs know that all of them do proceede from the hand of God, because all things come at his voyce, and readily obey him. And yet the *Chaldeans* had not this zeale of obeying God, for they were caried away with their couetous and insatiable lust and desire of dominion, or thought of some such like end, but God serued himselfe of them to execute his iudgements. And herein we clearly see an admirable witnes of the power of God, which is not tied to the will of men, neither depends it vpon their fantasies, but it is free for him to call whom he will to doe him seruice, yea such as are vtterly ignorant of it. And yet the wicked are not hereby excused when they are thus drawne against their purpose, because they serue not God freely, for they propound some other thing vnto themselves, as crueltie, spoile and violence, and God by their crueltie correcteth the sinnes and offences of his people.

Verf. 27. None shall faint nor fall among them: none shall slumber nor sleepe, neither shall the girdle of his loynes be loosed, nor the latchet of his shooes be broken.

His meaning is, that all things shall be so fitted and prepared, that nothing shall let or hinder them to march on forward: as if a Prince hauing inrolled his souldiers, should by and by giue order to prepare the wayes to bring in prouision of victuals, and to administer all things necessarie whatsoeuer. He shews then that they shall be readie and nimble, and that there shall be no impediment to cause them to prolong the time. He also shewes their diligence, affirming, that none of them should lo much as slumber. Now in these words, *none shall slumber, nor sleepe*, the

order is a little inuerted: for he should rather haue sayd, *none shall sleepe, nor slumber*: because it is a lesse matter to slumber then to sleepe. But this manner of speech must be thus resolu'd, They shall not slumber nor sleepe: that is to say, they shall be so farre off from sleeping, that they shall not slumber at all. We haue the like phrasē of speech in the 127. Psalme, He which keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleepe. It is an Hebraisme then, which agrees neither to the Greeke, nor Latine.

Verf. 28. Whose arrows shall be sharp, and all his bowes bent: his horse hooves shall be thought like stint, and his wheelles like a whirlwind.

His meaning is, that they shall be furnished with fit weapons. Now he retaines the manner of sight vsed among the Assyrians and other Eastern people, who for the most part were accustomed to arme themselves with bowes and arrows for warre, as we see the Englishmen doe at this day: but vnder these particulars he comprehends all sorts of weapons. But because the way was long, and the voyage difficult, the Jewes might happilie thinke there would be many impediments to turne away the enterprise of the enemy, and that is the cause he saith, why the *hooves of the horses should be like stint*, so as they should neither faint nor be wearie, but should easily come to Iudca. Hercunto appertaines the other member, when he compares the *wheelles to a whirlwinde*: for the people of old time were wont to goe to warre with Chariots, and therefore he not only mentions *horses*, but also *wheelles*. And all this is to be referred to this great haste and diligence which they should vse, to wit, that the Lord should not be hindred by the long distance of the way to bring in deadly enemies against the Jewes to destroy them.

Verf. 29 His roaring shall be as a Lion, and he shall roare like Lions Whelps: they shall roare, and lay hold of the pray: they shall take it away, and none shall deliuer it.

This appertaines to crueltie. He compares the Chaldeans to *Lions*, whose sight is fearefull, and of nature cruell, as if he should say, They shall not be such me as are touched with any sence of pitie, mercie, or humanitie, but shall rather shew themselves cruell, and like wilde beasts. He also adde, that they shall be of such *strength*, as none shall dare to come neere them to pluck the pray out of their teeth. Meaning thereby, that the Jewes shall be vtterly vnable to disappoint their assaults, because that for feare of their crueltie none shall adventure to approach vnto them: for in regard that God would vse them as his seruants to punish the Jewes, it was requisite they should be furnished with a terrible power and maiestie, that this fortif

people

Heb. 10. 31. People might be made to vnderſtand at the laſt that they had not to doe with men, but with God, into whoſe hands it is a terrible thing to fall.

Verſ. 30. *And in that day they ſhall roare vpon them, as the roaring of the ſea: and if they looke vnto the earth, behold darkenes, and ſorrow, and the light ſhall be darkened in their ſkie.*

The Prophet addes this, to let the Iewes vnderſtand that the Chaldeans ſhould not come into the field at random, but ſhould be appointed therunto by God, and prepared by his hand. By the *roaring of the ſea*, he meaneth ſuch a great hurly burly, as ſhould ſeeme like vnto a deluge, by which all Iudea ſhould be drowned. He alſo cuts off all hopes, in foretelling that there ſhould be neither

eaſe nor end in theſe chaſtiſements. The Iewes (ſaith he) ſhall looke vp and downe to finde meanes to eſcape, as men are wont to do in any great perplexitie, but on which ſide ſoeuer they turne them, be it to heauen or to the earth, they ſhall finde no eaſe from either of them, becauſe miſeries and calamities ſhould vtterly ouerwhelme them on all ſides. This maner of ſpeech is very common, yea euen among the rude people, at ſuch time as deſtruction and calamities do threaten on euery ſide, when no iſſue or eaſe can be perceiued. It is neceſſarie then that it ſhould ſare thus with vs, when the Lord purſues vs, to the end his high hand may alwayes appeare in our eyes; and that on which ſide ſoeuer we turne our ſelues, we might behold the creatures armed againſt vs for the execution of his iudgements: for we may ſometimes eſcape mens hands, but which way ſhall we be able to flee from the hand of God?

THE VI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *In the yeere of the death of king Vzziah I ſaw alſo the Lord alſo ſitting vpon a high throne and lifted vp, and * the lower parts thereof filled the Temple.*

*Or, with his
lewe: parts
he



They have been wont to begin the 6. Chapter heere, but ſome thinke it is the beginning of this booke; and therefore that the Propheſies of Iſaiab were not well collected and gathered together, alledging this reaſon, that y^e Prophet refuseth to take vpo him y^e office of teaching, which he would not haue done, if he had exerciſed it before: and that he ſeemes altogether a nouice, ſeing he yet knew not his vocation. Morcouer that heere he declares how he had now ſeene the Lord, and not before. But I thinke theſe reaſons are not of any value, as I haue touched heretofore, and therewithall I anſwere, that it ought to ſeeme no new thing that the Prophet ſhould be caſt as it were into a ſwound, and ſo aſtoniſhed with this ſtrange viſion, that he ſhould vtterly forget he was a Prophet: for there was no part in him which was not aſhamed at the preſence of God; and therefore as ooe amazed he willingly ran into ſome hole, or rather thinking himſelf but a dead man, he thought verily he ſhould haue giuen vp the ghoſt. And it is very neceſſarie that the children of God ſhould be thus touched, when God letteth them perceiue the ſignes of his preſence, to the end they may be humbled and conſounded in themſelues. Adde alſo, that God meant thus to feare the rebellious people in the perſon of his ſeruant, and therefore it is no maruell if he excuſe himſelfe being ſo aſtoniſhed with feare; as alſo in re-

gard that he had not before felt the weight of his charge as now he did, after the maiſtic of God had thus euidently appeared vnto him.

But why was not this viſion giuen him in the beginning? I anſwere, it was neceſſarie in regard of the time, to confirme him more and more in the execution of his office. An example whereof we may ſee in the Apoſtles, for in the beginning they were ſent with commandment, not to paſſe the bounds of Iudea, but after Chriſt roſe againe, he eſtablisheth them anew in a ſolemn manner. He breatheth on them, and tels them that they ſhould receiue the holy Ghoſt; and contents not himſelfe therewith, but ſending downe the holy Ghoſt from heauen vpon them in fire toongs, he put an extraordinarie power vpon them. So according to the diuers mutations which happened in times and kingdoms, it was neceſſarie that Iſaiab ſhould be confirmed and approued againe by a new viſion: as well that he might be encouraged to conſtancie, and might with the more cheerefulnes follow his vocation in time to come, as alſo that his miniſtrie might be authorized among the Iewes by the authority of God. This reaſon to me ſeemes ſufficient why he had not this viſion at the beginning, but had it rather ſometime after he began to teach.

Queſt.
Anſ.
Mat. 10. 5.
Iohn 20. 22.
Act. 2. 3.

Now that this booke takes not his beginning here, it ſufficiently appeares by that we haue ſeene in the former preface, which is much more cleare and proper then this. And becauſe all paſſage might be ſtopped by the desperate obſtinacie of this people, it was neceſſarie he ſhould begin his ſpeech with this vehemencie here ſet downe: as alſo becauſe it is very likely that he had exerciſed the function of teaching a long time vnder king Vzziah, who was dead as I thinke before this propheſie was publiſhed. Laſtly, the Prophet by theſe words ſignifies, that God appeared

peared vnto him after he had alreadie begun to execute his office.

Some by *Death* vnderstand the Leprosie wherewith this king was smitten, which was indeede a ciuill death, because the king was constrained to forsake the companie of men, and to leaue the government of the kingdom: but I had rather take *death* in his proper signification. Thus I thinke then, to wit, that *Isaiab* prophesied the former things fro the time of *Uzziah*, at that time when he was stricken with Leprosie, and that *Isaiab* had this vision after his death, at that time when *Iothan* should succeed him. For we know how the change of kings do bring diuers sturres and hurly burlies, so as it is no wonder if *Isaiab* were confirmed againe in his calling. Also the prophesie it selfe which followes will declare sufficientlie that he had preached sometime before he had seene the Lord. For the blinding of the people is heere spoken of, whereof the Prophet had such experience, y^e their stubbornnes might haue caused him to haue giuen ouer that which he had begun, seeing he lost all his labour. The Lord then confirms him by this vision, to the end all discouragemets being set apart, he should manfullie continue to do his dutie, and goe on with that which he had begun by the commandement of the Lord.

Obiect.

[*I saw the Lord.*] Some aske how *Isaiab* could see the Lord, who is a spirit, and therefore can not be seene with corporall eyes: and also because the vnderstandings of men are not able to mount vp to his infinit greatnes, how it can be that he should comprehend him vnder a visible forme? But we must note, that as oft as God shewed himselfe to the fathers he neuer appeared vnto them in his whole essence, but as men were able to comprehend him, according to their capacite. For it is not inconuenient (albeit men creepe here as it were vpon the earth, or at the least are very low beneath the heauens) that God should descend downe vnto them, so as the beames of his glorie should appeare vnto them as in a glasse. Such a forme then was represented before *Isaiab*, whereby he tasted and saw the incomprehensible maiestie of God as farre as his weakenes could beare. And therefore he attributes a *seate, a garment, and a bodily sight* vnto him. Whence wee may gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, that as oft as God shewes any signe of his presence, we are to know for certaine that he is present by vs: for he deceiues not in giuing vaine representations, as men wickedly disfigure him by their foolish inuentions. Because this representation then was a true testimonie of God his presence, *Isaiab* rightly affirms that *he saw him*. As when it is sayd that *Iohn saw the holy Ghost* in the likenes of a Dove, the name of the spirit is transferred to the signe, because he should not doubt but it was the holy Ghost which rested vpon Christ.

Matth. 3. 16

Obiect.

Anf.

It is demanded in the second place who this Lord should be. *S. Iohn* in the twelfth of his Gospel teacheth and that truly, that it is *Christ*, because God neuer shewed himselfe to the fathers bur in his eternall Word,

and only Sonne. And yet some notwithstanding do restrain this amisse to the person of Christ in my iudgement, seeing the Prophet giues him indefinitely the name of *God*. The name *Adonai*, which seemes best to appertaine to Christ, fauours their opinion nothing at all, for it is often attributed vnto God simply, and without relation. Mention is made of God in this place then without determining of either end: yet notwithstanding one may properly say, that *Isaiab* saw the glory of Christ, because he was the image of the inuisible God from euerlasting.

Col. 1. 15

[*Sitting vpon a seate.*] He could not haue better described the maiestie of God in regard of the circumstance of the place then vnder the person of a *idge*, to the end his maiestie might the better awaken the Iewes, and we shall see hereafter the horrible iudgement which the Lord pronounceth from his seate. But to the end we thinke not the Prophet should inuent how he could paint out God, we must note that he faithfullie represents the same shape and forme which was exhibited and shewed vnto him. Now some may doubt whether the Prophet was brought into the Temple, or whether these visions were reuealed vnto him sleeping. Although they are wont to bring many reasons for the one or the other exposition, which leaues it in suspence, notwithstanding the most probable coniecture is, that although he were out of the Temple, in the house, or in the fields, yet that this vision might be giuen him as to the rest of the Prophets.

Obiect.

Anf.

[*And with his lower parts.*] Almost all the expositors do vnderstand this of the fringes of the garment; although it may be referred to the verges of the iudgement seate: so as his meaning is to shew that the greatnes of God was such, that it spread it selfe throughout all the parts of the Temple. He also meanes to attribute a more excellēt and glorious forme vnto God, then to any humane creature whatsoever. And that he thus appeared in the Temple, it doth yet adde greater authoritie to the vision, because he had promised his presence to his people there, and there the people waited for answers, according as *Salomon* had exprefly declared at the dedication of the Temple, 1. King 8. 30. To the end then the people might know that these things proceeded from God (vpon whom they called dayly, and vpon whom in a vaine confidence they were puffed vp) this vision was shewed to the Prophet in the Temple. Now this must needs obtēin great credit among them, when it was preached aloud that this was no word of any mortall man, but a diuine oracle comming downe fro God, whose name they had wont boldly to vsurp as oft as they would attribute vnto themselves any great matter. For this indeed was a very sharp and an odious prophesie, and therefore had the greater need of sound confirmation: And it is also a thing vsuall among the Prophets of God, namely, that he spake vnto them from his Temple and from his Sanctuarie.

Verf. 2. *The Seraphims stood vpon it, every*

every one had ſixe wings; With twaine he covered his face, and with twaine he covered his ſecte, and with twaine he did ſlie.

HAving testified that God had appeared vnto him full of maiestie and glorie; he adds that the Angels were about him, which he calles *Seraphims*, in regard of their ſeruen- tie. Now although the etymologie of this word is well enough knowne, yet diuers reasons are brought on both ſides. Some affirme they are called *Seraphims*, because they burne with the loue of God; others, because they are swift as fire; others, because of their brightnes. Howſoeuer it be, the incompre- hensible maiestie of God is set forth vnto vs in this description, as by the sunne beames, to the end in them we might learne to con- sider and adore ſo admirable and excellent a glerie. Many thinke there were two *Seraphims*, euen as there were two *Cherubims*, which compassed the Arke. I willingly receiue this opinion, and yet I dare not affirm any thing, where the scripture is silent. Now in regard it is an vsuall thing in the scripture to appropriate the descriptions which are made of God, to the signes, the vse whereof was ordinarie, and the knowledge thereof familiar among the faithfull; it may be the Prophet saw such a figure. In the meane while I ſo continue to hold this as a probable coniecture, that yet notwithstanding I hinder not any to receiue a contrarie interpretation, if any can bring better warrant, for *Daniel* saw thousands of Angels, and not two only. Dan. 7. 10.

Six wings.] This figure is not without reason. For these wings thus composed, contained some mystrie, which y Lord would not haue whollie hidden. The two by which the Angels *ſlie*, signifie nothing else but their readinesse and nimblenesse to execute the commandements of God. And seeing the analogie of this thing is certaine and euident, I hope those which are not contentious will easily agree therunto. The other two where- with they covered their faces, sufficientlie shew, that the Angels themselves can not beare the brightnes of Gods maiestie; yea, that they are dazzled with his looke, euen as we are when we behold the sunne in his brightnes. And if the Angels can not beare the maiestie of God, how great shall the rashnes of men be if they strue to attaine therunto? Let vs learne then to enquire no further of God then is lawfull and expedient, in such wise as our knowledge may soberly and modestly taste that which yet is very farre off from our capacitie. Yet notwithstanding the Angels do not so couer their faces as that they should vterly depriue themselves of any sight of God, for they ſlie not at randon. So we also may behold God, but yet so farre forth as the weakenes of our vnderstanding can endure. There is a little more difficultie as touching the other two wings. For some thinke they haue their *feete covered*, lest they should touch the earth, and so get some soile

from thence, as wee our selues and others haue been wont to doe. For euen as in walking we gather duſt & filth, so whileſt we remaine vpon the earth we are infected, as with touching some contagious thing. Whence we may learne, that the faithfull shall haue no acquaintance with the Angels, vnlesse they ſlie aloft, being no longer glued to the earth. This is the exposition which some bring. But I am rather of their opinion who thinke these *wings* had a contrarie vse to those which were about rehearsed: for euen as they couered their faces with wings aboue, lest they should be ouerwhelmed with the exceeding brightnes of God; so had they *wings beneath*, to couer themselves from our sight. Now if it be so that wee can not behold so small beames of the brightnes of God which glimmereth in the Angels but we be by and by dazzled; how can we behold that most excellent and bright maiestie of God which is able to swallow vp all our reason? Let men learne then that they are farre remote from the perfect knowledge of God, seeing they are vnable to attaine so farre as to the Angels. This exposition I take to be the best, and yet I receiue not the first.

Vet. 3. And one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole world is full of his glorie.

IT was necessarie all these things should be represented to the Prophet in a vision, to the end that not only the people but euen *Iſay* himſelfe should be the more moued. For there was no lesse neede in regard of him, then of all the people, seeing he was to susteine very hard and difficult assaults; neither could he haue boldly denounced these things, vnlesse he had been first confirmed. The people also being admonished by this vision how exceeding great and fearefull the maiestie of God was, who pronounced this sentence against them, should be terrified therewith in good earnest: This God (at whose only looke the Angels themselves tremble, and whose praises they continually sound forth with full voyce; lastly, whom they serue and obey) came forth vpon his throne: but men whom he had vouchsafed to adopt for his children, proudly with obstinacie resisted him. Now when we heare that the Angels are continually buſied in sounding forth Gods glorie, let vs know that their example is set before vs for our imitation. For it is the highest seruiſe we can do vnto him to be occupied in celebrating his praises. In as much then as he herein makes vs companions with his Angels, it is to the end that whilst we wander here below, we should notwithstanding be conioyned and made like to the heauenly inhabitants. Lastly, to the end the harmonic between vs and the Angels may be perfect in all points, it behoues that the praises of God doe not only sound vpon our tongues, but that all the actions of our life be referred therunto; which we shall then do when we endeavor to doe all things therein to the glory of God.

To be occupied in celebrating Gods praises, is the highest seruiſe we can do him.

Exod. 25.

1

2

3

Holy,
Holy,
Holy.]

The Auncients haue vsed this testimonie against the Arians when they would prouue the three persons in the one essence of God. I mislike not their iudgement, although if I should haue to deale with heretikes, I had rather vse stronger arguments, for they triumph and become the more hardened when we contend against them with such places as are not sufficientlie plain and euident, as heere they might readily answer, that by the number of Three in this place was shewed a perfection (as in many other places of the scripture besides.) Although I doubt not but the Angels doe heere set forth one God in three persons (and to say the truth, we can not magnifie God, but we must by and by celebrate the praises of the Father, of the Son, and of the holy Ghost) yet notwithstanding I take it we should rather vse more solid testimonies, to the end that whilst we go about to prouue the chiefe article of our faith, we expose not our selues to the scoffes of heretikes. So then by this repetition there should be rather shewed an vnweariable continuance of praising, as if the Prophet had sayd, The Angels neuer ceased their melodie in singing the praises of God: as indeed his Holinesse ministreth to vs infinite matter thereof.

The whole world is full. Word for word it is, The fulnesse of whole earth: which we may referre as well to the fruits, liuing things, as to all sorts of riches wherewith God hath furnished the earth; and so the sense should be, that in this adorning of the earth, and the diuers furnitures which are in it, we may see the *glorie of God* to shine, because they are so many testimonies of his fatherly loue towards vs. Notwithstanding the most simple and naturall sense is, that the *glorie of God fillles the whole world*, and is spread abroad throughout all the quarters of the earth. And in mine opinion there is heere a close opposition, by which he beates back the foolish ouerweening of the Iewes, who imagined the glorie of God was shewed no where else but vpon them, as if they meant to shut it vp in their Temple. Now *Isaiah* shewes that it is so farre off from being shut vp within so narrow bounds, that it *fillles the whole earth*. And this agrees to the prophesie which will afterwards follow touching the blinding of the Iewes, for thereby he hath giuen entrance for the Gentiles into the Church of God, in regard they supplied the emptie and forsaken place of the Iewes.

Verf. 4. *And the lintels of the doore cheekes moued at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.*

His noyse of the posts sufficiently shewes that it was no voyce of man which the Prophet heard; for there is no mortall man that is able to make the posts and threshold of an house to shake with his voyce. Now the Lord meant not only to confirme his voyce to the Prophet, but to men also, and that for euer, that so it might be knowne throughout

all ages. Let vs know then that the *voyce of God* is confirmed to vs at this day by this sound, to the end we also should tremble as oft as he speaketh: for if the dumb and insensible creatures are moued therewith, what ought we to do; we, I say, which seele, smell, taste, and only vnderstand it, to the end we should holily and reuerently obey his holy word?

The house was filled with smoke.] This was a common and ordinarie signe which the Lord vsed among the auncient people: for as soone as *Moses* entred into the Tabernacle *Exod. 33. 6.* we reade that the smoke was spread, so as the people could neither see *Moses* nor the Tabernacle. The smoke then which *Isaiah* describes was no new thing; but God according to his accustomed maner meant thereby to testifie that he would manifest his power in executing iudgement vpon this people.

But some may aske why the Lord would manifest his presence by this signe rather than by another? A twofold answer may be giuen to this question. First, because the Lord hath alwayes been bent to repress the boldnes of men, to the end they should not enquire further into his Maiestie then was meete, being alwayes prone (euen all of vs) to be prying ouermaleperly and rashly in this regard. Wee would pearce aboue the clouds and search into the very secrets of Gods counsell, and in the meane while neglect that which is before our feete. From thence ariseth this laberinth of errors, in which after \bar{y} spirits of men are enwrapped, they forthwith fall to serue false gods: for me no sooner giue leaue vnto theselues to forge what they list of God in their fantasie, but they by and by therewithall enterprise they care not what against him. And therefore it is not without cause that he hath opposed this *smoke*, thereby to admonish men of their weakenes. And yet he would not haue them to be either blind, or besotted with the blockishnes and error of the Papiests, who at this day couer ignorance vnder the name of simplicitie: but he forbids to search or pry further into the heauely mysteries then that which is manifested vnto vs by himselfe in his word: for that (as *S. Augustine* sayth) is a very learned ignorance. Wherefore as oft as mention is made of the like smoke, let vs know it is as a bridle by which we ought to be kept in awe, that we shoul'd not be too curious in searching into the counsels of God. Secondly, this *smoke* was to strike a feare into them, as we see when *Dauid* describing God to be terrible and angrie, sayth, that cloudes and darknes are round about him, *Psal. 97. 2.* which also agrees very well to this place, because he pronounceth an horrible iudgement to wit, the blinding of the Iewes. Some would haue this a fore-runner of \bar{y} fire which should burne the Temple: but that which I haue set downe is more probable.

Verf. 5. *Then I sayd, woe is me, for I am vndone, because I am a man of polluted lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of*

of polluted lips: for mine eyes haue ſeene the King and Lord of hoſtes.

NOW the Prophet telleth in what manner he was effectually touched with this viſion, to wit, that hee was ſo terrified with the feare of Gods preſente, that he thought himſelfe undone. And hee addes the reaſon wherefore he thought thus of himſelfe: Be- cauſe (ſaith he) I am of polluted lips. I wonder why *S. Ierome* hath turned it, Be- cauſe I held my peace, ſeeing there is no ambiguity in the word. It is true that the verb *Damaſ* ſignifies to hold ones peace, but in this place there is a certaine note of the verb paſſiue which is added. It may alſo be tranſlated thus, Wo vnto me for I am brought into ſilence: becauſe ſilence is often taken for death in the ſcripture, and it is ſayd, that thoſe which are buried are in ſilence. But ſeeing it is all one as touching the ſenſe, I will not contend much about the tranſlation. His meaning is then, that he was ſo terrified with the ſight of God, that he became as a dead man: And indeede there is no cauſe why we ſhould wonder at this; for man muſt be wholly brought to nothing in regard of his fleſh, to the end he may be reued according to God. Whence is it that men liue, that is, that they thinke they liue, being puff- ed vp with the knowledge of their owne rea- ſon and power, but becauſe they are ignorant of God? And ſo before he reueale him- ſelfe to vs we thinke we are gods rather then men, but when the Lord appeeres, then we begin to feele and perceiue what wee are. Frothence comes that true humilitie which conſiſts in this, that men attribute nothing to themſelues, but depend wholly vpon God. Wherefore this and ſuch like places vpon this argument, ought to be diligentlie obſerued. Now it was an ordinarie thing with the holy fathers to crie, *I ſhall die, I am undone,* as oft as they ſaw God. Wherefore before our minds be well awakened by approaching to God in good earneſt, our life is nothing elſe but a vaine imagination: we are in darknes, where- in it is very hard to diſcerne truth from er- ror: but when we are come into the light, it is eaſie to diſcerne the one from the other. So when God comes to vs he brings the light with him, to the end we may ſee that we are nothing, which yet wee can not perceiue whilſt we are puff- ed vp with a vaine opini- on of our ſelues before.

Yes mine eyes haue ſeene.] Is it the ſight of God which brings death to men? For it ſeemes ſtrange that the looke or preſence of God ſhould take away the life, whereof he is the fountaine. I anſwere, that this fall- es out by accident, and in reſpect of our owne default, and not from the nature of the Lord. Death is in our ſelues, and we perceiue it not but when it is compared with the life of God. And without all queſtion this is it that the Prophet here meanes. For he ſaith not ſim- ple, I am dead, but he addes the reaſon, namely, becauſe he is of polluted lips.

But why refraines he pollution to the lips? Was hee pure in his vnderſtanding, in his

thoughts, and in the other parts of his body? I anſwere, The Prophet toucheth that which was the principall and moſt precious thing in him, to wit, his tongue, which was dedicate and conſecrated to God, by whom he was in- ſtituted a Prophet. And although otherwiſe he was a ſinner, yet notwithstanding in re- gard of the holy office which he exerciſed, he was ſpecially conſecrated in this part. And yet in as much as he answered not to the ho- lines of God, he confeſſeth he is polluted, yea euen in that part which is the moſt holy in him. And this I take to be the ſimple and na- tive ſenſe of this place, although the expo- ſitors haue ſayd nothing touching it hitherto.

In the miſds.] This is added by way of expo- ſition. For here he puts himſelfe among the people, no otherwiſe then as one who felt himſelfe guiltie of the pollution of the whole body, and forgets the puritie he had recei- ued of God, becauſe he was unable to ſtand before him. Hence it appeeres, how ſuch erre as thinke the Prophet ſeigned as the com- mon people are wont to doe, who forge diuers inuentions of God. For as I haue ſaid, the preſence of God is the confounding of the fleſh, becauſe it ſhewes vs that we are nothing in our ſelues. He which ſeech God, and is guiltie of his owne miſerie, what can he feele but his owne perdition? becauſe God is the Iudge, from whom nothing can be hid- den, or vnknowne; in whoſe preſence all our puritie becoms impuritie. And if this beſell the Prophet, what may wee thinke of our ſelues? for what are wee in compariſon of him? Although God hath begun to purge vs, yet muſt wee alwayes acknowledge our vn- cleanenes, the reliques whereof we ſhall al- wayes feele in our fleſh. From this place alſo we are to gather a generall doctrine, to wit, that mens mouthes are polluted and impure if they be not purged of God. Whence it fol- lowes, that all humane doctrines do alwayes ſmell of their impuritie: for there is nothing pure, but that which proceeds fro the Lord.

All doctrines of men ſmell of impuritie.

Verſ. 6. Then ſlew one of the Sera- phims vnto me with an hote coale in his hand, which he had taken from the altar with the tonges.

THE Prophet ſhewes what remedie was gi- uen him after he had been thus terrified, and as he thought to death: and this con- firms that which I haue ſaid alreadie, to wit, that the puritie of the lips comes from God only, for men can bring nothing of their owne which is not vaine and impure. If any obiect, it is abſurd that the Lord ſhould purge him now, as if his tong had been impure and prophane before, which notwithſtand- ing was the organ of the holy Ghoſt: I haue heretofore ſufficientlie answered this obiection. True it is that the Lord had purged him before, but according to his meaſure. The purgation which is now added is greater, becauſe it hath his degrees and increa- ſings, which no man can wholly obtaine at the firſt. Wherefore we muſt not gather that

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the Prophets lips were impure before, because they are now purged: but we are to regard to what end this was done, namely, because the Lord would augment and increase his graces in him, and raise him vp higher in dignitie, to the end he might haue greater authoritie among the people; and this was requisite by reason of the times, and of the mutation which was then in the state. *The fire is taken from the altar*, as diuine and heavenly, because the law forbid to take any strange fire from thence: the reason is, in regard that whatsoever men doe mingle with sacred things, can not but be a meere profanation. Wherefore *Isaiah* was taught by this figure, that all puritie floweth from God only.

Verf. 7. And he touched my mouth, and said, loe, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquitie shall be taken away, and thy sinne shall be purged.

WE see how God stoopes downe to the weakenes of humane sense. He puts the *songs* in the hand of one of γ Seraphims; to the end he may take a cole from the Altar and applie it to the Prophets mouth. This was done in a vision: yet notwithstanding God rayed vp the vnderstanding of the Prophet by the help of this outward signe. But we must not thinke that the cole had any vertue in it selfe, as superstitious people imagin hidden vertues in magicall arts: there is nothing of all this heere; for it is one God and none other which can purge vncleannes from any part whatsoever. The Angell was heere the minister of the purgation, but he was not the author of it; to the end we post not that ouer to another which belongs to God alone. And this the Angell himselfe expresseth clearly, in that he attributes nothing to himselfe, but taking the holy pledge which he had receiued of God, he applies it as a sacrament to the mouth of the Prophet: not as if he could not haue been clenfed without the *cole*, but because this visibler signe was profitable for a witness and confirmation of such a thing. And this also is the vse of Sacraments, namely, to confirme vs according to our weakenes. For we are not Angels to behold the mysteries of God without any helps; and therefore he lifts vs vp to him by little and little, and as it were by steps.

Behold he hath touched.] He shewes how the confirmation which was given by the signe was not in vaine, but that the thing which was signified by it was forthwith granted, so as *Isaiah* well perceiued he was not deceiued. Whence we may gather, that the thing it selfe is giuen vs in the Sacraments with the signe. For the Lord feeds not our eyes in the Sacraments with bare and empirie figures, but he ioynes the truth it selfe with them, to testifie that he works by the signes effectually. And we must note this so much the more diligently, as there are few at this day who are acquainted with the true vse of the Sacraments; as also in regard that commonly there are contentions among many holy

and learned personages, euen about this matter. Now in the first place we must hold this article, That γ truth can neuer be separate from the signes; although it ought to be distinguished. For we see and feele the signe; as the bread which is giuen vs by the Minister in the Supper: and because Christ must be sought in heauen, it behoues vs that our thoughts be caried thither. Notwithstanding he offretch his body by the hand of the Minister, to the end the faithfull might truly inioy it; prouided that they aspire to heauen by faith where he is. He giues it then to the faithfull who raise vp their minds to him by faith, because he can be no deceiver.

Now the vnbeleeuers receiue the signe indeed, but because they lie grouching vpon the earth, and ascend not vp into the kingdom of Christ; they are not partakers of the veritie, because that he which hath not faith, can nor lift vp his thought to God, and therefore can not be partaker of Christ. It is faith only which opens vs the gate into the kingdom of God; wherefore whosoever will liue by the flesh of Christ, it is necessarie that he be lifted vp farre above all humane sense into heauen by faith. In a word, there is nothing but the spirit of God only which can make vs partakers of this Communion: yet notwithstanding it follows not thereupon that the truth of the Sacraments should be diminished by the vnbeliefe of men, seeing God alwaies offretch the spirituall thing, but the wicked leaue it behind them; euen as the grace of God by the Gospell is offered to all, but all do not receiue it, although they heare it, and be constrained to consent to the truth of it.

Moreouer we learne from this plate, that the Sacraments are neuer separated from the word, for the Angell receiuefs not a dumb person in this place; but: first he hath giuen the signe, he by and by addes the word, to shew the end of it: for it could haue been no Sacrament, vnlesse the word had also been ioyned vnto it, whereby *Isaiah* might vnderstand wherefore the cole was put to his mouth. And therefore let vs know that the principall part of the Sacraments consists in the word, which without it are but meere corruptions; as wee see at this day how the Sacraments in the Papacie are commonlie turned into meere may-games. Now the summe is, that there should remaine no impediment why *Isaiah* should not now susteine the person of God, being perfectlie clenfed, and pure from all spot.

*Verf. 8. * Also I heard the voyce of * Or, after, the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send? and Who shall goe for vs? Then I said, Heere am I, send me.*

THE Prophet begins now to declare the end of this vision, and why the Lord appeared in so glorious a maiestie to ordaine him a Prophet againe, to wit, because he was to carrie an incredible ambassage touching the blinding of the Iewes: he is made more certain

The truth neuer separated from the signes, yet they must be distinguished.

Faith.

The Spirit

The Word and Sacraments must go together.

The vse of Sacraments.

God giues vs the thing signified in the Sacraments, and feeds our eyes therewith empirie shadowes.

certaine then of his vocation in ſo odious a matter, to the end that treading all feare of man vnder his feete, he may obey the commandement of God, for there is nothing that ſo ſecureth the minds of the faithfull, as whē they know they ſerue God. He had alſo another teſtimonie, to wit, that he was purged of God, and thus was ſufficient to make him vnder- take the hardeſt burthen which could be impoſed vpon him.

Whom ſhall I ſend?] The Prophet brings in the Lord ſpeaking, as if he could find no man fit to do this meſſage. Some thinke that the blockiſhnes of the Priests and Prophets is here touched, becauſe not one amongst them was able to teach, although they were many in number. Now although this reaſon hath ſome colour, yet I had rather refer it to the certentie of ſy vocation of the Prophet, to wit, that the Lord called him not forth at random, but with choice. This is then a graue deliberation which the Lord takes as touching him whom he ſhould ſend; not that he doubteth but theſe manners of ſpeech are in regard of vs, euen as when he ſayd, *I will goe downe, and ſee*, Gen. 28. 21. For God, to whom all things are manifeſt, needs no inquitie; but to the end that men may not thinke he haſtens too much in doing any thing, therefore he applies himſelf to their cōmon manner of ſpeech, ſo whē he asks, *Whom he ſhould ſend*, he ſignifies, that he needs not a common perſon, but an excellent Teacher in the execution of ſo great a charge. Hence wee are to gather that the authoritie of Iſaiah was confirmed, to the end he might not only be held for a Prophet, but the chiefe among the Prophets. *Who ſhall goe for vs?* I am of opinion indeede that this place notes out the three perſons in the Deitie, as elſewhere alſo, *Let vs create man after our image*, Gen. 1. 26. For God deliberates with himſelfe, and that in the plural number. And no doubt but he here conſults with his eternall Wiſdome and Power, that is to ſay, with the Sonne, and the Holy-Ghoſt.

Here am I.] This ſo prompt an anſwere ſets forth the greatnes of that readines which proceeds of faith. For he who before was like a dead man, feares now no difficulties at all. Whence we ſee, that this terror wherof we haue ſpoken herebefore, proceeded not from rebellion, as if he would ſee the preſence of God, and reſuſe the charge which was inioyned him: but becauſe he had neede of new grace, that ſo he might feele and know himſelfe ſufficient for the ſuſtaining of this office. Whence it is to be obſerued, that we can neuer rightlie enterpriſe any thing, without certaine teſtimonie of our vocation: for without that, we ſhall ſtagger and doubt at euery ſtep.

Besides, it is a great prop to vphold our inſimicue, when we feele that we are not ſtature of neceſſarie gifts, but that God furniſheth vs, to the end we may the more eaſily performe our charge. Morcouer it behoues vs to be inſtited by this excellent example of obedience, that as oft as the Lord calls vs, we be readie and prepared to beare the bur-

then which he ſhall lay vpon vs, and that we reſuſe it not, notwithstanding all the difficulties which may ſtand in our way. When the Prophet ſaith, *Heere I am*, it is as much as if he ſhould haue ſaid, I am readie to execute that which God ſhall command me; for by this manner of ſpeech, obedience is often noted forth in the Scripture.

Verſ. 9. And he ſaid, goe, and ſay vnto this people, yee ſhall heare indeede, but yee ſhall not vnderſtand: yee ſhall plainly ſee, and not perceiue.

IT appeares againe frō hence more clearly, how neceſſarie this viſion was for Iſaiah, to the end he might not faint in his courſe euen at the firſt pull. For this was a great offence of mind vnto him, that he muſt be faine to haue experience of ſuch an obſtinacie and rebellion in the people of God; and not for a yeere or two, but euen for more then ſixtie yeetes together. It was neceſſarie therefore that he ſhould be well armed, and to become euen as a wall of braſſe, that he might be inabled to ſtand againſt ſuch a rebellion. The Lord plainly teſtifies to Iſaiah then, that he ſhall haue to deale with obſtinate people, whom he ſhall do very little good vpon; yet that he muſt not faint by taking offence at ſo ſtrange a thing, neither be diſcouraged by ſuch a ſubburnnes; but y he is to overcome all theſe temptations, and to paſſe beyond them with an inuincible courage. For the Lord admoniſtheth him before hand touching that which ſhould come to paſſe: and it is as if he ſhould haue ſayd, Thou ſhalt teach, but without fruite, but yet ceaſe thou not for all that to inſtruſt ſtill, becauſe I command thee: and though thou perceiue no fruite, yet be not therefore wearie: only obey me, and leaue all the iſſue of thy labour vnto my wil. I forewarne thee touching theſe things betime, to the end thou ſhouldeſt not faint nor turne aſide by reaſon of thy ill ſucceſſe; as though ſomething v unexpected were beſalne thee. Adde withall, that he is commanded to deteſt their blind obſtinacie: openlie, as if of ſet purpoſe he ſhould thunder out againſt them, and ſhould ſay, I know it very well that I ſhall loſe my labour, but I care not, it is enough for me that God approves of my actions, to whom my preaching ſhall be a ſweet ſmelling ſauour, although it bring death vnto you, 2. Cor. 1.

Ministers are to yeeld obedience vnto God: and to command to com- ſucceſſe of their labors to the bleſſing of God.

Verſ. 10. Make the heart of this people fat, make their eare heauie, and ſhut their eyes, leſt they ſee with their eyes; and heare with their eares, and vnderſtand with their hearts, and conuert, and he heale them.

HEre the former ſentence is better expreſſed. For God not onely admoniſtheth Iſaiah that he ſhall loſe his labour in teaching; but alſo that he will cloſe up the eyes of this people

Hee that doubteth of his vocation, muſt needs ſtagger at euery Rep.

people by his doctrine, thereby giuing them occasion of greater blindnes and obstinacie, which in the end shall worke their perdition. He signifies that the people being deprived of reason and vnderstanding, shall perish, and that there shall be no remedie left: notwithstanding he therewithall aduertiseth y^e Prophet, that his labour shall be an acceptable sacrifice vnto him, howsoeuer it bring ruine and death to the Iewes. And truly this is an excellent sentence, not only because *Iſaiah* foretelles the things which were accomplished in the kingdome of Christ, but because it containes a very excellent doctrine, the vse whereof is perpetuall in the Church of God. Also those who walke faithfullie in the ministrie of the word, shall be forced to feele the experience of it; and we learne it by effect more then were to be wished: but this hath been common to all the seruants of Christ, and therefore ought we to beare it with the greater courage, howsoeuer it be a great scandall to those that serue God with a pure conscience. Besides, we are not only much offended hereby, but Satan vnder this pretext prickes his instruments forwards to bring their doctrine into the greater disgrace; namely, that is not onely without fruite, but also because it doth hurt, fo as it makes men more obstinate, and works their confusion. For many at this day hauing nothing else to reproch the doctrine of the Gospell withall, affirme, that the preaching thereof brings no other fruite but this, that it makes men worse then they were before. Now whatsoeuer the cunct be, yet notwithstanding God declares that our ministrie pleaseth him, because we do that which he hath commanded.

Besides, albeit our labours seeme vnprofitable, and that men cast themselves headlong into destruction, waxing more obstinate, yet must we goe on still, because we do nothing of our owne will, and therefore to content our selues that we are approved of God. We haue cause to sigh indeed when the cunct answereth not our labour: and wee ought to be much in prayer vnto God that he would giue his word efficacy. Yea, we are to lay the fault in part vpon our selues, when we see so little fruite; yet are we not for all that to cast away our weapons, or to forsake our charge. The truth must alwaies sound forth from our mouths, although there be no eares to heare it, yea, although the world be as blind and as senseles as stones. For it is more then sufficient that we faithfullie serue to the glorie of God, and that our labours are pleasing to him: neither is the sound of our voyce in vaine when it leaues the world without excuse.

The faithfull teachers ought heere to receiue a singular consolation, to fortifie themselves the better alwaies against the offences which fall out euery day by the rebellions of men, lest they be thereby cooled: no, let them continue in their office with inuincible constance. Now forasmuch as this also is a generall offence, to wit, that the liuely word of God (at the hearing whereof all the world ought to tremble) strikes thus the eares of

men without fruit or profit; let the weake in faith learne also to strengthen themselves with this sentence. We are wont to wonder how it can possible come to passe that the greatest part of the world should so furiously resist against God. And from thence also arises this difficultie, to wit, whether that can be the heauenlie truth of God or no which is reiected without punishment; because it is not likely that God would speake to men, to the end they should scorne him. But to the end our faith wauer not, we must oppose this stay; namely, that the office of teaching was committed to *Iſaiah*, that in casting abroad the seed of life, it should bring forth nothing but death: as also that mention is not made heere of that which befell once, but it is a prophesie of the kingdome of Christ as shall be said anon. Furthermore the circumstance is to be noted, that *Iſaiah* was not sent to all, but only to the Iewes: wherefore there is very great vehemencie in the particule demonstratiue *Hinneb*, as if he should say, The people whom the Lord had specialle chosen, heard me not; but shut their eyes in so manifest a light.

Therefore let vs not maruell, if whilest we speake to those who brag of the name of God, it happens to vs euen as if we told a tale to deafe eares. True it is this is a sharp message that the Prophet should say he is sent of God to stop up their eares, to shut their eyes, and to make their hearts fat, because it seemes these things are nothing agreeable to the nature of God, and that therefore they are contrary to his word. But we must not think it strange if God auenge himselfe vpon the malice of the people by such an extreme blinding of them. In the meane while the Prophet hath shewed heereofore that the cause of this blindnes was in themselves. For in commanding them to hearken, he testifies, that there is a doctrine fit for their instruction, if they would shew themselves teachable; and that the light is offered to enlighten & leade them, if so be they would open their eyes.

All the fault then is imputed vnto the people, because they reiected so wonderfull a blessing of God. Whence the solution of the difficultie which we touched a little before, is more apparent. I grant it seemes very hard at the first blush, that the Prophets should make the hearts of men more hard; seeing they bring the word of God in their mouth, by which as by a light men should lighten and order their paths, Psal. 119. 705. And we know that *Dauid* giues it this title, Psal. 19. 9. It is not the office of the Prophets then to blind the eyes, but rather to open them, And heereafter this word is called perfect wisdom, Chap. 8. How comes it to passe then that it takes away mens vnderstanding, and makes the dullards? Rather the hearts which were before of stone, iron, and freele; should hereby be mollified: how can it be then they should be come the more obdurate? I answer (as I haue touched already) that such blindnes and hardening proceeds not from the nature of the word, but is by way of accident: and it ought to be attributed to the wicked.

Obie^{ti}Ans^{er}

wickednes of men. For euen as they who haue
foie eyes can not accuse the Sunne for hur-
ting them with the light thereof: nor hee
which hath a weakenes and fault in his hear-
ing, a cleere and very loud voyce which he
can not beare: lastly, as he that is of a weake
capacitie is not to be offended with high and
difficult things which he is vnable to com-
prehend: So likewise the wicked can not ac-
cuse the word of God that they become the
worse after the hearing of it. Seeing then
that all y^e fault is in themselves because they
do not giue it access into their hearts, what
wonder is it if that which was appointed for
their good, do become their bane? For it
must needs be, that the disloyaltie and infel-
delitie of men should be punished in this man-
ner, to the end they should feele death from
that, whence they might haue receiued life;
and darknes from thence, whence they might
haue receiued light: lastly, all noysome and
hurtfull things frō thence, where they might
haue had the fulnes of all blessings to salua-
tion. Which is diligent to be noted, be-
cause there is nothing more common with
men, then to abuse the gifts of God: and
whilest they make themselves beleue they are
very innocent, anon they deck themselves
with other mens feathers. But they are doubly
wicked, in as much as they apply not those
things to their true vse which the Lord hath
giuen them in trust; but haue also prophane-
ly and miserably corrupted them.

S. Iohn alledgeth this place to set out more
plainly the obstinacie of the Iewes. True it
is that he recites it not word by word; but
yet he explanes the meaning thereof suffici-
entlie. And therefore could they not beleue
(saith he) because *Isaiah* said, he hath blinded
their eyes, and hardened their hearts. Not-
withstanding this prophesie was not y^e cause
of their vnbeliefe, but the Lord so foretold
it, because he foresaw they would be such.
Now the Euangelist applies that to the Gos-
pell which was practised vnder the law: and
teacheth therewithall, that the Iewes of his
time were deuiued of reason and vnderstand-
ing, because they were rebellious against
God. Although if any should aske the first
cause, we must come to the predestination of
God. But because this counsell is hidden frō
vs, we must not be curious in searching into
it. For the reason of God his eternall coun-
sell appertaines not to vs; but we must looke
to the cause which is before our eyes, to wit,
their rebellion, by which they made them-
selves vnworthie of so many and great be-
nefites.

S. Paul also shewes from this place not once
but often, that all the cause of their blindness
remained in themselves, *Act. 28. 27. Rom. 11. 8.*
They, saith he, haue made their eares heauie,
and stopped their eyes. So, that which the
Prophet attributes heere to doctrine; that
the Apostle attributes to the wicked affection
of this people, who were the cause of their
owne blinding. *S. Paul* brings in the *holy Ghost*
speaking in this place. *S. Iohn* saith, that *Isaiah*
spake thus of *Christ*, after he saw his glorie.
Whence it appeeres, as we haue said hereto-

fore, that this God which filled the whole
earth with his glorie, was *Christ*. But *Christ*
is not separate from his Spirit. It is to very
good purpose then that *S. Paul* hath refer-
red this place to the holy Ghost: for although
God did represent himselfe to the Prophet
in the luely image of his Sonne, yet is it also
certaine that whatsoeuer he represented vn-
to him, was whollie shed into him by the
power of the *holie Spirit*. Now let the wicked
barke against vs while they will with their
blasphemies, and blame our doctrine, be-
cause the world is made the worse by the
preaching of it; yet shall they gaine nothing
thereby, neither yet be able to diminish the
least tittle of the authoritie thereof, for they
must forwith condemne God himself when
they condemne his doctrine, but their slan-
ders can not let that his iustice should not
appeere; or that he should not preserue that
and vs also blameles.

Thas they conuert not. Hee heere cleerely
pronounceth, that he sent not the Prophet
to saue the people, but rather to destroy
them. But the word of God in it self is health-
full, and at least necessarie it is that there
come some fruit from the preaching thereof,
which may profite some, although many
lose the fruit of it by their owne infideli-
tie. I answere, mention is made heere of *Aas*.
the whole bodie, which was already desti-
nate and vowed to destruction, for there
are alwayes some whom the Lord hath ex-
empt from this generall perdition. The word
was powerfull to saue those, and did truly
bring forth his effect; but the common state
being sunken deepe in rebellion and infeli-
lity, perished. Whereby we also see that
the word of God is neuer so hurtfull, that there
should not be some few which feele saluation
by it, and haue triall thereof effectually.

But wee are to note from the order and
course of the words, that repentance is the
beginning of healing. First of all then let vs
see what he means by this word *healing*. He
referrēs it to the rods and scourges of God
wherewith the people had been humbled for
their sinnes. Now the cause of all the euils
which we endure, is our rebellion against
God; but when we repeny, and that he shewes
vs the light of his countenance, then the
rods wherewith he chastised vs are cast into
the fire, and thus we are *healed*. This order
ought to be diligent obserued of vs, by
which it very well appeeres whereth the Lord
aimes in inuiting vs to come vnto him, as
also what drift the holy doctrine hath, to wit,
that we might be *conuerted*. Behold here then
that part of the Gospell, Do penance, or Re-
pent. Afterwards, by offering vs reconcilia-
tion, he promiseth remedies for all euils, not
only against the bodie, but also against the
soule. But if we receiue not so excellent a
fruit of the word of God: if we be not recon-
ciled vnto God as soone as the word sounds
in our eares, we haue cause to blame none
but our selues, because the fault whollie re-
mains in vs. And in very truth that which
the Prophet recites heere is a strange thing,
and as it were against nature, to wit, that
men

Similies.

The punish-
ment of infi-
delitic.

Obiect.

of *Aas*.

Mat. 3. 2.

Act. 28.
Iob. 12. 41.

men should become rebellious and obstinate, yea altogether incurable by ſ doctrine of Gods word, the propertie whereof is to cure and heale men. It must needs be acknowledged then as a singular grace and mercie of God when we are touched inwardly, seeing the arme of the Lord is not reucaled to all. Notwithstanding the chiefe thing which *Isaiah* would reach vs by this horrible chastisement of malicious obstinacie, is, that about all things wee beware how wee contemne the Lord his voyce when he calles vs.

Isaiah 6. 44.

Verf. 11. Then said I, Lord how long? And he answered, vntill the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate.

Although the Prophets are seuered in denouncing the wrath of God against men, yet they cast not off humane affection, and therefore it is necessary they susteine a double person; for they ought to pronounce the iudgement of God with a bold and stout courage, so as they should rather see the whole world brought to utter ruin and destruction, then that the least iot of his glorie should be diminished. And yet in the meane while they are not cruell, as if they were not touched with any compassion of their brethren, whose destruction notwithstanding in regard of their office they are forced to foretel. Now although these two affectiōs seeme cōtrarie, yet do they agree very well, as it appeeres by ſ example of *Ieremias*, who at the first refused this hard burthen, in that he was cōmanded to threaten destruction to the people; but by and by after he takes heart againe vnto him, and stoutly follows his office: our Prophets mind was thus composed, for in regard of his obedience to God, he publisheth his iudgements with a loud voyce; and yet notwithstanding he had some respect to the people: as if he should say, O Lord, if it must needs be that they be blinded, yet let it not be *for euer*. And questionles when he made this prayer he was touched with compassion, desiring that so heauie and fearefull a punishment might be mitigated. Thus then naturall affectiōs ought not to hinder vs from doing our duties. As for example, It is a naturall affection that the husband hath to the wife, the father to his children; and yet notwithstanding they must be so restrained and kept vnder, that we haue a speciall eye to that which agrees with our vocation, and to that which the Lord commands.

Simile.

We must note this point diligentlie, for when we once begin to let loose the raines, we often pretend this excuse, to wit, that although our hearts were prompt and readie to do that which God commanded, yet we were overcome with naturall affection: but wee must so weane our naturall affectiōs that they hinder not our vocation; as we see they hindered not the Prophet that he should not follow his calling; for ſ Lord must haue such authoritie ouer vs, that when he com-

mands, we must forget our selues, and all that we haue. Furthermore, although the holy care that the Prophet had ouer the people be heere noted, yet the greatnes of the chastisement is by and by expressed, to the end the wicked (according to their custome) should not promise themselues any releafe. Neither are we to doubt but that the Prophet was stirred vp to aske this by a secret inspiration from God, to the end this sharp and terrible answer (which by and by follows) might be more plainly dartered against them. Whence it appeareth what issue the vnbelieuers shall haue, to wit, that they shall not be chastised superficially or lightly, but shall be cut off with extreme rigor.

He aggravates this, when he saith, *Till the houses be left without man, and the land be utterly desolate*. Because peradventure the countrie might be spoiled, and yet there might remaine some citie: also some cities might be assailed and destroyed; but yet some houses might remaine still: therefore he declares that there shall be such a discomforture, that not only *cities*, but *houses* shall be also rased to the ground, and that there shall be an horrible waste throughout the whole land: howsoeuer notwithstanding that euen in the greatest destructions there is alwayes something left. Now howsoeuer this was but once pronounced by *Isaiah*, yet let vs know that this appertaines to vs also, for the same iudgement is prepared for all those who with a rebellious spirit shall oppose themselues against God, or with a stiffe neck shall resist against his yoke: yea, so much the more fiercely as any shall behaue themselues this way, so much the more sharply shall the Lord handle them vntill he haue utterly consumed them.

Verf. 12. And the Lord haue removed men farre away, and there be a great desolation in the mids of the land.

This verse containes no new thing, but only expounds the former, and by other words describes ſ destruction which should happen to the countrie of Iudea, to wit, that God would send the inhabitants of the countrie farre off: for hee leaues no hope that those which escape the sword shall be therefore exempt, because they shall be led into captiuitie. Then he immediatly addes a general sentence touching the *desolation of the land*: as if he should say, It shall be left solitarie, and stripped of inhabitants, be it that they flee, be it that others be caried away into exile, or that others perish by the sword: behold what reward is prepared for the rebellious and obstinate, which heape sinne vpon sinne, vntill the vnquenchable wrath of the Lord be kindled to the height.

*Verf. 13. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and shall retorne, and shall be * catch vp * Or, left as an elme or as an oke which haue a sub-
barc.*

so

ſo the holy ſeed ſhall be the ſubſtance thereof.

There is ſome obſcuretie in the words; but let vs firſt ſearch out the ſenſe, and then it ſhall be eaſie for vs to gather the ſignification of ſy words. This place is expounded two wayes. Some expound the Hebrue word *Aſiriah*, the tenth part, others the tenth; and will haue it to be a Noun Collectiue. Truly *Aſiriah*, and not the former word, ſignifies properly Tenth among ſy Hebrues, although there be no great difference herein. They which turne it Tenth, thinke that truces are promiſed to the people, becauſe there ſhould be ten kings from the reigne of *Uzzias* vntill the deſtruction of Ieruſalem. And indeed we ſhall finde ſo many from *Uzzias* to *Zedechiah*. And thus there ſhould be a great approbation of the Prophets doctrine, to wit, to be able to number ſy Kings which ſhould reigne euen after his death, and not only to thev this, but alſo the time and the day. I know not whether the other ſenſe ſhould be more proper; for it ſeemes the Prophet meant here to comfort the people, becauſe they ſhall yet retaine ſome hidden vigor, which ſhall ſprout forth, howſoener for a time it ſeemes they be whollie dead, as the trees which are wont to waxe greene after the winter is paſt.

But becauſe the firſt expoſition is probable enough, therefore I will expound this verſe according to thoſe who thinke that mention is made heere of ten Kings, and that after they ſhall be paſt, the people ſhall be caried into captiuitie, and the land then conſumed as with a deuouring fire. In the meane while the reader ſhall note, that whether we turne it Tenth, or tenth part, yet we may very fitly referre it to the people, and then the ſenſe ſhall be, Vntill the people be brought to the tenth part; becauſe he had ſpoken before of ſome remainders of the people which ſhould be very ſmall, and will ſpeake of it againe hereafter. And indeed there remained a very ſmall number. It ſhould be taken well thus then, as if of a thouſand there ſhould remaine an hundredth, of a hundredth ten, and of ten one.

Shall returne] That is to ſay, there ſhal come a change for the better, when the Iewes ſhall returne out of exile into their countrie, and that the land ſhall recouer a freſh colour. But it ſeemes there ſhould be ſome contradiction in the hanging together of the text; for the Prophet immediatlie addes, that it ſhall be eaten vp, or left bare; how cold comfort ſhould this be, that the people ſhould be brought home to be deſtroyed againe afterward? Some reſolue this difficultie thus, as if *Iſaiab* ſhould ſpeake of the laſt and ſmall deſtruction of the people. But in mine opinion he meaneth that it ſhall not be an vtter ruine, but ſuch an one as we ſee in trees, the leaues whereof fall in winter, and there remaines no apperæce of any thing but a dead trunk of wood: yet when the Spring comes they will bud afreſh: he ſaith then, that the like ſhall befall to this people. The word *Leauer*, ſignifies to burne, and therefore it is as much

to ſay as to be conſumed with fire. But wee muſt conioine it and reade it with the ſimilitude which is by and by added. For *Iſaiab* ſaith not ſimply that it ſhall be conſumed; but as the beech or elme, that is to ſay, with hope of a neete reſtauration.

Whereas *S. Jerome* tranſlateth Declaration, I know not fro what other word he thought this took his originall, vnleſſe he interpreted freely as it came in his minde; looking rather to the meaning of the Prophet, then to the etymologie of the word, becauſe when trees flouriſh and bring forth leaues, their life is manifeſted, and comes foorth againe into ſight; and this will be very agreeable. It ſeemes alſo it was not without cauſe that *Iſaiab* hath put theſe two kinds of trees here, becauſe the one buds ſooner then the other, and flouriſheth ſooner alſo; and ſo came it to paſſe to the Tribe of Iudah. For firſt the ten Tribes with halfe the Tribe of *Beniamin* were caried away into captiuitie: ſo they which had flouriſhed firſt, firſt withered. Iudah withered in the latter end with great hope to ſprout againe; and becauſe heere is giuen hope of libertie, it was not like to the captiuitie of the Iſraelites. It ſeemes then that there is ſome propietie in this ſimilitude of trees, which notwithstanding I would not preſſe too much. By the word of *cauſing the leaues*, we muſt vnderſtand the falling away of them, as when the trees are ſtripped of their leaues, as of their garment. For in this nakednes it ſeemes the trees be feate and dead, although notwithstanding there is a ſecret vertue remaining within the, by which at the laſt they are reſtored againe at the Spring.

So ſhall] This is the application of the Similitude, which hath great force in it, for when we behold the goodnes of God in this order of nature, we are greatly conſumed therein. Euen as *S. Paul* propoſids the image of the reſurrection by the ſowing of corne, which is a thing vſualle done: ſo alſo *Iſaiab* in this place ſhewes the reſtauration of the Church by taking a Similitude from trees, which after the fall are like dead ſtocks, but as ſoone as the Spring is come, they waxe greene, and bring foorth new leaues, which they could not doe, vnleſſe they retained ſome ſapꝑe within them during the winter, howſoener in outward apperance they ſeemed dead. He prophetieth that the like ſhall befall this people, to wit, that although in this grieuous and hard captiuitie they ſhould reſemble drie trees, and therefore might be thought paſt hope of recouerie, yet ſome ſtrength ſhould be conſerued in them, by the which they ſhall be ſuſtained in the miſt of all theſe anguiſhes; and after they haue borne them for a while, at the laſt they ſhall ſpring forth and flouriſh.

Wee haue ſaid that this doctrine belongs not to one ſeaſon only, and therefore wee ought to make our benefit of it. For it often happens that the Church is in ſuch diſtreſſed eſtate amidst the manifold calamities which ſhe ſuſtaines, and is ſo deſtitute of all apperance of ſtrength, that a man would thinke

she were vtterlie perished. As often then as this fallies out let vs yet be fullie resolu'd that there is still a sap hidden within, which howsoeuer it appeare not by and by to our eyes, will yet shew forth his fruit in the end. Now this sap is hidden in the word of God, by which only the Church is vpheld.

Holy seed.] Heere he shewes what this substance is, to wit, the small number of the faithfull, which he calles a *holy seed*. For he meanes the elect, which should be saued by

the free mercie of God, and should be referu'd from this captiuitie, because that this banishment was as it were the purgation of the Church whereby the Lord tooke away the wicked, who being cut off, he gathered vnto himselfe a very small people, but yet truly sanctified. Some erre this to Christ, but this exposition seemes too farre fetched; it will agree better if we erre it to all the faithfull, because the holy seed is the *substance* of the Church.

THE VII. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. And in the dayes of Abaz the sonne of Iotham the sonne of Oziah king of Iudah, Rezin the king of Aram came vp, and Pekah the sonne of Remalib king of Israel, to Ierusalem to fight against it, but he could not ouercome it.*

* Or, Syria.



Here is heere recited an excellent prophesie of the wonderfull deliurance of Ierusalem, euen when it might haue seem'd whole desolate. Now the Prophet recounts all circumstances, to

the end by them the miracle might be the more admirable; that it might cleerly appeere how the Citie was preserued by the meere goodnes of God, and not by any policies or power of men. For this people were so vngratefull, that vnlesse after the deliurance, all these things had been brought to their remembrance one after another; they could not vnderstand how they were deliuered by the hand of God. And few there were who in the present danger waited vpon that which *Isaiab* had promised; because they iudged of the publike state of the kingdom and of their own also, according to that which they saw with their eyes. To the end then hee might lay forth the excellent benefit of God, he sets all circumstances before them, that so they might acknowledge out of how great danger they were deliuered when God freed them out of their enemies hands. As touching our selues, let vs know that this mercie was shewed to a people vnthankfull, to the end the Church might be preserued; and that Christ at the last night appeare.

We must note that the Prophet speaks of the second warre which *Rezin* & *Pekah* made; and this we shall more easilie gather out of the holic historie, for in the first warre *Achaz* was ouercome, and a great multitude led into captiuitie, who in the end were brought back by the Israelites, when the Prophet had in the name of God commanded it should be so done. And againe the kings of Syria and Israel raised an armie and assailed *Achaz*, because it was thought they had so spoiled them by the first warre, that they had left them no power to resist. Whereas then he

3. King. 16. 5

makes mention of the second warre, it is to amplify the miracle: for *Achaz* had not a competent power to resist so great a multitude, seeing all the flower of his souldiers were caried away in the first warre. And howsoeuer there were now many people remaining, yet they were scattered; and besides, were much affrighted with the remembrance of the discomforture which was very fresh in minde. And herein doth the goodnes of God and his power appeare to be so much the greater, that hauing compassion vpo so great a calamitie, he gaue succor to his people, and in a moment drew them out from the gates of death, euen then when they had no hope of saluation. *Came vp.* Here is the proposition and summe of y whole matter. For he shewes of what affaires he was to speake: and in few words according to y visuall maner of speech in the Hebrue toong telles what he meanes to declare anon more at large, and more clearely. For from the very entrance he propounds the issue, to wit, that the enterprise of these two kings *tooke none effect*: but by and by after he will shew the reason why Ierusalem could not be taken; and yet before he toucheth that, he will briefly shew what counsell and courage *Achaz* had.

Vers. 2. And it was told the house of David, saying, Aram is ioyned with E- * Or, Syria phraim: therefore his heart was moued, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest are moued by the Winde.*

His meaning is not that the newes of this league was brought at that time when the two kings were already neere the citie, for *Achaz* could not safely haue issued forth if the armie of the enemies had been already in the field: but it is said, that king *Achaz* trembled for feare before these kings had assembled their me of warre together. Whence it followes, that he was terrified more and more as the danger grew neerer him. *The house of David* signifies the Palace and Court of the king: as if the Prophet had said, *Achaz* and his Counsellors were admonished of the conspiracie made against y cuntry of Iudah.

As touching the words; the verb *Nachah* is diuerslie translated by the expositors; and because it signifies to leade, some draw this sense, that the Syrian brought his souldiers

to the ſuccor of the annie, and therefore they thinke there ſhould be ſome change of the letters in the word *At*: others deuiſe it of *Nachab*, and tranſlate, He is at reſt. According to other ſome the letters are miſplaced, ſo as *Nachab* is put in ſtead of *Chanah*, which ſignifies to pitch the camp, and therefore I haue thought good to turne it, *Syria is ioyned, or combined*: for y^e Prophet meant nothing elſe but that the *Iſraelites* and *Syrians* had made a league of warre together, to conioine their forces for the ſiſſailing of Ieruſalem. Alſo in the word *Ephraim* there is a figure called *Synecdoche*, much vſed in the Prophets. The whole kingdom of Iſrael is comprehended vnder *Ephraim*, not only becauſe that Tribe was the richeſt and more populous then the reſt; but alſo becauſe *Ieroboam* the firſt king came out of that Tribe.

His heart is moued.] Here we well diſcerne that by the houſe of *Dauid*, he meanes nothing elſe but the Palace of the king, from whence ſoone after all the reſt of the people were terrified: neither could it otherwiſe be but the common people muſt needs feare when they heard that the King and his Counſell were alſo in that plight. As ſoone then as theſe newes came, all were ouertaken with ſuch an aſtoniſhment, that none could hold a ioynt ſtill. He expreſſeth this quaking by a very apt ſimilitude, which we alſo are commonly wont to vſe when we ſay, He trembled like the leaſe of a tree. And this appertaineth to the ſetting forth of the miracle; for thence it appeeres that they were in a deſperate caſe, not only in other mens iudgements, but even in their owne alſo. They had been all yndone then if the Lord had not ſpeedilie prevented the miſchiefe. We haue heere a faire looking glaſſe, wherein we may behold the ſtrength which the wicked take vnto themſelues all the while they feele not the hand of God; and contrariwiſe how they are ſodainly ouertaken with feare, whē the Lord ſhewes them any danger; for they are ſo ſecure when all things fall out to their wiſh, that the Lord can ſcarcely bring them in ſubiectiō vnder his gouernment, and then they thinke themſelues alſo out of all danger. But if affliction do but a litle touch them, then they are by and by out of heart; yea, are ſo poſſeſſed with terror in their minds, that they behaue themſelues as blockiſh people, deprived of all ſenſe. And this is the puniſhment by which the Lord awakens them out of that deepe ſlumber into which they had caſt themſelues. For before, it ſeemed their eſtate was ſo firme and ſure, that they could neuer be put downe from their greatnes: but now at the leaſt noiſe they heare, they ſtraight fall into a ſwound for feare.

Such a feare is a iuſt vengeance of God, whom they would neuer haue reuerenced unleſſe it had been drawne from them by force. Let vs learne then, that if we haue but the leaſt dramme of true faith, we muſt not thus diſtruſt God when we are in any danger. I graunt it can not be that we ſhould be free from trouble and feare when we are in danger of enemies: but wee muſt not ſo

tremble and feare as being perplexed wee ſhould moue this way & that way, as though we knew no hauein, nor place where we may ſafely fixe our footing. For this difference will euer be betweene the faithfull and the vnbeleeuers, namely, the latter ſort feele no remedie to quiet their conſciences, but the firſt do by and by flee to God, where they reſpoſe themſelues with great tranquillite of minde, although they be vexed with diſquietnes for a time, as knowing that they haue a moſt ſafe refuge and hauein of reſt in him.

Verſ. 3. Then ſaid the Lord vnto Iſaiah, Go forth now to meeete *Ahaz* (thou and *Shear-iſhub* thy ſonne) at the end of the conduit of the upper poole, in the path of the fullers field,

Fiſt, we ſee how the Lord remembering his couenant, prevents this wicked king, by ſending his Prophet to meeete him. *Shear-iſhub* the ſonne of the Prophet is ioyned with him, that he might be a witneſſe of this prophecie. And it is a probable cōiecture that this name was not impoſed vpon him at randon, but by a ſecret inſtinct of the holy Ghoſt, or by expreſſe commandement from God, to declare the future deliuerance of the people. He bare a ſeale then as it were engrauen in his name, as well of the neere exile, as alſo of their returne. It is alſo credible, that this ſigne or wintes of the prophecie was knowne among the people, for he ſhould not haue been ioyned in commiſſion with his father, unleſſe he had ſuſtained ſome authoritie in his perſon. The place is ſpecified for certentie of the hitorie: and it may well be that the king went carefullie to conſider of the approaching of the enemy, to the end he might repulſe him, which appeareth more cleerely by the holic hitorie, 2. King. 16. 5. It is called, *The path of the fullers field*, for it may be the fullers were wont to waſh their clothes thereabouts; or rather it was ſome ancient place called by this name: howſoever it be, it was a ſigne that this miſerable hypocrite ran hither and thither with feare and terror, when *Iſaiah* was comming forth to quiet and ſecure him.

Verſ. 4. And ſay vnto him, Take heed, ^{Or, be aſſured.} and be ſtill: feare not, neither be faint-hearted for the two tailes of theſe ſmoking firebrands, for the furious wrath of *Rezin* and of *Aram*, and of *Remaliab* ſonne.

The verb *Shamar*, which ſignifies to keepe; is here put in the coniugation of *Hiphil*, and many expoſitors take it, to take heed; although they draw it amiſſe, and to a ſenſe both conſtrained and beſides the purpoſe, as if the Prophet had admoniſhed *Ahaz* to take heed how he made warre. The ſentence is more ſimple, to wit, that he ſhould not wax faint-hearted, nor wauer doubtingly, but that he ſhould be quiet & ſecure, therefore I haue tranſlated, *Be aſſured*. The ſenſe is theſe,

that *Ahaz* should take such heart vnto him, that at no hand hee suffer himselfe to boyle with impaience, neither to torment his minde with restless thoughts. For when men are dae stricken with terror, their mindes are colled vp & down, and haue no setled stay.

This exposition is confirmed by the words which follow, *he still*: for these two things are ioyned together: first, to stand quietly vpon his watch, to the end he may not be distracted with diuers thoughts, looking this way and that way: secondly, that he be still, and of a calme and quiet spirit within. And behold here the fruites agreeable to a iustifying faith. For as the vnbeleeuers wauer and floate in vncertaine in diuers assaults, and know not to which end to turne them: so the faithfull on the contrarie are staied, and cast themselues vpon God with quiet mindes. Impietie is neuer at rest: but where faith hath gotten strength; there we may see securitie and quietnes of minde, not trembling beyond measure.

These words then doe expresse the vertue of a true faith. Now hauing shewed the remedie whereby to appease the troublesome passions of the heart, he also forbids him *to feare*: because nothing is more contrarie to faith (who commits her saluation into the hands of God) then *feare*. For I confesse indeed that it is impossible for vs to be voyde of feare, when dangers approach. For faith makes vs not senselesse. Contrariwise, the children of God are touched with a double feare: the first procedes from naturall sense; which feare they could not auoyde, although they had a perfect faith: the other, from the weakenes of faith, because there is no man that hath profited so well therein, that there should not still remaine some reliques of distrust, against the which we must continuallie fight. This exhortation of the Prophet therefore must not be vnderstoode as if the Lord forbad all feare; but his meaning is, that the faithfull must arme themselues with such conlancie, that they ouercome all their *feares*. As if he should say, Take heede thou be not cast downe: and if thou meetest with strong and sharpe assaults, be of an inuincible courage, that dangers ouerwhelme thee not: but rather inanfully stay thy selfe vpon the power and goodnesse of thy God; to the end thou maiest bee able to ouercome all calamities.

And hereunto he by and by addes, that he be *not faint-hearted*, which is as much, as to melt away, or be dissolued. Also it is not without good cause that the Apostle teacheth vs, that our hearts are stablished by faith. For when (in forgetting God) we suffer our selues to moulder away any thing at all, through our owne infidelitie; it procedes first from a weake and sluggish cowardinesse. But hee cannot be said to be delicate, or womanish, who resting himselfe vpon the spirit of God, valiantly resists all aduerfities. Whence we gather, that the Prophet meant nothing else, but that *Ahaz* should waite with an vndaunted minde, for that issue which God had promised him.

For the two Tayles.] *Isaiah* vseth a very elegant similitude here, to weaken the opinion which the Iewes had conceiued concerning these mightie Kings, whose greatnes had smitten their hearts with such terror: for their crueltie and furie was as it had been a flaming fire; sufficient to haue consumed all Iudea: yea, and it seemed that this fire could neuer haue been quenched. But *Isaiah* on the contrarie vouchsafeth them not so much as the name of firebrands; because that might haue seemed somewhat: but onely calles them I cannot tell what fragments or ends of firebrands not kindled, but onely *smoking*; as if a brand being taken out of the fire; should begin to moulder away, and should cast nothing else but a little light smoke. This similitude then contains a singular consolation; by which we are admonished to esteeme farre otherwise of the violence of the wicked, then according to the outward appearance. They seeme to be so mightie, as if they were able to set on fire, destroy, and consume all the world. Now the Lord minding to preuent and take the feare which we haue conceined from vs, pronounceth that it is but a little *weake smoke*, of small continuance: although to our seeming it should bee such a fire as neuer could bee quenched.

We must not esteeme the violence of the wicked according to outward appearance.

Verf. 5. *Because Aram hath taken wicked counsell against thee, and Ephraim and Remathis sonne, saying:*

Although hee had saide before, that the threats and endeavors of the enemies against the people of God, should bee vaine and turned into *smoke*; yet hee discubles not how many cruelties they had deuised, if God withheld them not. For by *euill counsell*, he means a destruction: because these two Kings had both conspired to destroy the cuntry of Iudah, And to the end he might the better expresse the same, and might also let them see it, as it were before their eyes, hee recites their counsell in the verse following.

Verf. 6. *Let vs goe up against Iudah, and let vs waken them vp, and make a breach therein for vs, and let a King in the midst thereof, euen the sonne of it. Tabeal.*

* Or, an entrance into it.

Let vs goe vp.] That is to say, let vs make ready an armie. Some turne the verbe *Nekussnah*, let vs trouble or afflict: the which indeede shewes the originall of the word: but in this coniugation it signifies rather, To awaken. And howfoeuer I reiect not this first interpretation; yet notwithstanding I had rather follow the second, because it agrees best with the Text *By Awakening*, I vnderstand, To trouble; and to practise some new stratagem: as we commonly say, raise vp sturres, that this kingdom may no longer be in quiet. As touching that which followes, many

A double feare.

Heb. 11. 27.

many expound *Nauquinnah*: Let vs enter into it by force: others; Let vs ſo handle the matter, that it ſhall not be able to ſtand before vs. I haue translated, *Let vs make an entrance into it*. For the verbe *Dagua* ſignifies that which we commonly ſay, let vs inake a breach, or entrance. Now the meane to breake into Iudea, was either to ſtoppe the paſſages by force of armes: or by teares to ſolicit thoſe which ſhould be timorous and waivering, to reuolt: for which ſubiects hold their obedience, all paſſage is ſhut vp; but when all is on a hurly butly, by ſeditious and factious; an eaſie entrance is made to paſſe euen to the ſtrongest and beſt fortified places. Thus theſe two Kings hoped as ſoone as they ſhould bee arriued in Iudea, that they ſhould terrifie all the hearts of the people with their great and mightie armie, ſo as they ſhould haue neither power nor will to reſiſt. For it is not likely that hauing ſo great a multitude of men, they meant to holde any long ſiege. True it is, that Ieruſalem was well fortified: but they thought the cite would be frighted and troubled with this greate armie; and therefore would by and by yeeld it ſelfe to their mercie. Yet notwithstanding I leaue it to the libertie of euery one, touching the interpretation of theſe words: ſeeing the Prophets meaning is plaine enough. But we cannot eaſily gather from the histories who this *Thabal* was. It is very likely that he was ſome Iſraélite; who being an enemie to the houſe of *Dauid*, theſe Kings would binde and oblige vnto them.

Verſ. 7. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, it ſhall not ſtand, neither ſhall it be.*

That which was ſaide before, was to the magnifying of ſo rare and excellent a deliuerance. For when the Lord meanes to ſuccour vs in temptations, he ſets the greatneſſe of the danger before vs, to the end we might perceiue that hee promiſeth no leſſe than the neceſſitie requireth. Hee leſſeneth not, but rather amplifies the euils wherewith we are preſſed: then he offereth his promiſe, and ſhewes that hee is alſufficient to deſtroy vs, although it ſeeme wee bee paſt recouerie: The Prophet hath followed this manner of reaching. For he might ſimply haue told them what ſhould come to paſſe, and might haue incouraged the King and the people; to the end they ſhould not bee affrighted nor diſcouraged in regard of theſe great armies: but he diſcouers the counſell and deliberation of theſe Kings; againſt which he now oppoſeth the promiſes and decree of God, that his admirable worke in their deliuerance might the better appeare. Behold theri the ſacred anchor which onely holds vs faſt in the middeſt of all tempeſtuous temptations: whereas on the contrarie, if God ſhould take away his word from vs, we were neuer able to hold out in aduerſities. Although the King then was almoſt ouerwhelmed with deſpaire already; *Iſaiah* tells him that there is nothing ſo terrible which he may not boldly deſpiſe; if ſo be

that fortifying himſelfe ſtrongly vpon this promiſe of God, he patiently waite for that which he ſees not, which yet ſeemes almoſt incredible to him. He affirms then, that howſoever theſe men haue liſted vp themſelves as giants againſt God, yet they ſhal not bring their practiſes to perfection. And hee vſeth the word, To ariſe vp, as alſo the Latines by this ſimilitude ſignifie a worke with his goings forward. Laſtly, he affirms that ſuch a boldneſſe ſo full of ſaileledge, cannot ſtand. There is yet more vehemence in that which he addes, *It ſhall not ſtand*: that is to ſay, it ſhall be ſo diſannulled, as if it had neuer been. We muſt note this manner of ſpeech well, by which he oppoſeth the bare and naked word of God, againſt this great haſte, and the deliberation of theſe two Kings.

Verſ. 8. *For the head of Aram is Damafcus, and the head of Damafcus is Rezin: and within ſiue and threeſcore yeere Ephraim ſhall be deſtroyed from being a people.*

* Or, ye 66 yeeres, and
* Or, broken,
* Or, and ſhall be no more a people.

The head of Syria.] As if he ſhould ſay, Theſe two kingdomes ſhall haue their limits, euen as they haue at this preſent. They aſpire to thy kingdom, but I haue ſet their bounds which they ſhall not paſſe. *Damaſcus* was the chiefe citie of Syria, as *Paris* is of France. Hee ſaith then that theſe two Kings muſt be content with their owne greatneſſe, and that looke what eſtate they were now in, the ſame ſhould they continue in hereafter. Now after he hath told them it is in vaine for them to endeavour at this time to amplify their limits; he ſeteth the calamitie of the kingdom of Iſrael. For by the word, *To breake*, hee ſignifies that this kingdom ſhall be brought to nothing; and it ſhall be no more. For the Iſraelites were carried away indeed into exile, and brought to another people: as part of *Sauoy* is now incorporated into the kingdom of France, and hath loſt his name. This is it which the Prophet meanes, when hee ſaith, that they ſhall bee no more a people: becauſe that Iſrael in this exile ſhould be mingled with ſtrange nations, and ſhould euen loſe his proper name.

Te ſixte ſiue yeeres.] Seeing that the Iſraelites were led into captiuitie in the ſixth yeere of King *Hezekias*, and that *Ahaz* reigned but ſixtene yeeres: it is certain that this reckoning of yeeres ſhould not begin from ſay that *Iſaiah* was ſent to bring this meſſage. For there was onely twentie yeeres to the time that the ten Tribes were carried into captiuitie: *Amos* had prophesied of it: *Amos* 3. 11. and no doubt but as this prophesie of *Amos* was knowne, ſo alſo the period of time appointed was vnderſtoode of all, euery one knowing the number of yeeres. If we reckon then from the time that *Amos* foretold theſe things, we ſhall finde it threeſcore and ſiue yeeres: for *Iuſham* reigned ſixtene yeeres, *Ahaz* as many. Adde therunto ſixe of King *Hezekias*, wherein the ten Tribes were led into exile: and then take twentie ſeuen yeeres wherein

wherein *Yeriah* raigned after this prophesie, and it will make threefoore and siue. This coniecture is very probable: neither neede we doubt but *Isaiah* meant thus. For we haue the prophesie of *Amos*, by which the Lord admonished the people, lest they should haue complained they had been suddainely ouerwhelmed without warning. *Isaiah* confirms this prophesie, and propheseth the same time which was already knowne of all. Besides, by these words he sharply galles the senselesnesse of the people of Israel, in that being thus admonished of the destruction both of their countrie and name; they not onely despaired (with all boldnes) the name of God, but burned with a desire to deuoure all Iudea: as if they meant to scorne this heavenly reuelation of set purpose; and thinking because a long time was already past, that they therefore had now escaped. The Prophet derides this their folly; namely, because they imagined the word of God would waxe olde and wither away, in so small a number of yeeres. But because the Israelites were deafe, *Isaiah* giues them of Iudeah a set time wherein to looke for the ruine of their enemies. This place also teacheth, that the Prophets were faithfull assisters one of another, to the end they might serue God with one heart and affection.

* Or, In the meane while.

Verf. 9. *For the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliabs sonne. If ye beleene not, surely ye shall not be established.

BECAUSE this is a repetition by which he would confirme that which hee said before, namely, that God hath limited the boundes of the kingdom of Israel for a certaine time; therefore I haue translated, In the meane time: for otherwise it would bee absurd, that the chiefe citie should remaine in hir perfection after the kingdome (as hee erewhile foretold) should bee brought to nought. The sense then is, whilest the threefoore and siue yeeres are running on, and comming to their end, Israel hath some respite. His chiefe citie shall be Samaria: let him content himselfe with his boundes, and aspire no higher: for such shall his estate be, till he be wholly cut off, and be no more teperated a people.

Except yee beleene is.] The particle *ci* is put in the midst of the sentence, as yeelding the reason of it. And therefore some translate thus; If you beleene not: that is to say, because you are not beleeuers. And so restrain the first member to the prophesie of *Isaiah*: but the second, to the whole word of God, as if he should say, If you giue no credit to my words, then your infidelitie shall bee knowne to all. But thus there should be no difference betweene the verbe *Thaanninu*, and the other verbe *Thaamenu*, which are of diuers coniugations. But the Prophet hath not changed the termination without cause: and it appeares by many testimonies of the holy Scriptures, that the verbe *Aman*, in the

coniugation of *Niphal*, is taken for to stand, or continue fast in his degree. I thinke then that this is as much as if he had said, Beholde your onely stay; waite quietly without being vexed in your selues for that which the Lord hath promised, to wit, deliuerance: if you waite not for it, what remaines, but that you perish? The particle *ci* signifies as much (it being also vsually so taken in many other places) as *surely*. He affirms then that they cannot stand, vnlesse they belecue this promise: yea, his words sound somewhat more bitingly; namely, that although they refused to giue credit vnto it, and should endeavour to the vttermost to ouerthrow the stedfastnesse thereof; yet would God for his part continue still to bee firme and sure: as also, that themselues could not stand, vnlesse they rested vpon the promise here offered them. Whence we haue to gather a generall doctrine: to wit, that our destruction then approacheth, when we shall depart frō the word of God; howsoeuer we imagine our selues to be well and sufficiently grounded. For our saluation is inclosed in the word of God: and when that is reiected, God iustly auengeth the wrong that is done to him therein: for hee was neere to haue sustained men by his power, if they had not voluntarily plunged themselues headlong into destruction: we must rest confidently then vpon the promises of God, or else it is in vaine to looke for saluation.

Verf. 10. And the Lord spake againe vnto Ahaz, saying:

BECAUSE the Lord knew very well that King *Ahaz* was so wicked, as he would not rest vpon his promise; he therefore sent *Isaiah* to confirme him by adding a signe. For when God sees that his promises suffice vs not, hee addes fit and conuenient signes according to our weaknesse: to the end wee should not onely heare him speake; but that also in seeing his hand reached forth vnto vs, we might be further confirmed by euident testimonies. Whereupon we ought diligently to note the vse of signes; namely, to what end God shewes miracles: to wit, that we might bee confirmed by them in the certaintie of the word. For when we see his power, if we make scruple to beleue his word, hee corrects our doubting, by making vs see euen the thing it selfe: and miracles being added to the word, doe become seales thereof.

Verf. 11. Aske a signe for thee of the Lord thy God, aske it either in the depth beneath, or in the height aboue.

UNDERSTAND these words *hie*, or *low*, *simple*. He puts it to his choyce to choose a miracle, whether he aske it in heauen, or in earth. It may be this word *in the depth*, hath some greater vehemencie in this place, as if he should say, Take thy choise, God will shew thee by and by that his dominion is farre aboue

boue all the world; yea, that it reacheth euen to the bottome of all depths, ſo as at his will and pleaſure he can raiſe the dead out of their graues. See here then a ſingular goodnes of God towards the King, and towards the people, that not only patientlie beares with their diſtruſt for a time, but thus graciouslie ſubmits himſelfe ſo far, as to be readie to giue them euen ſuch a ſigne as they themſelues would deſire for a pledge of his power. Indeed he had not ſo much regard herein to the wicked alone, as rather to provide for the weak which had ſome ſeed of godlines in them, to the end they might be the more aſſured that *Iſaiah* ſpake not at adventure, ſeeing he could ſo readily ſhew a ſigne of the power of God for a confirmation of his ſpeech. The ſame goodnes of God is now diſplayed towards ſuch as he beares ſo much withall, although he haue iuſt occaſion to be angrie with them. For how great iniurie do they to him when they doubt of his truth? What is left to God, I pray you, when he is diſpoiled of that? Now although wee doubt, yet he is not only contented to pardon it, but alſo to vnderprop our diſtruſt, not with words only, but which is more, with miracles; and preſents them not only to the faithfull, but euen to the vnfaithfull likewiſe, of which wee may take a view in this king. Now if he be ſo gentle to ſtrangers, what ſhall we thinke he will be to his owne houſhold ſeruants which wait vpon him?

Verſ. 12. *But Abaz ſaid, I will not aſke, neither will I tempt ſhe Lord.*

HE vnder a faire pretence refuseth the ſigne which the Lord offered him, ſaying, that *he would not tempt him*: for he ſeemes as if he beleeued the words of the Prophet, demanding nothing elſe but the word. And truly as impietie is deteſtable before God, ſo doubtleſſe he greatly priſeth faith. Wherefore it ſhould ſeeme that he who reſts vpon the only word of God, deſpiſing all things elſe, is worthe of great praiſe, becauſe there is no greater perfection then to ſubmit our ſelues to God. But wil ſome ſay, Do we tempt God when we receiue that which he offereth? Certainly no. *Abaz* lied then when he refuseth the ſigne which was offered him, vnder pretence of *not tempting God*, for there is nothing better or more excellent, then to obey God. It is a great vertue in deed to aſke nothing but the word; but if God be pleaſed to adde ſomewhat more vnto it, it is then no vertue but a vice to reiect ſuch an help as a thing ſuperfluous. Yea, there is great iniurie offered vnto God in deſpiſing his liberalitie; as if that which he doth for our ſakes were vnprofitable, or as if he were ignorant what things were good and neceſſarie for vs. Wee know that faith receiues her chiefe praiſe, becauſe the holds her ſelfe in obedience: but when we will be wiſe in our owne conceits, and deſpiſe the leaſt thing which is of God, we are abominable before him, what pretence ſocuer we make before men. We muſt

ſo ioyne faith to the word then, that we deſpiſe not the helps which he offereth and giueth vs for the ſtrengthening of our faith.

As for example, the Lord in the Goſpell offereth vs all things neceſſarie for our ſaluation: for ſeeing by it we be ioyned to Chriſt, the ſumme of all good things is contained in it. But to what end ſerueth Baptiſme and the holy Supper then; ſhould we eſteeme them as things ſuperfluous? No ſurely, becauſe whoſo without flattering of himſelfe ſhall take knowledge of his infirmities, which all from the leaſt to the greateſt ought to feeble, ſuch an one will be willing to ſtrengthen his faith by theſe helps. True it is we ought to mourne and weepe that the holy truth of God (which can not lie) ſhould haue need of any prop for the infirmities ſake of our fleſh. But in regard we can not caſt off this corruption from vs at the firſt choop, whoſeuer according to his abilitie ſhall adde faith to the word, he ſhall forthwith render perfect obedience to God. Let vs learne then to embrace the ſignes with the word, ſeeing it is not in the power of man to ſeparate them.

Now in that *Abaz* refuseth the ſigne which was offered him, he therein ſhewed his rebellion & vnthankfulnes; for he deſpiſeth that which God had preſented him for his exceeding profit. Heereby alſo it appeares after what maner we ought to require ſignes, to wit, when they are offered vs of God: he then which refuseth them, muſt needs reiect the grace of God therewithall. Some franticke ones there are at this day who make no reckning of Baptiſme, nor of the Lords Supper, thinking them abees for little children: which yet they can not do, but they muſt therewithall reiect the whole Goſpell: for thoſe things muſt not be ſeparate which God hath ioyned together. But ſome wil aſke notwithstanding, whether it be not lawfull to aſke ſome ſignes of God, for we haue an example thereof in *Gedeon*, who deſired that his vocation might bee confirmed with ſome ſigne: the Lord granted his requiſt, and diſliked not ſuch a deſire: *Iudg. 6. 17*. To this I anſwere, that although *Gedeon* had no expreſſe commandement of God to aſke a ſigne, yet notwithstanding he was ſurred vp to doe it by the holy Ghoſt, and did it not of his owne proper motion. Wherefore we muſt not take the like libertie to our ſelues by abuſing his example; eſpeciallie ſeeing the importunitie of men is ſo great, that they make no bones to aſke ſignes of God without end or meaſure. Such a boldnes therefore is to be ſuppreſſed, to the end wee may content our ſelues with thoſe which God offereth vs. Now there are two ſorts of ſignes: ſome extraordinary; which we may call ſupernaturall: as that whereof the Prophet wil ſpeake anon, and that which was giuen to *Herexiah*, as we ſhal ſee God willing hereafter, *Iſay 38. 7*. Others are ordinarie, and in daily vie, as Baptiſme, and the holy Supper, which coiteine no miracle, at the leaſt which can be ſeene to the eye, or by any other outward ſenſe. For that which the Lord miraculoſly works therein by the holy Ghoſt, can not be ſcene; but in the extraor-

The ſignes and word muſt not be ſeparated, where God hath coupled them together.

Queſt.

Anſ.

Two ſorts of ſignes.

1

2

Obiect.

Anſ.

Extraordi-
narie mira-
cles, visible.

dinarie, the miracle is visible to the eye. Now all other signes haue the same end and vse, because that euen as *Gedeon* was confirmed by that maruelous signe, so also are we confirmed by Baptisme and the holy Supper, although we see no miracle before our eyes.

Verf. 13. *Then he sayd, heare you now o house of Dauid, is it a small thing for you to griene men, that ye will also griene my God?*

Because it was an intolerable wickednes to shut the gate against the power of God which should confirme the truth of the promise vnder colour of honestie and modestie; the Prophet is iustlie offended, and sharplie rebukes these wicked hypocrites. Now howsoever it were an honorable thing for them to be held for the race of *Dauid* (which had been so indeed if they had walked in y steps of *Dauid*) yet notwithstanding he now calles them y successors of the house of *Dauid* rather by way of reproach, then otherwise. And in very deed, the ingratitude was so much the more heinous, because this fauour was reiected by that house, out of which the saluation of the whole world should come. Their originall therefore from whom they had so shamefullie degenerated, was a great dishonour vnto them. And wee must obserue this order heere: for we ought not to begin with sharp reprehensions, but with doctrine, to the end men may be gentlie drawn, rather then enforced by it. When the bare & simple doctrine will not serue, then we must adde confirmations: but if they will profit by neither of these, then it is needfull to vse greater vehemencie. In this maner it is that *Isaiah* thundreth here, for hauing offered doctrine and signes to the king without fruit, he now vseth the last remedie, sharplie and grieuousslie chiding this obstinate man: and not him alone, but also all the house royall, which was defiled with this impietie.

Is it a small thing?] He vseth comparisons betweene God and men; not that those of whom hee speakes, to wit, the Prophets and faithfull Teachers, can in deed be separated from God, for they are nothing else but the instruments of the Lord, hauing one common cause with him, as long as they discharge their duties. And the Lord testifies of them, *who so despiseth you, despiseth me: and he that heareth you, heareth me*, Math. 10. 40. The Prophet then shapeth his speech according to the impietie of *Ahaz* and his fellowes, because they thought they had to do only with men. And no question but we may heare the like voyce which the wicked belch out euen amongst vs at this day: Are they not men that speake vnto vs: and by this meanes they thinke to make voyd the doctrine of God.

It being then an ordinarie thing amongst the prophane contentners of holie doctrine to speake thus, the Prophet acknowledgeth indeed that they were men which had this charge committed vnto them, to teach the word of God. As if he should say, be it that I

am a mortall man, as you say I am, and that you haue such an opinion of the Prophets of God; yet is it a small thing for you to griene vs, but that you will also griene God himselfe. But in reiecting the signe of his admirable power which hee is ready to giue you, you reiect him. It is in vaine then for you to brag that you make no account of it, because you haue to do with men, and not with him. This then is the cause why the Prophet is so moued with anger: whence we perceiue the thing which I touched erewhile, to wit, that it is time to vse seuerer reprehensions after we haue vsed all the good meanes which God hath giuen vs, and haue omitted nothing of that which was our dutie: then we must rush vpon them with greater vehemencie, and lay open that impietie which lay hid vnder these cloakes of hypocrisie.

My God.] He said before, Aske for thee a signe of the Lord thy God, to wit, whilest his peruerstie and rebellion was hidden: now he takes it as proper to himselfe, because *Ahaz* and those that were with him were vnworthie of the honour of so excellent a title. He shewes then that God is of his side, and not with these hypocrites, and thus testifies what his confidence is. For he shewes with what conscience he promised deliuerance to the king, as if he should say, I came not of myselfe, but was sent of God, and haue told thee nothing but out of the mouth of my God. All Ministers should haue the same boldnes, not in appearance only, but effectuallic rooted in their hearts. The false Prophets will brag too much of this; but it is only a vaine and impudent iangling which they keepe, with a blind confidence proceeding from presumption.

Verf. 14. *Therefore the Lord himselfe will giue you a signe, Behold the Virgin shall conceive and beare a sonne, and she shall call his name Immanuel.*

Ahaz had already refused a signe which the Lord had offered him when the Prophet protested against his obstinacie and vthankfulness. *Isaiah* notwithstanding testifies that this shall not let nor hinder the Lord from giuing the Iewes the signe which he had promised and appointed. But what signe? That a Virgin should be with child. This place is obscure: but the Iewes themselves are partie the cause of it, who as much as in them is haue deprauid the true exposition by diuers cauls. For this testimonie toucheth them neere, in regard it conteines an excellent prophetic of the Messiah, who is heere called *Immanuel*; and therefore haue they studied by all meanes to wrest the Prophets meaning to another sense. Some of them pretend that mention is made here of king *Hezekias*, others of the sonne of *Isaiah*. Those which draw this place to *Hezekias*, are too shamelesse, seeing it must needs be that he was of yeeres when *Jerusalem* was besieged, shewing thereby that they are altogether ignorant of the historie. But behold the iust reward of the froward, namely,

namely, that God ſo blinds them, that they are deprived of all iudgement. The like befalls the Papists at this day, who ostentines make themselves laughingstocks, when they are caried away with the spirit of giddines to depraue the scriptures. The pretence of those who thinke it was the sonne of *Iſaiah*, is altogether frivoulous, because we reade not that a deliuerer should be raised vp of the seed of *Iſaiah* which might deserue the title of *Immanuel*: for this title is so high and excellent, that it can appertaine to no man.

Others thinke, or at the least confesse (because they will not contend ouermuch with the Iewes) that the Prophet speaks of some child which should be borne then, by which Christ notwithstanding was figured darkely. But they bring no reasons of any weight, neither do they shew who this child should be, nor yet prouoe it by any testimonies. Now it is certaine (as hath been said) that this name of *Immanuel* can properly agree to none that is man only, and therefore we need not doubt but the Prophet speaks here of Christ. But all both Greeks and Latins which haue written vpon this text are too confident in the expounding of it: for they simple affirme, that Christ is here promised of the virgin *Marye*, as though there were no difficultie in this place. Now the knot which the Iewes would haue vs vntie is not easily done, to wit, that mention is made of Christ here without any cause. Thus they deale with vs, willing vs to consider well the circumstance of the place. *Ierusalem* was besieged, the Prophet was to giue them a signe of their deliuerance: to what purpose is the Messiah promised them now, who should be borne five hundred yeeres after? By this argument they thinke they haue woun the goie, affirming, that the promise touching Christ could stand. *Ahaz* in no respect for assuring him of the deliuerance of *Ierusalem*. And here they cue victorie, chiefly indeed because none haue answered them. And therefore I said that the expositors hitherto haue been too confident in this respect, for it is not a thing of small importance to shew the cause why mention is made here of the redeemer. Let vs see then how we may resolve it.

King Ahaz refusing the signe which was offered him of God, is brought at the last by the Prophet to the foundation of the covenant, which euen the most wicked durst not reiect. The Messiah must be borne, and all looked for him, because the saluation of all the people depended vpon him. The Prophet then hauing rebuked the king, proceeds with him againe in this manner, Thou wouldest faine ouerthrow the decree of God in reiecting his promise; but this decree notwithstanding shall remaine inuiolable: thy disloyaltie and ingratitude shall not hinder God from being the deliuerer of his people, because, at the last he will raise vp his anointed. And for the more full declaration of these things, we must obserue the custome of the Prophets, who in confirming particular promises, do lay this foundation, to wit, that God will send the Redeemer. By this general prophecie Lord

euery where confirms that which he speciallie promiseth to his people. And questionlesse it must needs be that he which lookes for help and succor from God, must therewithall bee also perswaded of his fatherly loue. But how should he be fauorable without Christ, in whom he hath freely adopted vs for his chosen, and alwaies receiued vs vnto mercie? According to which *S. Paul* saith, That in Christ all the promises of God are yea and Amen, 2. Cor. 1. 20. As oft then as God sent any succor to his people in old times, he by and by reconciled them to himselfe in Christ. And therefore when hee threatens famine, pestilence, or sword, he sets the Messiah before their eyes to giue them hope of deliuerance. Seeing this is so apparat, the Iewes haue no cause to storne here as if the Prophet should speake without cause of a thing: so farre remote. For wherevpon did the deliuerance of *Ierusalem* depend? was it not vpon the manifestation of Christ? vpon which foundation the saluation of the Church hath euermore been builded and vpheld.

Iſaiah then speaks properly, saying, Thou receiust not the promises of God; but yet will he fulfill them: yea, he will send his Christ, for whose sake it is his pleasure to preserve this Citie: and howsoeuer thou beest vnworthie of it, yet God will haue regard of his owne glorie. *King Ahaz* then is shut out from the signe which he had before reiected, and is deprived of the benefit of which he made himselfe vnworthie: yet is the inuincible promise of God offered againe vnto him, which is sufficientlie shewed by the particle *Laken* which signifies *Therefore*, as if he should say, Because thou reiectest this particular signe which God offered thee; the same God which was so liberall as to offer thee a signe freely, will not cease to giue it, although it be irksome and cumbersome to thee. But where as I haue said, that the effect of this promise is made euen to *Ahaz*, my meaning is not as if God did therein comprehend him within the number of his chosen, for whose saluation God had ordeined his Sonne: but as in respect that the word was directed to the whole bodie of the people. For they which expound the word *Laken*, which signifies your sonnes, is constrained. Moreover, the Prophet leaues this prophane king in regard of the accomplishment of the promise, and hath respect to the people who were adopted of God. He will giue it you then, not to thee, o cursed king, nor to thy companions, but to you whom he hath adopted. For the covenant which God had made with *Abraham* remaineth sure and vnmoueable. And the Lord hath alwaies had a remnant to whom the fruits of it do appertain, although hypocrites rule and beare sway ouer the people who are partakers thereof. So then there is no inconuenience to propound this promise to the visible Church, and to set it in full view before their eyes.

Behold a virgin.] The word *behold* hath great weight, and it is put to set forth the greatness of the matter. And so is the Scripture wont to speake of excellent and memorable things;

to, the ead mens minds may be lifted vp a-
bout all earthlie things. The Prophet com-
mands then y^e those which heare him should
be attentive, and consider this extraordinarie
worke of God; as if he should say, Be not
suggish, but wey this great grace of God,
which you bought cherefullie to receiue; but
it is hidden from you, because of your dul-
nes. Now although the word *Alma* which
signifies virgin, be deriued from *Alam*, which
signifies to hide, because shamefast and mo-
dest virgins presse not into publike meetings:
and although the Iewes contend very much
about this word, denying that it is taken for
virgin, because *Solomon* vseli it for a yong
maid which is beloued; we need not stand
long in deciding this question. Let vs grant
them that *Alma* signifies a yong Dansell be-
trothed, and that this word is to be referred
rather to the age as they will haue it (which
the scripture notwithstanding vseli often
when it speakes of a virgin) the thing it selfe
sufficiencie refutes all their slanders. For
what matter of admiration had the Prophet
spoken of, if he had said, that a maid should
conceiue by the companie of man? Truly it
had been a ridiculous thing to set this forth
for a matter of wonder or miracle. But put
the case it should be spok^e of a woman which
should conceiue by the helpe of man, yet all
may see it to be a fond and senselesse thing,
that the Prophet speaking to the Iewes of a
new and extraordinarie matter, should adde
thac a betrothed maid should conceiue. It
appeares sufficientlie then that he speakes of
a virgin which should conceiue by the power
of the holy Ghost, and not according to the
common order of nature. And this is that my-
sterie which *S. Paul* so lighlie magnifies, to
wit, that God was manifested in the flesh,
1. Tim. 3. 16.

And she shall call.] The verbe is of the femi-
nine gender among the Hebrues. For I know
not whence they haue taken it which reade
in the masculin, seeing the copies which we
use differ not one from another in this re-
spect: so that being referred to the mother;
it is certaine that some extraordinarie thing
is expressed. We know that the charge is al-
waies giuen to the father to impose the name
vpon the child, in regard it is a signe of that
authoritie and power which fathers haue o-
uer their children; neither belongs it to
the women. But here it is transferred to the
mother. Whence it follows then that he is so
conceiued of his mother that he had no fa-
ther on earth, for otherwise the Prophet
should peruert the common vse of the Scrip-
ture, which attributes this office to me only.
Although it is to be noted, that this name
was not imposed vpo Christ by the wil of his
mother, neither had there been any weight
therein; but the Prophet means that the
virgin shall be as it were the Herault which
shall publish this name, because there should
be no earthlie father to performe this office.

Besides, this name was attributed to Iesus
Christ euen in regard of the effect, because
the only sonne of God clothed himselfe with
our flesh, and vnited himselfe vnto vs in ta-

king one selfesame nature with vs. He is cal-
led then *God with vs*, or conioined with vs,
which can not agree to the man that is not
God; The Iewes in their cauilings say, that
this name was imposed vpon *Herckias*, be-
cause God deliuered his people by his hand.
He (say they) who is Gods minister, repre-
sents his person. But neither *Moses* nor *Ioshua*,
which deliuered the people, were so called:
it followes then that this name *Immanuel*, is
preferred farre before that of *Moses*, *Ioshua*,
or any other; for by this name he sumntos
all those that either were before, or shall be
after him: it being a testimonie of an high
and excellent dignitie and authoritie where-
with hee is adorned about all creatures.
Wherefore it appeares that not only the ver-
tue of God is heere set forth vnto vs as it was
wont to be by such ministers, but the vnion
of the person, in which Christ appeared God
and man together. Whence we still perceiue,
that *Isaiah* telles vs no common matter, but
shewes an incomparable secret, which the
Iewes labour with tooth and naile to obscure
and darken.

*Verf. 15. Butter and hony shall be eate,
till he haue knowledge to refuse the euill,
and to choofe the good.*

Here the Prophet confirms the true hu-
manitie of Christ; for it was a thing al-
together incredible, that he which was God,
should be borne of a virgin. So strange a
thing agreed nothing at all to humane rea-
son. To the end we should not thinke then
that hee imagineth some ghost, hee declares
the signes of this humanitie, by which he
shewes that Christ shall appeare in the very
true nature or flesh of men, to wit, because he
shall be nourished after the same manner that
other little children be. Now the Iewes had another
maner of nourishing their children then we
haue, for they vsed hony, which we commonlie
vse not, and they retaine this fashion among
them yet to this day, so as they cause the In-
fant new borne to taste of butter and hony be-
fore they giue it suck.

Till he know.] That is to say, till he be come
to those yeeres wherein he can discern euill
from good, and as we commonlie say, till he
be of discretion: for the letter *Lamed*, signi-
fies the time and terme, namely, how long
he shall be nourished after the maner of chil-
dren: and this serues to proue his humane
nature: so much the more. By *knowledge* hee
meanes that vnderstanding and iudgement
which comes after Infancie is past. Whereby
we see how farre it pleased the sonne of God
to abase himselfe for our sakes; that he would
not only be fed with ordinarie foode, but
was also content to be deuiued of vnder-
standing for a time, and to susteine all our in-
firmities according to his humane nature; for
this can not appertaine to the diuine nature. *Heb. 2. 15.*
S. Luke speakes of this time of Christs igno-
rance, when he saith, he profised in wisdom, and
in stature, and in fauour with God and men. *Luk. 3.*
35. If *S. Luke* had said simplic that Christ
profited,

profited, one might have replied, that was in regard of men; but he expreſly addes *ſayeth* God. It was needfull that he ſhould be like to all other little children for a time, that hee might be deſtitute of vnderſtanding as touching his humanitie.

* Or, Truly. Verſ. 16. * *For before the Child ſhall haue knowledge to eſchue the euill and to chooſe the good, the land that thou abhorreſt, ſhall be forſaken of both her kings.*

Many are heere deceiued when they will conioine this preſent ſentence with the former, as if it were ſpoken of the ſame child, and to make it an expoſition of the former, as if the particle *ſi* were ratiouall. But if we more narrowlie wey the Propheets meaning it will ſufficiently appeare, that hauing lett the generall doctrine, from which hee had made ſome digreſſion, he now returnes to the matter againe; for hauing grounded the hope of Ieruſalams deliuerance vpon the promiſed Meſſiah, now he teacheth how it ſhall be deliuered. I expound not this verſe then of Chriſt, but of all children in generall; and herein I differ in opinion from all others which thinke it ſhould be ſpoken here of ſome certaine child. But for mine owne part I take the word *Hannan* generallie, to as the letter *He* ſhould be added for the better vnderſtanding, rather to ſhew the age, then ſome ſpeciall child, as we commonlie ſay, *I be child*, adding this article *The*, for the clearer vnderſtanding of the matter; which alſo is verſe vſuall in the Scripture. Now if the word *ſhe* had marked out ſome particular child, he would rather haue ſaid, this child, as in other places. Neither is it likely that this promiſe touching the ruin of the kingdomes of Syria and Samaria (which followed not long after) ſhould be deferred ſiue hundred yeeres, that is, to the coming of Chriſt: we know this were too great an abſurditie. The ſenſe then is, *Before the children which ſhall be borne heere after ſhall know to diſſeue euill from good, the land which thou abhorreſt ſhall be forſaken.*

By *land* I vnderſtand the land of Iſrael & Syria: for although they were two Countreys, yet notwithstanding they were eſteemed but one, by reaſon of y^e couenant which the two kings had made one with another. Some take *the land* for Iudea; but that can not agree, becauſe of the relieiue that followes. Now it is caſe to gather from the holie hiſtorie, that theſe things came ſo to paſſe according as they are heere written. For after *Ahaz* had called the Aſſyrians to help him, *Rezin* was ſlaine by them, 2. King. 16. 9. *Pekah* king of Iſrael died ſoone after, that is to wit, in the twelfth yeere of king *Ahaz*; and *Holbez* the ſonne of *Hele* reigned in his ſtead, 2. King. 17. 1. Before the children then which ſhould be borne ſoone after ſhould come to yeeres of diſcretion, *both the kingdomes were deſtitute of both their kings*, becauſe *Rezin* and *Pekah* died before that time. The word indeed is directed to *Ahaz*; and to the end he might be

the more reuiued, God promiſeth him to take vengeance of his enemies; yet only to the end he might be left the more without excuſe. As touching the words, it is ſaid, that king *Ahaz* abhorred or deteſted the land of Syria and Iſrael, becauſe from thence he was aſſailed. God promiſeth then that theſe kings ſhall quicklie periſh. Some turne the word *Mipne*, becauſe; and I confeſſe it is often taken in this ſenſe: but I expound it more ſimplie heere, as if he ſhould ſay, the land ſhall be forſaken and left deſtitute of the preſence of her two kings, ſo as they ſhall appeare therein no more. And by theſe words of the Prophect it ſufficiently appeares, that theſe things are to be vnderſtood of both kingdomes.

Verſ. 17. *The Lord ſhall bring vpon thee, and vpon thy people, and vpon thy fathers houſe (the dayes that haue not come from the day that Ephraim departed from Iudah) euen the king of Aſhur.*

Here the Prophect on the other ſide threatens this wicked hypocrite, who ſeemed afraid (forſooth) to tempt God, and yet in the meane while ſought help from thoſe whom God had forbidden him to meddle withall. To the end then he ſhould not liſt vp his creſt too high in regard of this promiſe heere made vnto him, he denounceth his deſtruction, and teſtifies, that the help which he expected, to wit, from the Aſſyrians, ſhould be altogether for his ouerthrow. As if he ſhould ſay, I thou promiſtſt thy ſelſe wonders from the king of Aſhur, and thinkeſt that he will ſtick cloſe to thee, becauſe that (againſt the commandement of God) thou haſt made a league and peace with him; but thou ſhalt ſhortlie feele what commoditie will then redound vnto thee by tempting of the Lord. Thou mighteſt haue reſted quietlie at home, and ſo would God haue been mercifull vnto thee; but thou loudeſt rather to haue help of Aſhur: well, thou ſhalt learne by experience, that their crueltie ſhall farre exceede the crueltie of all other enemies. This ſpeech of the Prophect then ſutes very well with the former; for he preſſeth the diſloyaltie and vnthankfulnes of the king the more neere, who in relieuing both the word of God and the ſigne, had made himſelſe vtterlie vnworthie of any promiſe at all. Alſo becauſe that as ſoone as hypocrites haue eſcaped any feare or danger they turne by and by to their old bias againe, he affirms that the Iewes can by no meanes eſcape but they muſt be chaſtiſed; according as they had well deſerued. For this cauſe he ſaith expreſly, that the houſe of *Dauid* (which by a ſpeciall priuiledge ought to be exempted) ſhall be wrapped euen vnder the like calamities. For God ſo moderates his iudgemēt, that whileſt he ſpares his Church and prouides for the ſafetie thereof, he yet in the end cauſeth the wicked (who are mingled with the good) to feele the rigor of his vengeance.

From the day that Ephraim.] The Scripture vſeth this phraſe of ſpeech when it notes out any

See 2. King. 16. 7. and 2. Chro. 28. 16.

2. King. 15. 30.

1. Kin. 12. 26

any Speciall calamitie. The Iewes could no way be more deepe wounded, then to see the kingdome not only miserable wasted, but also the bodie of this people to be rent and torne in peeces; the ten Tribes being led away captiues: and therefore the reuolt of *Ephraim* from *Iudah*, is a forewarning of an extreame ruine: for seeing the kingdome of *Iudaes* magnificence was more abased by this diuision then by any other calamitie which could haue befallne it, the Prophet saith that *in this time* they had not receiued a greater losse. Wee see heere (as I was about to say ere-while) how God opens a way to his mercie, by remembering the faithfull, and in chastening the hypocrites.

Wherefore we ought to consider this his admittable counsell, namely, that the Church should then remaine safe and found in the midst of the dangers of death. Who would euer haue thought that *Ierusalem* should haue been deliuered from the great armie of these two kings? And that the kingdome of *Syria* then in her flourishing estate should afterwards be brought so soone to nought? Or that the destruction of *Samaria* should immediatly approach? And in the meane while who would haue imagined that *Assyrians*, vpon whom the Iewes reposed themselves, should be more hurtfull vnto them then euer the *Syrians* or *Israelites* were? The Lord did all this for the conseruation of his Church, so as yet notwithstanding hee tooke vengeance vpon the impietie of king *Ahaz*.

Verf. 18. And in that day shall the Lord bisse for the Flie that is at the vttermoſt part of the flood of Egypt, and for the Bee which is in the land of Aſhur.

BECAUSE the Iewes imagined to hold the *Assyrians* at their deuotion in regard of the couenant, the Prophet deriding such a follie, declares, that the *Assyrians* shall be readie, as soone as God shall but make a signe, and shall driue them whither soeuer he thinketh good. This word *bisse*, is put in stead of commandement, as hauing respect to the nature of the kingdomes wherof he makes mention: for *Egypt* abounded with *Flies*, in regard that the region is hot and myric. There must needs breed many *Flies* then where the ayre is hote and moyst. *Assyria*, that had honey-bees in great plentie. But howsoeuer hee declares that hee will bring the enemies with his *whistle*, alluding to the nature of the *Flies*, and of the *Bees*: his meaning is, that he wil make them come easilie, as if he should say, There shall be no great need of much traualle, for they shall *ſtie* as it were hither as soone as I shall haue giuen them a *ſigne*. And thus he shewes how readilie his counsell and secret instruct shall haue force and efficacie, when with his only whistle he shall constreine the most warlike people to execute his commandement.

Verf. 19. And they shall come and shall light all in desolat valleys, and in the holes

of the rocks, and vpon all thornie places, and vpon all bushie places.

HE follows the Similitude; for *Bees* vsually desire to make their nests in *caues* or *valleies*, *bushes*, or such like places: as if he should say, There shall not be so much as the least corner which the enemies shall not fill to make their nests therein. Wee neede not trouble our selues much in searching out the reason why he rather speakes of *thornes* and *bushes* then of other things, seeing the maner of speech is figuratiue; & yet notwithstanding I make no question but his meaning is to shew, that there should be no place of refuge at all left vnto them, whether they sought to dig *caues*, or to hide them in the *desolate valleys*, because the enemies will fill vp all the roomes in the countrie. From hence we gather once againe, as we haue already noted, that nothing comes to passe rashly, or by chance, but that all things are gouerned by the immediate hand of God. Secondly, that albeit the wicked bestir them, and are caried with a blind furie to do mischief, yet God notwithstanding holds them short, in making them serue to his glorie. Therefore when we see the wicked set all at fixe and seuen, let vs not thinke that God hath giuen them libertie to wander at their pleasure, but let vs be most assured that he wil calme and moderate their restless boilings. This may exceedinglie comfort vs amidst these tourmoiles wherein *Christendome* is now enwrapped, and by the violence thereof so tossed vp and downe, so that all things seeme to fall on heapes: for wee must remember that the Lord hath a secret reine or bridle in his hand wherewith he keepes in these furious beasts, lest they should swallow vp all, by ranging whithersoever their rage carries them: and that they can not passe the bounds which he hath assigned them.

Verf. 20. In that day shall the Lord ſhauẽ with a razor that is hired, euen by them beyond the riuer, by the king of Aſſur, the head, and the haire of the feete, and it shall consume the feete.

NOW he vseth another Similitude, and compares the enemies by whom God had determined to afflict *Iudah* (in his time) to a *razor*, wherewith the beard and haire are shaued, and wherewith they vse to take away the like excrements. The particle *Beth* is superfluous heere, and signifies only (after the maner of the *Hebrues*) that an instrument is spoken of, and therefore I haue simple translated, *shall haue with a razor*. Now the Prophet himselfe will by and by expresse his owne meaning, to wit, that the *Assyrians* shall be as a *razor* in the hand of God, and that they shall come from *ſarre*. For which cause he addes, that *they are beyond the flood*: giuing thereby to vnderstand, that the riuer *Ephraites* shall not hinder them from passing ouer to fulfill the commandements of God. Moreover he saith, that not some portion of this people

people only shall of his owne proper motion rush into an other mans land, tracing vp and downe without any certaine direction; but that the *King himselfe* shall be their leader, to the end that Iudea may be destroyed by the people and King together, that so they may fall, and be ouerwhelmed vnder so heauie a burthen.

It is not without cause that he saith, this *Razor* shall be hired: for hereby he sets forth the crueltie of the warre which the Assyrians should make: as if one hauing hired an hoise or a sword, should boldlie serue his turne therewith, making no more spare of it then if it were his owne. For we know that such as take things vpon hire, will haue the seruice of the thing; according to the price they hired it for. So the Lord tels them that he will not spare this razor, although the edge of it should be blunted; which is as much to say, as he will send the Assyrians with a boisterous and furious rage. Now if the Lord auenged himselfe so sharpe for the causes heterotore mentioned by the Prophet, let vs feare lest we feele the like punishment; or rather let vs tremble at the razor wherewith the Lord hath begun to *shave* vs alreadie.

The head, and the haire of the feet] By the *haire of the feet*, hee means the lower parts: for whatsoever is below the bellie is attributed to the feete by the figure Synecdoche, by reason whereof the Hebrues call vrin, the water of the feet; and covering of the feet, for easing the bellie. His meaning is then that the whole bodie shall be shauen all ouer, and the beard also. Now if wee take away these figures of each, and would haue a more plaine and simple sense of these words, he signifies an vtter and vniuersall ruin: as if he should say, This razor shall descend from the crowne of the head euen to the feet, and the kings and princes shall not escape this discomfiture, but they themselves shall feele the cutting of this *Razor*.

Verf. 21. *And in the same day shall a man nourish a yong Cow, and two Sheepe.*

IN these verses to the end of the Chapter the Prophet layes forth the estate of a Countrey wasted and spoiled: for his meaning is to paint out as in lively colours, and to set in full view before this people so great a calamitie, that nothing shall be discerned on which side soeuer a man turnes his eye, but the marks of an horrible waste and desolation. And whereas some thinke the Prophet pronoueth heere a mitigation of the chastisements, we shall by and by see that this suites not with the text. And although also he makes mention of a man nourishing, yet notwithstanding he speaks properlie of the richest of them: for he giues not to euery one so much, but that those who in times past had wont to nourish many Oxen and Sheepe, should now content themselves with a few. His meaning is then, that they shall all be brought to great penurie. And therefore because the Prophet in his language saith a man shall *reuiue*, or *quicken*, some thinke it is as much

as if he had said, To deliuer from death: notwithstanding I haue followed that which was the most simple and approued.

Verf. 22. *And for the abundance of milke that they shall giue, he shall eate butter; for honey and butter shall euery one eate, which is left within the land.*

SOME expound, that they shall hardlie draw so much nourishment from one Cow as will be sufficient to serue for one familie: for those who bring vp Cattell, luc not only of the Milke, but make Cheesse also, and reserue Butter to sell. When he saith then that of all the abundance which shall be left, one shall not be able to get so much as will be necessary to suffice the familie; he thereby notes out (as these expositors affirme) necessitie and want. Others thinke that he here promisseth increase, so that although they should haue but few Sheepe and Kine, yet notwithstanding they should haue enough to maintaine themselves. But the third exposition agrees best, for it seemes the Prophet meant to say, The number of men shall be so small, that they shall not need much milke to suffice them all. *Which* then hath declared in the former verse that Iudea should be so pilled, that there should not remaine many beasts: but now he addes, that there shall be yet a lesse number of men, because a *litt'le milke* shall suffice for foode to the inhabitants that remaine in the land. This exposition I rather receiue, because a promise should not well sute to this place. And as for the first sense, it is vnapt, because he speaks not only of those that haue Cattell, but of all the inhabitants; for he expressly saith, *whosoever shall be left*: by the which speech, he signifies yet againe a small number. His meaning then (in a word) is to say, that the land shall be to ruinate and dispeopled, that they shall not neede much milke nor butter, because few men shall be left in this desolation.

Verf. 23. *And at the same day euery place wherein shall be a thousand vines, shall be a thousand pieces of siluer: * so it shall be for the briars and for the thornes..*

*Or, Because

I Will not stand to refute the opinioe of those who thinke that *israhel* here comforts the faithfull, because the veine of the text doth sufficientlie shew the contrarie, so as the very words cleerely shew, that the Prophet goes on still to describe the waste and ruin of the land. Others thinke this should be the sense, namely, that there should be bushes and thornes in the places where the vines were, which were sold for a thousand pieces of siluer. But we see that this should be too base a price, if the Prophet should speake of all the land in general: For what thing were it to prize a vine at a sickle, which is the most precious possession that one can haue? That were all one as if it should be giuen for a piece of bread, as we commonlie

say when a thing is sold extremely vnder-foote. There is no field so barren and vnfriitfull that is not worth more, if so bee a man bee able to husband it, as they doe when a land is well peopled. Hee addes the reason of the changing of the price, whereby it appears that he speaks of a wast and destruction. There shall be no labourers, saith he, because of the *bushes and briars*, which we see comes to passe in an extreme calamitie. I thinke also that the letter *Lamed*, which some haue expressed by the word *To*, signifies *Be-cause*. For the enemies hauing pilld and made hauock of all, and no husbandmen nor vinedressers being left, the best husbanded places must of necessitie be couered with thick bushes and brambles. His meaning is therefore, that there shall be so few inhabitants, that scarcely one should be found that would bestow the least piece of siluer to buy the fairest Lordships.

Verf. 24. With arrowes and With bowes shall one come thither, because all the Land shall be briars and thornes.

THe verb is in the singular number, yet notwithstanding we may expound it by the plural, to wit, that the Archers shall goe through Iudea. Some thinke *Isaiah* speaks of *Bowes and arrowes*, because the enemies should be so fearefull to behold, that no man should dare to approach neere his possessions without armour. But I thinke it more probable that men shall go a hunting where the land was well manured and dressed before, because there should be caues and denues for wilde beasts. Now this is a miserable change, to wit, when fields which in times past were husbanded and fruitfull, are conuerted into forests and bushes. And therefore by bowes and arrowes in this place I vnderstand hunting; and the sense is, that the Farmers shall not come neere their Vineyards, but the hunters: and that they shall not meddle either with planting or pruning of vines there, but others shall hunt wilde beasts in those places. So that for conclusion, he notes nothing else but an utter desolation, by means whereof the whole land shall be turned topse turue.

Verf. 25. But on all the mountaines which shall be digged with the mattocke, there shall not come thither the feare of briars and thornes: but they shall be for the sending out of Bullocks, and for the treading of sheepe.

* Or, there shall be no feare.

IT seemes heere that the Prophet contradicts himselfe, for hitherto he hath spoken of the consumption of the land: but now when he saith that *oxen* shall feed in the places where were thornes and briars, he describes as it were a new estate. This hath caused some to applie these words to the consolation of the people. But the Prophets meaning is nothing lesse, because hee declares that the mountaines which were farre remote from the places where men dwelt, and whither men went with great difficultie, should be now fit pasture for Cattell by reason of the multitude of folks which should retire thither. And because euery one would flee to the mountaines, which in former times were desert and inaccessible, they should not feare to be scratched with thornes, because there should bee inhabitants enow to suppress them. Now this is a miserable thing, when men can no otherwise escape from death, but by running amongst the *thornes and brambles*. His meaning is then, that men shall seeke shelter and habitation in the *mountaines*, which were desert and vnhabited: because there shall be no roome left for safetie in the plaine. And thus hee portraites out the rounous and pitifull estate of all the countrie; namely, such an horrible destruction, that the face of the land shall be vterly changed from that it was before. When the Prophet foretold these things to King *Ahaz*, no doubt but hee contemned them. For this wicked King resting vpon his forces, and vpon the league with the *Affyrians*; staied himselfe hereupon, and seded himselfe againe vpon his lees: as soone as the siege (which threatned the Citie) was raised and gone. But *Isaiah* notwithstanding ceased not constantly to discharge his dutie, shewing still, that there was no succour but in God; testifying to this wicked hypocrite also, that his ruine would come from that place whence he looked for safetie and deliuerance.

THE VIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. Moreover, the Lord said vnto mee; Take thee a great roll, and write in it with a mans pen; Make speeche to the spoile, haste to the pray.

* Or, a common stile.



His Prophecie contains no new matter: but is a confirmation of the former; wherein *Isaiah* had prophesied the destruction of two kingdoms of Israel and Syria, which was at hand.

Hee had also foretold, that both Countries should lose their Kings, before the children which should be borne soone after, were able to discern betweene good and euill; that is to say, before they should bee of discretion. But because the wicked take no warning by any threatnings, it was needfull that this prophecie should bee repeated, and confirmed by some signe: First, that he might awaken the people; God commandeth this Prophecie to bee published and written, to the

end

See the end
of the Pre-
face before
this Prophe-
cie.

Hab. 2. 2.

end all might take knowledge of it. We haue ſaid heretofore, that the Prophets were wont after they had receiued commandement to publiſh any thing to the people, to comprehend the ſumme of it in few wordes; and then fixed it to the gates of the Temple: as we may gather from the booke of *Itabacut*; wherewith if wee conſerre this place, the thing ſhall bee manifeſt enough. But here is a more particular thing: for hee not onely commands the prophetic to bee written; but hee requireth a great and *large roll*, to the end it might bee read a ſarre oft. For by how much ſmaller the letter is, ſo much the more difficult and obſcure it is to read. Heereunto appertaines that which immediately followeth, touching the *Stile of a common perſon*. The word *Enoſh*. is taken for a man of any trade; to the end all, yea the ſimpleſt ideots might read that which ſhould be written.

Make haſte.] This ſhort and cutted manner of ſpeech hath much more vehemencie in it, then if hee had ſtood to dilate the matter at large. For euery one was able to carry home foure words to his houſe; and in them to take knowledge of the ſwiftnesse of Gods wrath; as alſo to bee the more neere, and in good earneſt touched with his iudgement, no leſſe then if hee had felt it with his finger. Laſtly, the Lord would not ſtrive with words, becauſe it was now no time to plead; but rather to repreſent the matter by an outward ſigne. By an example then he ſets the vengeance of God before their eyes; whereof the Prophets had ſo often told them in vaine before: to the end it ſhould pierce the more deeply into their hearts, and ſhould remaine engrauen in their memories. So that as oft as one ſhould but mention theſe words, *haſte to the ſpoile*; they ſhould alſo call to mind the deſtruction of *Iſrael* and *Syria*, and be further certified of it. Now becauſe the Prophet prophecied in the former chapter of the coming of Chriſt; many vnaptly expound this of him: to wit, that being furniſhed with an heavenly vertue, hee came to diſpoile the prince of the world; and therefore haſtneſſe to the pray. Although this hath ſome ſhew of wit, yet it can by no means agree to the text. For the true and plaine ſenſe declares, that the Prophet ſaith not any new thing, but conſirmeth that which hee had ſaide before.

Verſ. 2. *Then I tooke vnto mee faithfull witneſſes, to record, Uriah the Prieſt, and Zechariah the ſonne of Ieberechiah.*

THe Prophet vſeth a nounce and verbe deſcended from one roote, and the meeting together of the words hath elegancie: as if we ſhould ſay, I haue witneſſed my ſelfe with witneſſes. Now becauſe this matter was of great importance, hee tooke *witneſſes* with him, as men were wont to doe in things of conſequence. Hee calles them *faithfull*; that is to ſay, true and meete: and yet notwithstanding one of

them was a curſed and wicked apoſtata, who to flatter the King, built an Altar like vnto that at *Damaſcus*; and openly conſented to an horrible impietie and abomination. I know there are others who are indeede of a contrary opinion: but if wee conſider the circumſtance of the time well, we ſhall finde it to be euery that ſame *Uriah*, who like a trencher-chaplain, conformed himſelfe to the yngodly humour of the King; as the holy hiſtorie witneſſeth. Whereas they thinke it was ſome other, becauſe *Iſaiab* calleth him *faithfull*: it is too weake a reaſon; for the Prophet did not ſo much looke to the man, as to the office which he exerciſed; in regard whereof, hee was ſufficient to be a witneſſe in this caſe. He meant not to ſay then, that *Uriah* was a good man; but that his perſon was not to be reſpected, in regard of the authoritie of his office; but was in reſpect thereof, a witneſſe free from all exception, as they ſay. Moreouer, I thinke this prophecie was fixed to the doores of the Temple, in the preſence of *Uriah* and *Zechariah*, who were taken to be *witneſſes* to it. For hee ſpeakes of no viſion, but of a commandement of God, which liue indeede did and performed: to the end theſe words might be as a common prouerbe in the mouthes of all the people.

Verſ. 3. *After I came vnto the Propheſſe, which conceived and bare a ſon: Then ſaid the Lord to me; call his name Maher-ſhalal-chaſh-baz.*

I Make no queſtion but this which folowes happened to the Prophet in viſion, to ſcale vp the former prophecie. It ſeemed then to *Iſaiab*, that he had the company of his wife; and that by this copulation he begat a ſon vpon whom this name is impoſed. There were no abſurditie if we ſhould confeſſe that the Prophet had the company of his wife; and that hee did indeede beget a child, to whom this name was giuen: neither would I much contend with him which ſhould be of ſuch an opinion. But becauſe it is not very likely that this name was impoſed vpon any man, there being no teſtimony of it: I rather incline this way; to thinke that this viſio was offered to the Prophet, as a confirmation of the former prophecie. Hee calles not his wife a *Propheſſe*, as the wiues of Kings are called *Queenes*, by way of honour: but becauſe ſhe was a publike perſon in this viſion. *Iſaiab* therefore out of doubt, doth of ſet purpoſe turne away the mindes of the faithfull from thought of any carnall copulation; that they might ſo much the more attend to this ſacred myſtery. For howſoeuer it be a thing lawfull in it ſelfe to beget children in marriage; yet notwithstanding nature it ſelfe teacheth, that the act is a matter of bluſhing, or ſhamefaſtnes, which ſeeketh to do it ſecretly.

Verſ. 4. *For before the child ſhall haue knowledge to crie My father, and my mother, hee ſhall take away the riches of Da-*

m. sciz, and the spoile of Samaria, before the King of Assur.

Here follows both the exposition of the obscure words of *Isaiah*; as also of the vision aduoyced vnto it. For seeing God meant to speake briefly, it was needefull it should bee intelligible. I referre not the word *child* to the sonne of the Prophet, but to all those that should bee borne soone after; as I haue said heretofore. He threatens then, that the two kings of *Israel* and *Samaria*, shall be cut off before those children shall be of any growth. In the presence of the King of *Assur*. That is to say, according to his desire and will. Wherein it may bee hee meetes with the ancient manner of those which triumphed: before whose chariot they vsed to carrie the spoils of the enemies. Thus the spoiles of *Damascus* and *Samaria* shall bee borne before the King of *Assur*. From hence it appears yet better that the Prophet meant nothing else but to foretell the ruine of the kingdom of *Israel* and *Syria*: First, for the comfort of the faithfull, and secondly, to scorne at the foolish feare of this cursed King, which could not endure that the Lord should succour him. He had not onely reiect-ed the promises; but also the signe which was offered him. This is the cause why the Pro-phet doth so much the more reprocue the impiety of this king, and of all the people: as if he should say, I see that thou art resolu-ed to beleene nothing: but yet is the Lord determined to assist his chosen. For thou shalt shortly see sudden and vnexpected changes, by which God will deliuer his people. And yet it is certaine that these things are not directed so much to the King, as to the faithfull. Whence we are to note, that the seruants of God doe not alwaies speake so to the hearers doe by and by beleene their sayings. *Isaiah* speaks heere to the wicked, whom he professed nothing at all. Why then doth he direct his speech vnto them? To the end hee may conuince them more and more, and to lay their infidelity in their dishonour: as also that the goodnes of God might be the better knowne. For who would not haue thought but such an impiety would haue shut vp the gate of all Gods mercies from them? yet notwithstanding the Lord by his goodnes ouercomes both the peruersitie of the King, and of the people. Now yee see the Prophets drift, to wit, that whilest he reprocheth the wicked with their pride, he shewes them notwithstanding that God is alwaies like himselfe.

Verf. 5. And the Lord spake yet againe vnto me, saying,

6. Because this people hath refused the waters of Shiloh which runne softly, and reioyce with Rezin, and the sonne of Remaliah.

TO the end *Achaz* should not waxe secure, nor rest himselfe vpon a vaine hope, the Prophet suddenly breakes off his speech tou-

ching the common saluation of the faithfull, and doth againe set the threatenings and chastisements before the vnbeleeuers. Some thinke that hee speakes here against those which onely sought after newes: as indeede it comes to passe, that the common people for the most part are not contented with the present state, but desire to heare of a new King. And that often happens to manie, which wee see befall those that are sicke; namely, they hope to be better, when they haue changed their place. The wills of men are so peruerse, that when things fall not out as they would, they looke after nothing but a change in the state, greedily pursuing after tidings therof, thinking to receiue some reliefe by it. But I thinke the meaning of the Prophet is to be stretched further, and is not to be referred only to those who asked after a change: but that it is rather a generall speech comprehending all estates: for impietie, and the contempt of God had almost ouergrowne the whole land.

He speaks not then of any small number or of a particular faction; but of the whole assemblie of the people: and seeing they were almost all of them degenerate, he very iustlie reprooues them all. I confesse indeede that he excepts a little remnant of the faithfull, of whom he will make mention by and by. Now the offence is, that the people distrusting their owne weaknesse, desired greater riches and forces. He saith then, that they despised the waters of *Shiloh*, because the Iewes made no reckoning thereof, and were discontented with their owne estate. He ads, that they delighted to looke to *Rezin*. Others translate, with *Rezin*; but the particle, *to*, expresseth their peruerse desire better. His meaning then is to say, that the Iewes seeing themselves destitute of great garisons, looked vnto others, and longed for the riches of the kingdom of *Israel*. For when they considered their pouertie and weak estate they trembled, and trusted not in God at all; but only in outward helps. They thought they should be in great safetie, if they could obtaine a Prince equall in power to the King of *Israel*. Thus they reioyced in other mens riches; and desired them,

Verf. 7. Now therefore, behold the Lord bringeth upon them the waters of the riuer, mightie and great; euen the King of Assur with all his glorie, and he shall come vp upon all their Riuers, and goe ouer all their bankes.

HE speaks in the present tence, to the end all should lay it the nearer to heart. Behold, the Lord brings upon you violent waters. We must note the similitudes which the Prophet vseth: for the speech is much more elegant, then if he had spoken barely and nakedly without them: and it is as if hee had said, Because the people are not contented with their condition, but are euer lusting after the riches and wealth of another, I will shew

ſhew them what it is to haue a mightie King. As for example, if ſome few people ſubiect to a poore and obſcure Prince, hauing mightie neighbours that were ſubiects to a King of great renowne ſhould ſay, Oh, what a goodly thing were it to bee the ſubiects of ſuch a puſſant King, to be vnder the government of the Emperor, or of ſ King of France, who haue an inuincible power! Should not God haue iuſt occaſion to chaſtiſe ſuch a wicked deſire? For by how much the more mightie Kings are; ſo much the more doe they oppreſſe their people: they will be vnder no controll, but will do whatſocuer they liſt: adde alſo, y they know not the meaſure of their power, but according to their ſtrength they giue themſelues licence to doe what them liketh. The Lord reprooues this vbridled deſire of the Iewes, that in diſtruſting their owne ſtrength, they looked not to the Lord, but to the riches of mightie Kings. Now this reprehension hath much more grace vnder theſe figures, then if he had ſpoken with- out them.

Silo, as *S. Ierom* ſaith, was a little fountaine, whente proceeded a riuer running ſoftly thorow the middeſt of *Ieruſalem*. And becauſe this little riuer was inſufficient to defend them, they deſired and asked after thoſe great riuers which inuironed, and greatly enriched the cities. For there is nothing which brings more renowne and riches to a countie, then theſe great nauigable riuers, by which one may fetch in and carrie out all ſorts of merchandize, the more eaſily. He compares *Euphrates* then, (which is y moſt renowned riuer in the Eaſt) with *Shiloah*; and follows the ſame ſimilitude: vnderſtanding by *violent waters*, the *Aſſyrians*, which ſhould waſte *Iudeab*, and ſpoile it wholly, as it were with a deluge. I wiſhew you, ſaith the Lord, what it is to wiſh for theſe mightie and violent waters.

• King. 18.

And ſhall come vp.] This place ought to be diligently obſerued. For wee haue all of vs a diſtruſtfulneſſe naturally rooted in vs, ſo as when the helpe of man failes, wee are out of heart. Let God make what promiſe hee will, we cannot be reſolued of the truth of it: but haue our eyes fixed vpon our owne feeble- neſſe, and being beſotted, we lie like blocks in our feares. And therefore haue we neede to ſeek a remedie for this vice. *Shiloah* then; that is to ſay, the vocation or condition to which God hath called vs, with promiſe of bleſſing; ſhould be vnto vs a ſtrong defence, although we ſee it not before our eyes; and that we ſhould preferre the ſame our eſtate before the power of the greateſt Kings of the world. For if wee relie vpon the ſuccour of men, and place our confidence in riches and abundance of ſiluer; we muſt looke for the chaſtiſement which the Prophet threatneth in this place. The holy hiſtorie witneſſeth that theſe things came to paſſe; ſo as he which ſhall reade therein, ſhall haue no great need of an expoſition of this place. The *Aſſyrians* whom the Iewes called to their ſuccour, deſtroyed them; and this was a iuſt puniſhment of their diſtruſt. Wherein wee haue

a faire looking glaſſe to behoold the ende of ſuch luſtfull people, who could not content themſelues with the promiſe of Gods aide and ſuccour. Let vs then looke to our ſelues, and let vs be warned by this deſtruction of the Iewes.

The Church for the moſt part is in ſuch caſe, that ſhe is alwaies deſtitute of the helpe of men, leſt whileſt we be too well ſtabliſhed in our outward eſtate, wee ſhould haue our eyes dazled with our riches and ſtrength, and ſo ſhould fall to forget God. We muſt learne to reioyce in our weakeneſſe, and to content our ſelues therewith; to the end we may depend vpon the Lord for ſuccour: ſo as the *ſmall and low waters* be better pleaſing vnto vs then all the great and *boiſterous riuers* of the Heathen: let vs not therfore enuie the great- neſſe and power of the wicked. To this purpoſe it is ſaid in the 46. *Pſal.* The ſtreames of the riuer ſhal reioyce y city of God; the fan- ctuary of the moſt high is in the miſt thereof, therefore it ſhall not moue: God will helpe it right early, the Heathen make a noiſe, the kingdoms ſhaked, and the earth trembled:

The Lord of hoſtes is with vs, &c. If any ſhall obiect that the helpe and ſuccour of men is not to be deſpiſed: the anſwere is very eaſie: Anſ.

Obiect.

to wit, that the Prophet condemnes not ſuch helpe here; but that curſed feare which driues vs into deſpaire: as when we are ſo affrighted, that no promiſe of God whatſo- euer can hold vs in our places. Now we muſt yeeld God this honour to content our ſelues with him alone, although all things elſe ſhould faile vs; ſeeing we are aſſured that he is alwaies ready to relieue vs. And then it is al one whether we haue outward helpe, or whether we haue them not. For if we haue them, it is in our liberty to vſe them; if wee haue them not, let vs be content: and let one God onely ſuffice vs for all neceſſities. For hee is ſufficientlie able to fulfill his promiſes of himſelfe, and needeth none of mans helpe: therefore wee may boldlie commit our ſelues ouer into his onely cuſtodie and ſafeguard.

Let this be wet obſer- ued.

The Verbe *Kataph*, which ſometimes ſigni- fies to paſſe; is as much in this place, as to ſpoile and cut off: as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; Hee ſhall not onely ſlightly paſſe thorow *Iudeab*, but ſhall alſo ouer-flow it; ſo as he will drown and deſtroy it wholly. For he will ſpread himſelfe all ouer the land in all places. He addes,

Verſ. 8. *And ſhall breake into Iu- dath, and ſhall ouerflow and paſſe thorow, and ſhall come vp to the necke; and the ſtretching out of his wings ſhall fill the breaddth of thy land, O Immanuel.*

THIS ſimilitude is taken frō a mā, who ente- ring into a riuer, goes forward by degrees til at length he come vp to the neck. So ſhall *Iudab* be inuironed with this boiſterous flood; to wit, with the *Aſſyrian*: in ſuch fort, as he ſhall waite into it vp to the necke. Now he ſpeakes this of *Ieruſalem*, which was the chiefe and capitall

Citie

Citie in the kingdom: for when the Assyrian arrived there, it was no hard matter to destroy all Iudah. *The breads of thy Land.* That is to say, ouer all the parts of it. The Prophet goes on still with the similitude of his prophesie, and shewes how great the violence of the Assyrian wil be, and he amplifies his fiercenes and turbulencie by the same similitude, to wit, of a *raging streames*, which hauing broken all ramparts that could be set before it, ouerflows and spreads euery way, ouercaries and beares all downe before it. For he follows his denunciation against the Iewes, as he began to do in the two former verses. And as he had threatned the Israelites and Syrians with destruction, so now he likewise threatens the Iewes with the same. For the better vnderstanding whereof, we must consider the context which *Isaiah* disposeth very fitly. He had directed his speech before to others, because *Ahaz* was vnworthie of it. The Lord shall giue you a signe, and this we haue handled in the former Chapter. He therewithall addes the meanes whereby to preserve Ierusalem, to wit, by the sodaine mutations which should happen to Israel and Syria. This was confirmed in the beginning of this Chapter as well by expresse commandement, as by vision. Now he comes to the Iewes, who should not thinke to escape without punishment; as also that they should not be too much lifted vp with the fall of their enemies: for he shewes that their reward is very neere, and that they shall be chastised for their impietic and disloyaltie, because they despised the Lord, and would not be satisfied with his *promises, signes,* and benefits which were offred them in all fulnes and abundance.

Immanuel. Some aske why the Prophet rather turnes his speech to *Christ*, then to call it Gods holy land: for no doubt but by the name of *Immanuel* he meanes *Christ*. It should seeme that this was said to expresse the indignitie of the offence so much the more: because Iudah was not only consecrated vnto God, but also had the pledge of his saluation in the person of the Mediator; and therefore should be a great indignitie vnto them to be destroyed by an Infidell king. But I thinke rather the Prophet addes this *word*, to giue some hope againe to the faithfull, and to comfort them in so great a calamitie, for they might haue been out of heart, seeing the countrie so cruellie wasted and spoiled. His meaning is to say then, that this destruction shall not hinder the coming of the Redeemer (of whom he had made mention before.) As if he had said, The land shall be thine, *O Immanuel*, thou must dwell and remaine in it. This then is adled in stead of a consolacion, giuing them to vnderstand that the land being pilled and destroyed, shall yet notwithstanding be rather *Gods* then mans. And this turning and applying of the speech to the second person, hath great vehemencie, because by this meanes he hath recourse to the promised redemption: to the end the Lord may moderate his anger in the midst of these horrible calamities.

Verse. 9. Gather together on heapes *o ye* people, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Or, peoples. *ces,* and bearken all yee of far countries: *gird your selues,* and you shall be broken in pieces: *gird your selues,* and you shall be broken in pieces.

The Verb *Roen* signifieth to bruise, or to breake, whether it descends from the word *Roa*, or from *Raab*. But because *Raab* signifies to conioyne or assemble, some had rather take it in this sense; which also agrees best with the argument and context of the Prophet. For whereas some translate, Breake you, to wit, either the kingdom of Iudah, or the Assyrians; it seemes too constrained, & too farre fetched. But it appeeres that *ŷ* Prophet describes the counsels and enterprises by which they thought to cut off the Church of God, because he by and by addes, *Gird your selues*. Also in the beginning of *ŷ* next verse, Take counsell. The word then of *Asssembling*, properlie agrees to this place, vnlesse any had rather take the word to Breake by a figure; to which I willingly yeeld, and so the word amounts to as much as to heape vp, or (as we commonlie say) to pack vp hard together, because things which are pressed, are also consequetlie pressed with violence and thrust together. He meanes then not only an heape, but an heape well pressed together: as if he should say, Gather your selues close together, as if you were some very thick heape. This signification as it seemes agrees very well to the circumstance of this place; and that which is added afterward tends also heereunto, *Arme you, Gird your selues*. But the Prophet encourageth himselfe with trust and confidence, after he had made mention of *Immanuel*, that is to say, God, who was to assist his people. And by the seliefame meanes conceiued a new hope against the enemies, who although they might seeme to haue obtained all their desires when they had spoiled the countrie; yet should the Lord be conqueror, and would maintaine his owne against the crueltie of their aduersaries. And thus withdrawing his mind from the contemplation of this calamitie, he turnes it to *Christ*, and in beholding of him, he so fortifies himselfe, that he is bold to triumph ouer his enemies, as if he had alreadie ouercome them. We are to place the Prophet then as it were in the watch-tower, from whence on the one side he beholds the difcomfure of the people, and from the other the Assyrians conquering and ouerflowing in all pride. Then being comforted by the sight and name of *Christ*, he forgets all his afflictions, as if he ailed nothing, and being deliuered out of all miserie, he turnes himselfe against the enemies which God should destroy soone after. And this we ought diligentlie to obserue, that hauing now to wrastle against the same temptations in these afflictions which the Church indureth, and with *ŷ* burthen whereof she is almost ouerwhelmed: that we forthwith cast our eies vpon *Christ*, by beholding of whom we may triumph ouer Satan, and all sorts of enemies.

Quest.

Ans.

Ques.

Ans.

O ye peoples,] Wherefore makes he mention of peoples, ſeeing the Aſſyrian only ſhould deſtroy the land of Iudea? I anſwere, that the Armie of the Aſſyrian was compoſed of diuers nations, for he had ſubiected the Chaldeans; together with many others: and therefore this Monarchie comprehended diuers countries, notwithstanding, he hath alſo an eye to the Iſraelites, Syrians, and Egyptians, and to all other enemies whomſoever which had ſet themſelves againſt the Church of God. Neither ſpeakes he of one plague wherewith the Church was afflicted only, but of the perpetuall combats which the choſen people ſhould ſuſtaine from time to time. For the better understanding wherof we muſt ioine the verſe following: where in the latter end it is added, *becauſe the Lord is with vs*. For behold the foundation of our deliuerance, to wit, *God with vs*. Let men conſpire, let them plot, conſult, and determine, all ſhall be in vaine, becauſe there is no counſell againſt the Lord. Let vs begin then at this foundation, if we meane to be ſtrong in deede.

But we are to examin whether it be lawfull for all to reioyce on this maner; the wicked bragge in deed that God is *with them*: neither make they any bones to triumph and glorie in his name, and yet is their glorie vaine and to no purpoſe. As touching the faithfull, their valiant mind is grounded vpon the word of God, and proceeds from a true faith, liuely ingrauen in our hearts: by means wherof we dare boldly triumph ouer all our aduerſaries. As alſo *S. Paul* teacheth, who encourageth all the faithfull by this doctrine, *If God be with vs, who ſhall be againſt vs?* Rom. 8. 30. Let vs then in the firſt place looke that we haue the *Lord with vs*; which can not be done, but we muſt embrace the promiſes by faith: which if we haue, then ſhall not our reioycing be in vaine. Whereas he ſpeakes to a nation ſo farre off, to which this voyce could not reach, the reaſon thereof is euident enough, to wit, that the faithfull might know the efficacy of the word, and might vnderſtand that the Aſſyrians with all their preparations ſhould be governed by it, although they were very farre remote: as if he ſhould ſay, It is true that you deſpiſe God, but he can eaſily keepe you back a farre off, and beate downe all your rage.

Grd you &c.] The repetition is not ſuperfluous, for it is much more hard to looke for the ſuccor of God againe after we haue once been deliuered; then to embrace the promiſe of one only deliuerance. And further, although the firſt aſſaults of the enemies do not much aſtoniſh vs, yet notwithstanding whē we ſee them obſtinate in their malice; their hardnes of heart weakens vs, of the which we haue dayly experience. For if any danger preſents it ſelfe, we can looke for ſuccor from God for a brunt, but if we fall therinto the ſecond time, we quaiſe: and ſuch is our woſull vnthankfulnes, that we can hardlie be brought to belecue that God will aſſiſt vs once more. So then, we are out of heart if happely we fall into danger oft times, thinking ſurely that God will be wearie at

the laſt, if he do vs good and ſuccor vs curry day. *Iſaiah* therefore would prevent this weakenes of men, that when we haue been aſſailed once or twice by enemies well provided and furniſhed: yet notwithstanding to remaine couragious and inuincible ſtill. And if it fall out that being once circumvented they yet double their forces, neuer ceaſing to weary vs, yet let vs not therefore wax faint or out of heart, becauſe God is able to deſtroy and cut them off to day and to morrow, euen as oft as they imagin our ouerthrow.

And in this place alſo we are aduerted of our eſtate & condition, to the end we might learne to be alwaies vpon our watch, and readie to ſuſtaine new aſſaults: and not to thinke we are therefore diſcharged when we haue reſiſted once, becauſe Satan is neuer idle, but is euer buſie in his charge, not ceaſing day nor night to procure our ruin. He ſolicits and ſtirres vp his ſouldiers, and ſets them on fire with new luſts. But albeit we muſt neceſſitie enter into the combat often, yet let vs be aſſured to obtaine the victorie. Let vs fight then with cheerefulnes; and keepe our ſtanding firme in the battell.

Verſ. 10. *Take counſell together, yet it ſhall be brought to nought: pronounce a decree, yet it ſhall not ſtand: for God is with vs.**

* Hebr. Immanuel.

HAuing ſpoken of the force of the enemies, he comes now to their counſels; as if he ſhould ſay, Howſoever the enemies are mightie not only in weapons and ſtrength, but alſo in counſell and wiſdome, yet ſhall they loſe all their labour. This aduertifement therefore was very neceſſarie. For it often happens that we contemne our enemies, how mightie or well armed ſoever they be, becauſe they want counſell, and are rather carried with blind furie, then led by reaſon: he aduertifeth therefore that all the craft and ſubtilties whereby the enemies ſhall endeavour to ſnare the people of God, ſhall in the end turne all into ſmoke, and therefore that they ſhall bring nothing to paſſe, although they haue all means readie, and that nothing be wanting in their power, counſels, and policies.

He adds, *Pronounce a decree*, that the ſenſe might be the more cleere. I haue tranſlated Appoint, or Decree a decree. This appertains either to the inſolencie of the enemies, or elſe it is the conclusion of their counſell: for after a thing is determined, the *Decree* follows. He aſſirmes, that all this ſhall vaniſh into ſmoke. Thus it appeares what the Prophet meanes, and what we are to make of this place. Now this may ſerue vs as a ſhield wherewith we may beate back all the darts of the enemies, whether they be furniſhed with weapons, riches, power, credit, authority: or whether they be indued with wiſdome, counſell, policie, wit, foreſight, aptnes of intention, or boldnes: for if ſo be we haue *God with vs*, we are then moſt ſtrong, and very well appointed; and conſequentlie, all that

We muſt not content our ſelves to haue put our confidence in God for once or twice, but we muſt hold out for euer, as it is in Chap. 26. 4.

1. Pet. 5. 8.

The ground of comforting our ſelves in the daies of trial. *Prov.* 21. 30.

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the enemies shall plot and devise, shall forthwith vanish away into nothing. We haue in the former verse at large explained the reason which he addes, namely, *That God is with vs*: yet I doubt not but in saying *Ci Immanuel*, he respects the name which he imposed vpon Christ before: and although he shewes that God assist his people, yet notwithstanding because the Maieestic of God in it selfe would not suffice for our comfort and consolation, he considers God himselfe, *in the person of the Mediator*, for whose sake alone he hath promised to assist and helpe vs.

Verf. 11. For the Lord spake thus to me in taking of mine hand, and taught me that I should not walke in the way of this people, saying,

Here the Prophet wrastleth against another kinde of temptation, to wit, against the infidelitie of the people. And to speake more plainly, we are to note that he had two temptations, one without, the other within.

- 1 The outward came in regard of open enemies, as the Assyrian, who hauing almost consumed all, so astonished the people by spoiles and cruelties, that he saw nothing but vtter subuersion. The inward was, because this holy people who bragged they were the chosen people of God, did put their confidence in the help of man, rather then in the Lord: this was a very dangerous temptation. For hereby it seemed that all passage for the promises of God was whollie shut vp; which were dayly offered them, and alwaies whetted vpon their memories. What could the Prophet imagine in such a perplexitie, but the vtter subuersion of this froward people, who ceased not maliciously to reject the grace of God which was so neere vnto him? The Lord therefore hereby armes the Prophet and his disciples against such a temptation,

As if he had taken me by the hand.] See here an elegant similitude, which the expoitors haue not vnderstood as I thinke. He alludes to fathers, or masters, who vsually put their hand vpon their children or schollers to hold them in, and to constrain them to obey, when they profit nothing by words. Thus the Lord holds in his Ministers, who are readie sometime to leaue al, because they think their labor is but lost: he then holds the back I say, in laying his hand vpon *the*, to the end they may continue to execute their office. They who faithfullie serue the Lord haue sufficient experience how needfull this is for them, and haue a prooffe of it euery day. There is no temptation more burdensome, then when those who ought to shew themselves faithfull, recourt: in a word, when it seemes that faith is banished out of the world. It is very necessaric then that God should take vs by the hand; for wee are not only vnstable, and subiect to lightnes, but also naturallie inclined to euill more then we ought, although we be not drawne therunto by any whomsoever. But if any naughtie custome be joined herewithall, then can wee hardlie bee ma-

sters of our selues. It is certaine that wee should fall downe backward at euery push, were we not vpheld by an admirable power of God, to fixe our constancie in an assured haue. Let euery one of vs exercise himselfe diligentlie with the consideration hereof. For although we are well perswaded of the truth of all this, yet notwithstanding when we should put it in practise we faile, and cast our cies rather vpon men then vpon God. In regard whereof we ought to be so much the more carefull to profit in this doctrine, and to pray vnto God, that he *will hold vs in*, not only with his word, but also *with his hand*. And herewithall let vs consider how prone we are to follow an euill course, for when we see wicked examples we run after them with might and maine, and of an example make a law: so that if so be some march afore, we thinke we are permitted to follow after, and to do as they do, especially when a wicked custome hath gotten the vpper hand, and that the matter rests vpon the constancie of one or two only. Euery one also couers himselfe with this faire vizard of a generall consent; the which all will confesse to be wicked and naught in it selfe. And which more is, where is he to be found that is not pushed forward as with a whirlwind to follow custome? euen as if it were in the power of a people to bring in their corruptions, in stead of good lawes. This hath not been the fault of one age alone, but it hath the swinge as much or more euen at this day then euer heretofore. Yea, this corruption is ingrauen in all men by nature, namely, to hold an error as a law. From thence haue proceeded all the superstitions that euer were, and those which are now in the Papacie, so as if one would seeke the original, we shall finde they came from no other spring, but from that which one of them hath drawne in after another, by one and the same error. And thus are all intangled in the nets of Satan, so as euen at this present the common consent of men is the chiefe corner stone of such inuentions. Behold the weapons wherewith each one of them defendis himselfe: We are not alone (say they) we follow an infinite multitude.

A common consent, the chiefe corner stone of humane inuentions.

Verf. 12. Say ye not a confederacie to all them to whom this people saith a confederacie, neither feare you their feare, nor be afraid of them.

First, we must consider what the state of this people then was: they saw themselves destitute of great forces, and too weake to susteine warre against so mightie enemies. See what it was which made them set their eye and affections so strongly vpon strangers, for they thought themselves vtterlie vndone, vnlesse some aid came vnto them from other places. It is in this sense that I take the word *Conspiracie*, because they thought they stood in neede of their *Confederates*. But because the word *Conspiracie* is taken both in the good and euill part, and sometimes in

Hebrue

Hebrue ſignifies as much as *Band*, I take it in the better ſignification. Others are of a contrary opinion, and expound, Behold thine enemies the kings of Iſrael and Syria, who haue conſpired among themſelves. But I rather agree with thoſe who referre theſe words to the covenant and aſſociation which many vnbelievers would contract with the *Aſſyrians*. The Lord then admoniſheth *Iſaiah* not to regard the counſels of the wicked, although all the people ſhould approve of it, and that every one of them ſhould yeeld to the deſire of his companion. Wee may alſo giue a double interpretation: for ſome reade it apart; as if the Prophet in the ſecond member ſhould condemne the corrupt manners of the people. But wee muſt reade and conioine theſe two members, Be not aſtonied if your fellow citizens plot together from day to day to make vnlawfull covenants, agree not you with them. Moreover, although God ſhould haue ſpoken but to the Prophet alone, and not to the multitude of thoſe who profited by inſtruction to turne their mindes left they ſhould become vnfaithfull in aduenturing rathlie after others; yet notwithstanding the plurall number *Sa ſee not*, thewes, that all y^e faithfull were taught in his perſon.

Feare not. Here we ſee from what ſountaine the giddie counſels whereby men ſkirmiſh among themſelves proceede; to wit, from this, that their mindes are ſo foreſtalled with feare, that they are caried hither and thither without any diſcretion at all. The chiefe cauſe why the Iewes deſired ſo much to be confederate with the *Aſſyrians*, is diſcouered in this place, that is to wit, being tertiſhed aboue meature, they thought they could ſaue themſelves by no other meanes; and ſo this blinde feare hindred them from expecting help and ſuccor from the Lord; this is the cauſe which made them thus to long for this *confederacie*. True it is there was like occaſion of feare as well to the faithfull, as to the vnfaithfull, but they feared not all after one maner. For the faithfull tooke heart of grace becauſe they knew God had the care of their ſaluation, and being armed with the promiſe of God, comforted themſelves as oft as the name of *Immanuel* came into their mindes. But the wicked ſurprized with feare, thought of nothing but of refuge from the *Aſſyrians*: they cared not for Gods helpe, neither yet retired themſelves vnto him. The Lord forbids not the faithfull to feare; for they are vnable to abſteine from it; but he commands them to overcome this faithleſſe feare which overwhelmes the wicked: Let vs not gaze here and there then after their example; and leſt wee plunge our ſelves headlong into deſperation in ſeeking vnlawfull helps, let vs aboue all things take heed that *feare* deprivē vs not of true iudgement.

Now the remedie of this miſchiefe is this, that we be reſtrained by the word of God, from whence proceeds all peace and tranquillitie of minde. And in conſerring the eſtate of this people with our owne, let vs learne to runne for refuge to the name of God, which ſhall be as an invincible forteſſe

and tower vnto vs. It alſo appears againe by theſe words, *ſaue ſee not* &c. put in the plurall number, that the Lord ſpake not to the Prophet alone. Likewiſe *S. Peter* drawes a generall doctrine from this place, 1. Pet. 3. 14. admoniſhing vs not to feare the feare of the wicked; but to put our confidence in God, and to haue our eyes alwaies fixed vpon him, thereby to remaine conſtant, although heauen and earth ſhould be mingled together. And if euer the admonition of the Apoſtle *Peter* were neceſſarie, it is now in our great neede: for wee ſee all things overthrowne, turned as it were topſie turvie, and mingled together with an horrible confuſion: to the end then that we be not troubled, the Lord puls vs from fixing our eyes vpon men, that being attentue to the voyce of his word, we might continue immouable. True it is that *Saint Peter* takes this word of *ſaue* in the paſſive ſignification, and *Iſaiah* in the aſſiue. The Apoſtle exhorts the faithfull to be conſtant, and not to tremble at the threats and terrors of wicked men; and the Prophet condemnes this feare which moued the Iewes to ſecke confederacies with the prophane. But becauſe it was not y^e Apoſtles meaning to expound this place, or to aillege it word for word, but only to allude to the ſenſe of the Prophet, there is no abſurditie in this diuerſitie.

Verſe 13. *Sanctifie the Lord of hoſts, and let him be your feare, and let him be your dread.*

WE haue ſaid already that the cauſe of ouer great feare in dangers comes frō hence, that men liſt not vp their eyes nor aſſections to God, and therefore the Propheet now applies a ſoueraigne remedie to aſſuage ſuch immoderate feares, to the end ſuch as feare imminent and preſent dangers might learne to yeeld that honour vnto God which vnto him belongeth. *Sanctifie the Lord of hoſts*, ſignifies as much as to magnifie and exalt his power, to the end we ſhould call to mind how he gouernes the world; and that the beginnings and iſſues as well of good things as of euill, are in his power. Whence it followes, that God is robbed as it were of his honour and holines if we goe not directlie vnto him when we are in any perplexitie. This maner of ſpeech therefore hath great weight, for we are taught that God can not be more contemptuouſly deſpised, then when we are overcome of feare: as if he were not exalted high aboue all creatures, to order and diſpoſe of the euents of things. Contrariwiſe, after that by his ſuccor we haue ouerpaſſed and overcome the dangers by a conſtant faith, then is he adorned rightlie with that ſoueraigne authoritie which is due vnto him, becauſe vnleſſe we be moſt aſſured that he hath infinite meanes readie in his hands which we are ignorant of for our deliuerance, it is all one, as if wee eſteemed him ſome dead idoll.

It is to very good purpoſe alſo where he addes, *That God himſelfe ought to be the feare*

The difference betweene the feare that is in the faithfull and that of the wicked.

and dread of the people; to the end they might know that they should receive a iust and due recompence of their wickednesse and contempt of his Maiestie, when they trembled like cowards, and were so amazed for the present dangers. Now, although hee joyne *aread and feare* together; yet his meaning is not that the Iewes should so tremble at the mention of Gods name, as to flee from his presence: but he placeth these two words together, onely because he requires a sonne-like reuerence of his Maiestie: as also to note a constant perseuerance therein. His meaning is then, that they shall be free and dispatched from trouble of minde, if so bee his feare bee so liuely engrauen in their hearts, that they neuer depart from it. And tuely, whosoever hee be that subiecteth himselfe willingly vnto God, setting his feare onely before his eyes, to hold himselfe by meanes of this bridle, in his duty; such a one shall feele by experience, that there is no place of refuge more safe, then vnder the shadowe of his wings. But in regard that the wicked cease not to prouoke his wrath against them by their outrageous libertie; hee auengeth himselfe worthily vpon such a carelesse securitie, vexing their mindes with a continuall vnquietnesse.

Verf. 14. *And hee shall be as a Sanctuarie: but as a stumbling stone, and as a rocke to fall vpon to both the houses of Israel; and as a snare and as a net to the inhabitants of Ierusalem.*

HE promiseth a secure and quiet conscience vnto the true seruants of God; because the Lord will easily appeale all terrors, in keeping them vnder the shadow of his wings. Now he alludes to the word *Sanctifie*, which hee vsed heretofore: for the word which signifies *Sanctuarie*, Tower, or fortress, is deriued of that which signifies, *to sanctifie*. He meanes to affirme then, that God asks nothing whereof he offereth not a like mutuall recompence. For whosoever they are that doe *sanctifie* him in their hearts; shall also proue by experience, that he is a most certaine *Sanctuarie*, and hauen of safetie for them. But howsoever there bee some correspondencie betwene God and vs in this *sanctification*; yet notwithstanding it is in diuers respect; because wee are said to *sanctifie* him, when wee attribute vnto him all praise and glorie, and depend altogether vpon him: but he on his part is said to *sanctifie* vs, when hee deliuers and keeps vs in all dangers. Now because very few are found who obey him, resting themselves wholly vpon his promises, the Prophet meant to arme the faithfull against all such temptations. For they were in danger to be carried away by such and so wicked examples as by a kinde of whirlwinde. Behold now the Prophets meaning; as if he should say; The Lord will bee a most safe and faithfull gardian vnto you; and howsoever others spurne against him, yet be not

you afraid; but continue you constant in your places.

There is also in this place a secret opposition: because the *Sanctuarie* is as a Tower situated in an high place, for the defence of the faithfull; and for the destruction and ruine of the vnfaithfull, in regard they rushed vpon God with a foolhardinesse. But wee shall hereafter see more cleerely how this was accomplished; partly vnder *Hezekias*, partly also from the time of the captiuitie of *Babylon*: and yet notwithstanding, Christ was therewithall prefigured, who was to bee a *rocke of falling*, and not a fortress of defence to the Israelites. *Isaiah* aduertiseth the faithfull of this fall; to the end they should conforme themselves to this warning.

To the two houses.] The Iewes doe fondly and senselessly rent this sentence, instead of diuiding it aright. For they say, that God shall be partly a sanctification; and partly an offence to the Israelites: as if by the *two houses*, he should distinguish betwene the faithfull and the vnfaithfull. But hee rather commands the faithfull not to bee discouraged, although almost all the multitude of both the kingdomes, do hinder them from following of God; but that in forsaking all impediments, they should goe on with cheerefulness through the thickest of them. The Prophet might haue said in a word, hee shall be a stumbling stone to *Israel*: but hee meant to expresse it more fully: for he comprehends the whole people, and saith; that God shall be their ouerthrowe. The people were diuided into two Kingdomes; to wit, *Ephraim* and *Iudab*; and therefore hee names both the one and the other. I grant that some were excepted out of this number: but he speaks here of the whole body in generall.

This is an excellent place, and cannot bee too oft called to minde; especially in this time wherein we now liue, wherein wee see the estate of religion almost quite abolished in Christendome. Many boast that they are Christians, who yet are farre off from God, and to whom also Christ is a stone of offence.

The Papists proudly brag of his name, although they prophane his whole seruice by their superstitions, and despihtfully dishonour him. As touching those who haue the pure worship of God established in the midst of them, there are very few who imbrace the doctrine of the gospel with a sincere affection.

On which side then soeuer wee turne our eyes, wee can see nothing but wofull temptations euery where. And therefore let vs set this most profitable aduertisement before vs; to wit, that it is no new thing to see the greater part, yea, almost all those who boast themselves to be the seruants of the Church, yet to spurne against God. And in the meane while, albeit we be but as a little handfull of people in respect of them; yet must wee rest our selues constantly notwithstanding vpon the Lord.

To the inhabitants of Ierusalem.] This is the second amplification. For hauing made mention of both the kingdomes, hee names the principall

God would not haue vs so to feare him, that we should flee his presence.

principall or head place of them both. Now howſoever the whole Country was degenerate; yet notwithstanding it ſeemed that the Lord had his chiefe residence there. Hee ſhewes then that God is a ſtone of offence, and a rocke to fall vpon; not onely to the common people, who were diſperſed abroad in the Countrey and villages; but alſo to the greateſt; as to the Magiſtrates and Miniſters who were in Ieruſalem: yea euen in this holy place (I ſay) where God intended that the remembrance of his name ſhould eſpecially be honoured. The which Dauid alſo witneſſeth when he ſaith; that the maſter builders whom God had ſet on worke, reiected the chiefe corner ſtone: *Plaſ. 118. 22.* Ieſus Chriſt alleading this place againſt the Iewes, thewes that theſe words were ſpoken of him. I deny not but this fell out in *Iſaiah* his time; but much more in the time of Chriſt for impietie & rebellion increaſed by little & little, euen till it came to the height. So then as wel the great, as the ſmall, who had alwaies obſtinately reſiſted God, did yet more licentiously overflow at that time; ſo as being come to the top, in the day of their deſtruction, they were wholly forſaken of God, whoſe Sonne they had wiſſily reiected. And from hence we gather a teſtimonie of the eternall Godhead of Chriſt: *Saint Paul* ſhewing that it is God himſelfe of whom the Prophet here ſpeakes: *Rom. 9. 33.* Now hee mentions no new God; but him who created heauen and earth, and who maniſteſted himſelfe to *Moſes*. It is God himſelfe then, by whom the Church hath been alwaies gouerned.

Verſ. 15. And many among them ſhall ſtumble, and ſhall fall, and ſhall bee broken, and ſhall be ſnared, and ſhall bee taken.

HE continues to threaten the wicked as he did heretofore; and denouneeth, that all thoſe which would not reſt vpon God, ſhould not eſcape unpuniſhed. Now the threatening is this; After they haue ſtumbled, they ſhall fall; and in the end, ſhall be broken. This agrees with the former Similitude, in which he compares God vnto a ſtone. Chriſt alludes thereunto, comprehending both the members: Whoſoever falls vpon this ſtone, ſhall bee broken; and vpon whomſoever it ſhall fall, it ſhall grinde him to powder: *Mat. 21. 44.* That which follows afterward, *They ſhall bee ſnared and taken*, agrees to the Similitude following; wherein he compares God to a net and ſnare. Let not the wicked thinke themſelves then ſtronger then God, or wiſer then hee: for they ſhall ſeele in the end, both to their coſt and ruine, that he is the ſtrongeſt and wiſeſt. Therefore it muſt needs follow, that they bee brought to nought; becauſe they ſhall be broken to powder in an inſtant: or elſe ſo enwrapped, that they ſhall neuer winde themſelves out. Now theſe things are not proper vnto God otherwiſe the accidentally, if we may ſo ſpeake: for his proper office is rather to draw men vnto

him, and to giue them aſſured ground of their ſaluation; which was very well knowne and ſcene moſt cleerely in Chriſt. In regard whereof, *Saint Peter* ſaith, that howſoever many vnbelecuers ſtumble at him, yet that their falles ought not to hinder our faith, that it ſhould not alwaies march on; becauſe to vs Chriſt is a choſen and pretious ſtone: *1. Pet. 2. 4.*

Verſ. 16. Binde vp the teſtimonie, ſeale vp the law among my Diſciples.

THE Lord now turnes his ſpeech to the Prophet, and incourageeth him againſt he ſhould fight againſt Apollataes and rebels; to the end he might execute his office boldly and conſtantly; which was not a little needfull. For *Iſaiah* had tried the great rebellion which was in the people: ſo as if he had looked onely vpon the preſent eſtate, to wit, the infidelitie of the people, and the labor which hee beſtowed in vaine, hee might forthwith haue been vterly out of heart. For this cauſe the Lord purpoſed to confirme and ratiſie his vocation a freſh vnto him: and not for his ſake alone, but for all their ſakes alſo which ſhould obey his doctrine. And howſoever few ſhould giue credit to the ſame; yet doth the Lord witneſſe notwithstanding, that his doctrine is ſealed vnto thoſe few: and that for their ſakes *Iſaiah* was not to giue ouer teaching, neither yet that the others ſhould ceaſe their walking in the obedience of faith. Now he compares the doctrine of the word to *Sealed letters*, which many might hold and handle; but yet notwithstanding could not bee read nor vnderſtood but of a ſmall number; that is to ſay, of thoſe to whom they were directed. And thus there are very few who vnderſtand the word of God, (for they are the elect onely) howſoever it be offered to all in generall. The word of God then is ſealed vnto thoſe that profit not by it; and yet ſo ſealed, as that the Lord opens the ſame notwithstanding to his choſen by his holie Spirit.

Some deriue the verbe *Tſur*, which ſignifies to Binde, of the verbe *Natſar*; and tranſlates, Keepe. Now although this bee of no great importance; yet notwithstanding it appears by the other word *Seale*, that the expoſitiō which I haue followed is the beſt: for the auncients were wont to binde a threed about their letters, and then to ſet the ſeale vpon it. Now from hence wee gather a moſt profitable doctrine: to wit, that the Paſtours and Miniſters of the word, ought to continue conſtant in their office, although it ſeemes that all reuolte, and that nothing is to be ſeen in men but outrage and rebellion: becauſe the Lord will euer reſerue vnto himſelfe, ſome diſciples which will profit in the reading of his letters; howſoever they be cloſed and ſhut vp to others. The Prophet will vſe the ſame Similitude, *Chap. 29. 11.* where hee ſaith, that the word is like to a cloſed booke: but there mentions the wicked onely: but heere hee ſpeakes of the *Diſciples*, amongſt whom

Mat. 21. 42.

A teſtimonie
proving the
Godhead of
Chriſt.

whom his doctrine should not be vnfruitfull.

Quest.

But some will demand; whether the Prophet should leaue the people so, as to withdraw and shut vp himselfe apart with his disciples, who made some benefit of his warnings? I answer: This was not the Prophets intent; for it was the will of the Lord that he should preach publicly and manifest his message vnto all. And because he spake as to deafe eares, & might therefore lose his labor, and so hee discouraged in seeing no fruit to come thereof; the Lord heereby encourageth and strengtheneth him, to the end he should go on forward still, although all things were in a manner desperate: that so, contenting himselfe with the small number of his disciples, he might be more courageous in his ministerie then euer before.

*Or, So.

Verf. 17. *Therefore I will waite vpon the Lord, that hath hid his face from the house of Iacob; and I will looke for him.*

SO I will wait.] I had rather translate the Hebrew participle *Uai*, in this sense; because the Prophet retires himselfe apart as it were, hauing receued consolation from the Lord: as wee haue seene heretofore. It is as much then as if hee had said; Seeing the Lord is pleased to haue some Disciples, amongst whom his doctrine should bee sealed, *I will wait*, although hee hath hid his face from Iacob. That is to say, although hee hath reiected and cast off his people. This place is worthy our obseruation; in the meditation whereof, wee ought continually to be much encouraged: yea, if so be the Lord proceede so farre, as that he hath turned his face away from his people, and should reiect those who make profession of his name: yet for all this, must wee wait vpon him with inuincible patience. This is the only remedie wee haue. The word *waiting*, hath great emphasis in it, as if hee should say; Yet notwithstanding will not I turne away from the Lord; I will still perseuere in faith. He yet augments the matter when he addes, *So I will wait*. Seeing our faith is wont to stagger and faint when offences doe happen. It is greuously shaken when we see our selues forsaken of our companions, and that the sworne enemies of the Church doe proudly vsurpe the title of it: for offences for the most part doe cause vs to turne away from God, filling vs with such perplexed thoughts, that we are ready to call the truth of his word into question. This consolation then is very necessary, as well in the calamities wherewith the Church is oppressed, as in the troubles wherewith shee is tossed by the disloyaltie of others.

Verf. 18. *Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath giuen mee, are as signes and wonders in Israel, by the Lord of hostes which dwelleth in Mounts Zion.*

HERE the Prophet not onely testifies, that hee will wait in patience; but also

shewes what his constancie is; proposing himselfe, with his disciples and those which remained with him, to open view. As though hee should say, Although others recoile, yet Lord behold I am ready to doe thee seruice; and I also bring those with mee, whom thou hast vouchsafed to saue miraculously by my labours. Hee shewes an inuincible manfulness then, and protests that he will continue in the faith and obedience of the Lord, although all should reuolt.

By *Children*, hee vnderstands seruants and ministers; following therein the vsual custome as well of the Hebrew tongue as of the Latine. Now he speakes of the Disciples whom he mentioned before. Whence it appeareth, what their dutie is, who would bee reputed the true disciples of the Lord; to wit, that they protest with *Isaiah*, to be teachable, and ready to hearken, and that they be ready to obey, as soone as the Lord shall speake. The teachers also ought to bring their disciples with them, and not to send them alone before them: they ought to march in the first ranke, and to shew them the way by their example; as was said in the second Chapter, verse 3. otherwise they should haue no authority in teaching. The Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, applies this place to Iesus Christ; and from thence draws an admonition, which ought to serue vs as a sharpe spurre; to the end wee should not thinke to follow *Isaiah* alone for our leader and Doctor, but Christ himselfe; and to be so much the more encouraged to run our course with greater alacritie.

Heb. 1. 13.

is hee the Lord hath giuen me.] The Prophet shewes heere of whom it is that we hold our faith; to wit, of God and of his free election. For *Isaiah* preached to all publicly, admonishing every one, and soliciting all without exception, to draw neere vnto the Lord; but the word profited those onely *which God had giuen him*. By the word *Giuen*, hee meaneth those whom God drew inwardly by the secret instinct of his holie Spirit; for otherwise the externall voyce should haue sounded in the eares of the people in vaine: and thus it is said that the elect are *giuen* to Christ of God: his Father: Ioh. 6. 37. Whereby we perceiue, that the promptnesse of faith depends not vpon the will of man; but that some few among many doe beleue, because (as *S. Luke* saith) they were ordained before vnto life: Act. 13. 48. Now God is wont to call them whom he hath predestinate; and sealeth vp the testimonie of their adoption effectually in them, to the end they may giue themselves to teachableness and obedience. Such a thing is the *gift* then whereof *Isaiah* speakes in this place. But this agrees fitly vnto Christ, to whom the Father offereth and giueth Disciples; as it is said in Iohn; No man cometh vnto me except my Father draw him: Iohn 6. 44. Whence it followes, that he is appointed our *g*adian to perseuere vs vnder his protection vnto the end: and therefore he saith; That none of those whom the Father hath giuen him, shall perish: Ioh. 17. 12.

Ioh. 10. 10.

Signes and wonders.] Some referre this to miracles

miracles amiſſe: for the ſenſe is farre otherwiſe, namely; That all the faithfull ſhall not onely be hated, but alſo bee had in execration; ſo as they ſhall be eſteemed monſters; and that not amongſt ſtrangers and open enemies, but euen in Iſrael it ſelfe; whereof wee haue experience at this day. The Papiſts on the one ſide abhorre vs more then Turkes or Iewes; nay, more then dogges and ſwine. Now although this be odious, yet muſt wee not be much aſtoniſhed therat; for this propheſie of neceſſities muſt euen now bee fulfilled. The Prophet found it by experience amongſt his owne people: as all thole haue likewiſe done, which haue followed his doctrine. But wee finde not onely this hatred towards vs in the Papiſts alone, but euen in thoſe who would ſeeme to haue profited moſt in the Church: and the greater part of theſe abhor vs, mocke vs, and eſteeme vs as very monſters; onely becauſe we trouble our ſelues ſo much, and are ſo carefull for the ſaluation of the Church, of Gods honour, and of life eternal. But yet let vs not bee afraid to put our ſelues into dangers, to incurre hatreds, enuies, raunts, baniſhments, want, hunger, nakedneſſe; and laſt of all, death it ſelfe for all this. *To them incede they are monſtrous things; for how can they taſte of theſe ſoueraign good things with any reſiſt, whileſt they pamper themſelues, and are ſo carefull for their quiet and eaſe? But to the end their flouts may not aſtoniſh vs, we muſt arme our ſelues with this exhortation of the Prophet.

Now to the end hee might ſhew how vaine and friuolous the conſpiracie of the wicked is, hee ſtoutly triumphs ouer the pride of the whole world, by placing the Lord of hoſtes oppoſite againſt them: as if he ſhould ſay; I paſſe nothing at all that men abhorre and deſpiſe, ſeeing I am aſſured that God is on my ſide. When hee alſo addes, that the Lord dwelleth in mount Zion; theſe words carry great weight. For though the people were covered vnder an infinite heape of vices and wickedneſſe, yet they gloried as if they onely were holy to the Lord; and in abuſing his promiſes, they condemned the true ſeruants of God, which reprobud them. On the contrary, that the Prophets might pluck this pride & vaine confidence away fro them, they teſtified that they were the Miniſters of the onely true God; whom this people notwithstanding falſly bragged to worſhip in Mount Zion. Now God did not ſo chuſe his dwelling place there, as if being tied to that he would therefore allow a baſtard and newfound ſeruice: but would be fought and ſerued there, according to the rule of his word. And therefore Iſaiab taking the God which dwelleth in Mount Zion, on his ſide, taxeth and ſharply galleth the hypocrits, who fooliſhly and proudly bragged as of as they cried, *The Temple of the Lord*: becauſe it was rather an idoll wherein they gloried; contrary to Gods word. Now although they ſnatched the promiſes to themſelues, yet they falſly alleaged them againſt the true ſeruants of God; as the Papiſts at this day doe againſt vs. The Prophet then adorneth God with this title, to the end hee

may vnmaſke thoſe hypocrits, which made no conſcience vainely to oppoſe the name of the Temple againſt the expreſſe word of God. And in this regard Iſaiab now ſaith; Take vs for monſters as it pleaſeth you, yet notwithstanding God will approve of his owne; you cannot abhor them, but you alſo therewithall reiect the God of Abraham and David, whole ſeruants we are;

Verſ. 19. *And when they ſhall ſay vnto you, Enquire at them that haue a Spirit of diuination, and at the Soothſayers, which whiſper and murmur; ſhould not a people enquire of their God, from the liuing to the dead?*

[*But if they ſay.*] The Prophet goes on with his ſpeech; to wit, that all the faithfull being armed with the authoritie of God, ſhould not onely as with a buckler, but as with a wall of braſſe, conſtantly reſiſt all impietie. He admoniſteth them then to continue ſtedfaſt, and not to be ſhaken, if any ſhould offer to ſollicite them to ſuperſtition and idolatric. Hee vſeth the plural number, to ſhew that it was a vice common among all eſtates, which had ouerflowed euery where: as if he ſhould ſay, I ſee very well what will come to paſſe, you ſhall be in great danger: for thoſe which remaine amongſt you, will endeavour to turne you aſide from the true God, becauſe themſelues being wicked, will alſo deſire to haue you become like them. I herewithall he ſheweth how wickedly they were reuolted from the law and covenant of God, in that they were not aſhamed to ſollicite others to ſeeke vnto Sorcerers and Enchanters, whoſe verie names ought to haue been abominable and accuſed vnto them.

[*A people.*] Some reades this altogether in the perſon of the wicked; as if vnder pretence hereof, they would deceiue the ſimple: to wit, that there is no nation whatſo euet, without oracles & revelations, but euery one aſketh counſell at his gods, or at leaſt, of the Magicians and Soothſayers. Yet notwithstanding, mee thinks the opinion of others is more ſound, who thinke that Iſaiab teacheth his diſciples how they ſhould anſwere, if ſo be any ſhould ſollicite them to idolatric. And yet this doth not ſufficiently open the meaning of this place: for commonly it is expounded as if it were a compariſon, from the leſſe to the greater; What? doe the Gentiles aſke counſell at their gods, which notwithstanding are falſly ſo called; and ſhall wee not make more account of him whom wee know to be the true God, eſpecially ſeeing he hath maniſteſted himſelfe ſo to be vnto vs, and that by ſo infinite teſtimonies? Is it not a foule ſhame that the heathen ſhould make more reckoning of their gods, then we doe of our God? But I rather expound this of the Iewes themſelues, who are called *People*, by way of excellencie; becauſe they were adopted of God. Neither is it materiall that the Prophet vſeth the word *Elohim*, Gods, in the plural number;

ber, for the same word is taken in the like sense in the singular.

This text is a buckler wherewith we ought to beate backe all those superstitions which glide so smoothly thorowout the world. And if others doubt and stand in a mammering whether they should aske counsell at *dead idols*, or at Saints departed, yet let vs alwaies haue this answer ready at hand; That we ought to aske counsell of God onely. Now the Prophet alludes to the place in Deuteronomie; where the the Lord forbids that they should goe to *Enchanters or Sorcerers*: Deut. 18. 10. And lest they should alledge the examples of the heathen, who had their Soothsayers and expounders of dreames, and obserued the flying of the fowles, hee addes in 15. verse, that they should not want a Prophet, neither should they be left destitute of necessarie doctrine. It was the will and pleasure of God then, that they should wholly depend vpon his word, and onely learne from thence whatsoeuer was expedient for them to know, and so to yeeld him loyal obedience.

As touching that which follows, *from the liuing to the dead*, some expound it otherwise, and interpret *for* in stead of *from*: and then the sense is this; Will yee aske counsell at the dead for the matters of the liuing? But in regard this sense is constrained, it should bee more proper it may bee, to expound it thus, The Lord will be our master, and for this end hath ordained his Prophets, that we should learne his will of them: for the Prophet is the mouth of the Lord. It is not lawfull then to goe vnto the *dead*, to whom this office was not giuen: and adde hereunto also, that the Lord mindes not to vse the seruice of the dead to teach vs. But yet, when I haue well considered the text somewhat more narrowly, I had rather translate the Hebrew word *Dead*, *From*; to wit, *from* the liuing to the dead: as if he should say; that one onely God ought to suffice vs, as well for the *liuing* as for the *dead*. Whether thou considerest the heauen, the earth, or the lowest parts thereof, thou shalt finde that one God onely sufficeth vs. Me thinks this sense is most proper, and easie. The Prophet then armes the faithfull against the deuises and plots of the wicked, which otherwise might haue caused them to reuolt; to the end they might content themselves to haue God onely for their Master; and that they should not doe him that iniurie, as in forsaking his doctrine, to giue themselves to other teachers; but rather casting off all other things, they should onely depend vpon the truth; the which hee repeates and confirms immediately.

Verf. 20. *To the Law, and to the Testimonie, if they speake not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

This place is diuersly expounded. For some take it to be a forme of an oath, as if the Prophet should Swear by the law, that

those were apostataes, which drew others to the like apostasie with them. But I take it otherwise; namely, that we are rather brought *to the Law, and to the Testimonie*; because the particle *Lamed*, shewes that this is the true sense. The *Testimonie* is conioyned with the *Law*; not as if they were diuers things, but for the plainer vnderstanding. As if hee should say; *To the Law*, which contains the Testimonie of Gods will toward you. Lastly, we must take the word *Testimonie*, for an epithite; to the end we may know what the vse of the *Law* is; namely, that God manifests himselfe therein, and shewes what a one he will be towards vs: and lastly, hee there ordaines all things which are needefull for vs to know. This then is an excellent commendation of the *Law*, which contains the doctrine of saluation, and the rule of a right and happy life. And this is the reason why hee iustly forbids vs to turne from it in the least iota; as if hee should say, Forsake all your superstitions, after which these runne so violently. They were not content with God alone, but sought a thousand inuentions: for what will satisfie him that forsakes the Lord? Christ speaks also in this sort; They haue *Moses* and the Prophets, let them heare them: Luke 16. 29. For although *Abraham* bee brought in speaking there, yet is it a perpetuall oracle which procedes out of the mouth of God.

We are inioyned then to *heare the Law and the Prophets*, to the end we should not be carried vp and downe after the curiosities of mans braine; neither to desire the knowledge of any thing by meanes of the dead. For if the *Law* and the Prophets sufficed not, the Lord would not forbid vs to vse other meanes. And hereby we learne, that whatsoeuer is added to the word of God, ought to be condemned and reiected. Why so? Because it is the Lords will that we should wholly depend vpon his word, and that all our wisdom should bee limited within the bounds thereof. If we then listen vnto others, we snatch vnto our selves a libertie which he hath forbidden vs; and in so doing, wee offer him great outrage. Now whatsoeuer it is which men shall bee bold to set vp of themselves, will bee found nothing else but a corrupting of this word. Let vs therefore reiect all other teachers, if we minde to obey God. And he also shewes further, that we shall then be well armed against all idolatries and superstitions, when we relie vpon the *Law of the Lord*. For as *S. Paul* calles the word, The sword of the Spirit: Ephes. 6. 17. so also by it ought we to bring Satan and all his inuentions to nought. Retire we thither then, when the enemies shall assault vs; that being armed therewith, wee may fight valiantly, and at the last, ouercome and put them to flight.

If they speake not, &c. I will not recite all the diuers expositions of this place, because it would be too tedious. And indeede, the true exposition seemes to mee so sure, that it may easilie refute all others. The common interpretation is, that the wicked doe therefore

All our wisdom should be limited within the bounds of Gods word,

advance

duance their lies, and set their wives to sale, because there is no light in them: that is to say, because they are deprived of common sense. But for mine owne part, I expound it, that the faithfull are hereby exhorted to be of good incourage: so as if the vnfaithfull agree not to the true doctrine, they doe nothing elsse herein but show their blindness. And therefore must we contemne their blockishness, to the end it may be no let nor impediment vnto vs: as also Christ admonisheth that we should boldly let such blinde guides alone, lest we be moued with their blinde obstinacie. They are blinde, saith he, and leaders of the blinde. Will you wittingly perth together with them? *Matth. 23. 14.* For this cause the Prophet commands that such authoritie be giuen to the word of God, to the end wee may boldly despise the whole world, if they should gainſay it: for by the authoritie thereof, wee may condemne the Angels themselves, if they should fall into such a sinne. If an Angell from heauen should preach any other doctrine, let him be accursed; saith *Paul*, *Gal. 1. 8.* How much more boldly then may wee condemne men which resist God? And this manner of speech also which the Prophet vseth, hath great weight, if they *speake not according to this word*: because such a one is iudged blind, who readily and without resistance imbraceeth not this sentence; namely, That wee must not bee wise beyond the Law of God.

We must not be wise beyond the Law of God. *O shall passe by this Country.

Verſ. 21. Then hee that is afflicted and famished, shall goe to and fro in it: and when he shall be hungry, he shall euen curse himselfe, and curse his King and his gods, and shall looke vprward.

Lest the faithfull should suffer themselves to be enwrapped in the common errors, hee addes how horrible the punishment is which threatneth the wicked when they shall be once reuolted from God, and also shall inforce themselves to draw others to the same reuolt with them. The place is somewhat obscure, but the cause thereof proceeds of this, that some haue not weighed y words as they ought to haue done. Now the verb *Aber* hath great weight: for by this word *To passe*, he signifies the giddinesse which causeth men to wander, so as they are altogether disquieted, nor being able to stay long in any place whatsoever. We must supplie a noun to the verb indefinite, to wit, The Iewes shall passe. By the pronoun *in us*, he vnderstands the countrie of Iudea, which the Lord had preferred aboue all other regions: and therefore this may be well inough vnderstood, albeit the Prophet hath not expressed it. As if he should say, I haue pronounced indeed that this region should be the perpetuall heritage of my people, but they shall be as restles vagabonds; and it shall fare with them as with those who being driuen out of their countrie, being afflicted with pestilence, famine, and all manner of miseries, do seeke euery where for some place of abode better then their owne, but

Gen. 12. 15.
o 17. 8.

can no where finde it. Thus these words are opposed to that singular benefit of God, whereof *Moses* makes mention so often, to wit, that they should dwell perpetuallie in Iudea: for he foretelles here that they shall be *vanderers* and vagabonds not in their countrie, but in a strange region, so as in whatsoever place they should arriue, they should be assailed and vexed with infinite calamities.

Assimilad.] It seemes the Prophet speakes of the Iewes conuersion, as if he should say, After they haue bin thorowly humbled with Gods iudgements, they will come to repentance: and questionlesse this is the true remedie whereby God for the most part heales the obstinacie of men. Notwithstanding if any thinke that by the word *hunger* the Prophet describes the wrath and stubborn yelling of the wicked, it must be obserued that he not only comprehends hunger and thirst, but. (by the figure called *Synecdoche*) all other calamities also. By the word *To prouoke*, he signifies that which we haue in our common speech, they *ſet*, or *chafe*. The meaning is, that they shall begin to be displeas'd in themselves, and shall also detest all those factors in which they trusted before: and this in deed is the beginning of conuersion; for in prosperitie, we flatter our selues, but being oppressed, we abhorre whatsoever is about vs. Now if any had rather referre this to the reprobate, then this word *ſet* shall note out that gall and bitterness which rather pricks them forward to a furious raging, then to a calme and quiet humbling of themselves.

They shall curse their king.] By *king*, some vnderstand God. And *Zophonie* takes *Malchom* in this sense, *Zoph. 1. 5.* that is to say, their king. But I here put a distinction between *king* and God, for the wicked are first blinded with the false trust which they put in Idols, and by and by after they ground and establish their strength vpon earthlie things. The Iewes hauing a *king*, were puffed vp with his glorie and power: and when *Iſaiah* preached, the wicked exasperated the king against him, and they moued all the people to imitate their king, who was as it were the standard-bearer. In as much then as they were puffed vp as well in regard of their idols as of their king, he shewes that they shall be oppressed with so many calamities, that they shall be constrained to *curse their gods, and their king*. And behold heere the beginning of repentance, namely, to detest and put farre away all impediments which turne vs away from God.

Lifting vp their face on high.] He heere describes an affrighted and perplexed conscience, which vexeth the afflicted so long till they haue learned to lift vp their eyes boldly on high. It is some beginning of repentance, as I haue touched a little before, to endeavor to seeke true remedies, hauing been instructed and awakened by calamities and chastisements. But we must goe a step further, to wit, that resting our selues vpon God only we gaze not here and there, neither yet be tossed to and fro with all winds. To be short, *Iſaiah* threatneth the Iewes with an vtter

ruine, because they were become so desperate, that a light and easie stroke of Gods hand had not sufficientlie tamed their rebellion. Yet notwithstanding we may expound this in the good part, to wit, that the Iewes should *lift up their eyes at the last vnto heauen:*

Verf. 22. *And when he shall looke to the earth, behold trouble, and darkenes, vexation and anguish, and he is drinen into darkenes.*

BVt then we must reade this 22.verse apart, and so the sense will be, that the Iewes shall conuert vnto God, because they shall be destitute of all meanes on earth, and shall

perceiue nothing but horrible calamities on which side soeuer they turne their eyes. Now these speeches are partlie simple, and partlie figuratiue: for by *darknes* and *obscuritie* he meanes nothing else but aduersitie, after the maner of the scripture phrase: but he addes *drinen*, amplifying it greatlie by this word *affliction*: for if one push him forwards which is in darknes, he stumbleth and hurts himselfe very greatly. His meaning is then, that to one sore affliction the Lord wil add another more grieuous, to humble them more and more. For his intent is nothing else but to shew that the iudgements of God shall be so horrible, that they shall be constrained in despite of their teeth to cast vp their eyes *into heauen.*

THE IX. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Yet the darkenes shall not be according to the affliction that it had when at the first he touched lightly the land of Zebulon, and the land of Nephtaly; nor after ward when he was more grieuous by the way of the sea beyond Iordan in Galilee of the Gentiles.*



E begins to comfort & afflicted with hope of a mitigation of the chastisements, least they should be swallowed vp with so great an heape of calamities. Many draw these words to a cleane cō-

trarie sense, saying, that it is a threatening which presageth a more heauie affliction to the Iewes, then that wherewith they were chastised by *Tiglath-peleser*, or by *Salmanassar*. The first did them much euill, and the second more then the former: for he caried the ten tribes away captiue, and abolished the name of *Israel*. Some thinke then that the Prophet in this place foretels of a more heauie calamitie then euer they yet tasted of, which being compared to the two former, should much surpasse them. Although I am not minded to reiect this exposition because it is something probable; yet notwithstanding I am of a contrarie opinion, albeit this first hath the fairer shew: the Prophet meant to take all pleasures from the hypocrites, lest they should imagine that this destruction which was to ouerflow all, should be like some little spoile which might passe away by and by as the former afflictions had done; and so shall we take the particle *et* in his proper signification. But me thinke the naturall sense of the place will agree better if we say, that it is a consolation, wherein the Prophet begins to moderate that which he had formerlie spoken of these horrible *darknes*, and *drinings* forward: and in mitigating the bitterness of

these chastisements, he comforts and *drawes* them to hope that God will shew them mercie; as if he should say, And yet, euen in this cruell destruction which the Iewes shall vndergoe, the darknes shall not be such as it was when the land of Israel was first afflicted by *Tiglath-peleser*, and then a little more seuerely by *Salmanasser*: for the faithfull might haue growne out of heart in such distresses, if they had not had some consolations to haue cheered and comforted them. The Prophet then speakes vnto them, to the end they should not thinke themselues vndone, and declares vnto them that the rods wherewith God meant to beate them should be more easie then the first. We shall easily discern hereafter by the context how proper and naturall this exposition is.

But why saith the Prophet that this destruction which will lay all things waste, shall yet notwithstanding be more gentle and supportable? for Ierusalem should be razed, the Temple broken downe, the Sacrifices abolished, which notwithstanding in former warres remained wholie vntouched: this then should seeme the cruelllest, and the others but light in comparison. We must obserue that there is a certaine promise added to this, which was not to the others; now it is by this promise only that temptations may be overcome, and the iudgements made more light: this (I say) is the only remedie which sweeteth our euils, so that those who are destitute thereof must needs fall into despaire. If the Lord confirme vs by this meanes, giuing vs hope of his helpe, there is not the greatest affliction which we shall not esteeme very light. This may be illustrated by a similitude: It may fall out that a man shall drowne himselfe in a little riuer, if he fall therinto with his head downward; the which notwithstanding in the midst of the sea might haue been saued, if he had had some placke or boord which might haue brought him to the shore. So also the little calamities will ouerwhelme vs if we be destitute of the grace of God; whereas being grounded

grounded vpon the word of God, we can eſcape and come forth out of an extreme miſerie and ſound.

As touching the words, ſome take *Muſph* for an adiectiue, as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, It ſhall not be darkened: but the relatione of the feminine gender which followes a litle after, hindreth from referring this vnto men. The opinion of thoſe who ſay it is a nounce ſubſtantiuē is better, & therefore I haue thought good to translate word for word: There ſhall be no darkenes in Iudea according to the time, &c. Whereas ſome expound the verbe *Hekah*, as if the earth had been oppreſſed and burdened with people led into captiuitie; this is vtterlie wide from the Prophets meaning, neither agrees it to the ſcope of the Text: for it is ſaid, by and by after, that the neighbor region was burdened with a ſecond warre: no doubt then but this verbe answers to the former, *Harifſhon*. Becauſe then that *Tiglaib-pelizer* aſſailed but a litle portion of the kingdome, it is ſaid that the warre which he made is but light in compariſon of that of *Salmanazar*. He alſo ſaith *by the way of the ſea*, becauſe Galile was neere the riuer of the Mediterranean ſea, on the other ſide it was inuironed with the flood Jordan. It is called *Galile of the Gentiles*, not onely becauſe it was neighbour to Tyre and Sidon, but alſo in regard many nations were mingled there amongſt the Iewes; for after *Dauid* gaue this countrie to king *Hiram*, it could neuer be ſo quiet but the Gentiles would alwayes occupie ſome part of it.

1. King. 9.
11.

Vcrſ. 2. The people that walked in darknes haue ſeene a great light: they that dwelled in the land of the ſhadow of death, vpon them hath the light ſhined.

HE ſpeakes of things to come, and yet notwithstanding vſeth the time preſent, that in this deſtruction of the Citie, and in the captiuitie and ruin thereof, the people might behold the light of God. The ſumme is then, that euen in the miſt of *darkenes*, yea of death it ſelfe, they were neuertheleſſe to hope, ſeeing God is able ſufficientlie to giue life to his people when they ſhall be thought as good as dead. It ſeemes that *S. Matthew* in alledging this place turnes it to an other purpoſe: for he ſaith this propheſie was fulfilled when *Ieſus Chriſt* preached by the ſea ſide, *Math. 4. 15*. But if we rightlie conſider the Similitude, *S. Matthew* hath iuſtly applied this place vnto *Chriſt*, and hath obſerued the true ſenſe. Although it ſeemes our expoſitors can not tell how to make it hang together: for whereas they ſimply affirme, that this appertaines to the kingdome of *Chriſt*, they yeeld no ſufficient reaſon of it, neither doe they ſhew how this agrees to this place. If we will haue the true ſenſe then, we muſt call to mind what hath been ſaid heretofore, namely, that the Prophet in ſpeaking of the returne of this people from the captiuitie of *Babylon*, preſented not one age or ſeaſon before his view, but comprehended all others, euen to

the coming of *Chriſt*, who brought a full and perfect libertie with him to his people. For the deliuerance from *Babylon* was as an entrance and beginning of the reſtauration of the Church, not to eſtabliſh it for ſome few yeeres, but till ſuch time as the Meſſiah ſhould come, who brought ſaluation, not to mens bodies onely, but alſo to their ſoules. We ſhal finde this maner of ſpeech to be very familiar with *Iſaiab*, after we haue proceeded further, and ſhall be a litle better exerciſed in reading of his propheſie.

The Prophet then hauing ſpoken of the captiuitie of *Babylon*, which ſhewed a very great calamitie to come, declares that it ſhall yet be more light then that which *Iſrael* had ſuſtained at the fiſt, becauſe the Lord had moderated and limited a certaine end to this calamitie, to wit, the ſpace of 70. yeares, which being paſt, the light of the Lord ſhould thine againe vpon them. By this hope of deliuerance then he cheares vp the hearts of ſuch as were caſt downe with feare, to the end they ſhould not be diſcouraged. And thus he hath put a difference betweene the Iewes and the *Iſraelites*, who had not any certaine hope of ſo neere a deliuerance. For howſoeuer the Prophets had giuen a certaine taſte of the mercie of God to a ſmall number of the faithfull amongſt the people of *Iſrael*, yet notwithstanding becauſe the deliuerance of this people was as an ouerplus, and depended vpon the deliuerance of *Judah*, the Prophet iuſtly affirms that a new light is offered, in as much as God hath determined to redeeme his people. *Saint Matthew* alſo rightlie ſpreads the beames of this light ouer *Galile*, and the land of *Zabulon*.

*Ser. 25. 11.
12. and 23. 9
10.*

Darknes and the ſhadow of death.] Heere he compares their exile in *Babylon* to *darknes and death*, becauſe thoſe which were detained therein were poore and miſerable, and were altogether like *dead men*: as alſo *Ezechiel* out of their mouth declares, namely, that the dead ſhould riſe out of their graues, *Ezech. 37. 11. 12*. Their condition then was ſuch, as if no brightnes or ſparkle of light had ſhined vpon them. Yet notwithstanding he ſhewes that this ſhall be no hinderance at all, that they ſhould enioy the light, and recouer their fiſt libertie againe: which libertie he ſtretcheth not to a litle ſpace, but euen vnto *Chriſt* his time, as hath been already ſaid.

And hence we obſerue how ſy Apollies went to alledge ſy testimoniēs of ſy Prophets, and to ſhew the end and true vſe of them. As *S. Paul* alledgeth the teſtimonie of *Hoſea*, I will call them my people which were not my people, *Rom. 9. 26*. *Hoſea 1. 10*. Where he appropriates this to the calling of the Gentiles, although it be properlie ſpoken of the Iewes: and ſhewes that it was fulfilled when the Lord did incorporate the Gentiles into his Church. Thus when this people were in this baniſhment and incloſed therein as in a ſepulcher, they differed nothing from the heathen. And in regard they were in one and the ſame condition, it is good reaſon that this teſtimonie ſhould appertaine to the Gentiles as well as to the Iewes. Neither muſt it be re-

How the Apollies are wont to alledge teſtimonies out of the *Prophets*.

ferred to an externall miserie only, but to the shadow of eternall death, vntill Christ shine vpon vs by the doctrine of his word, which is the cause why Paul saith, Awake thou that sleepest and stand vp from the dead, and Christ shall giue thee light, Ephes. 5. 14. If then we extend the beginning of the deliuerance from the returne out of Babylon vntill the comming of Christ, from whom proceeds all bountie and libertie of good things, we shall haue the true sense of this place, which otherwise hath not been expounded clearly enough by the expositors.

Verf. 3. *Thou hast multiplied the nation and increased their ioy: they haue reioiced before thee according to the ioy in haruest, and as men reioice when they diuide a spoile.*

THIS place is somewhat obscure, as well in regard of it selfe, as also because of the diuersities of interpretations: for it seemes absurd to say that *the ioy was not increased*, seeing he by and by addes, *They reioiced*. For this cause the Iewes say that the particle *Lo* is not negatiue here, as if one letter were put in stead of another, to wit *Alaph* for *Vau*: as also that this is found in the scripture, albeit very feldome: and this they publish, because they can not make the text hang together as they would. Some referre this to *Sennacherib*, because his so great an armie brought him no matter of ioy, but rather of sorow. Others not amisse expound it of the Church: but they giue no reason for it, for they thinke the Prophet speaks this because the faithfull are subiect to many miseries and troubles thorowout their whole life. Others drawe out a sense further from the purpose, to wit, that the Gentiles which should increase the Church, should not bring any ioy to the Iewes, nor to the ancient Synagogue. But I cannot approue any one of these interpretations. And therefore I expound it thus: that euen as in the beginning of the Chapter the Prophet said, the benefit of this redemption should be greater then all the rest, although it seemed not so in regard of the small number of those which should returne home into their countrie: so now also he repeats the same comparison againe: or at the least, another euery way like vnto it: namely, that the grace of God should shine much more then it did when he multiplied the people. For if we compare the estate of the kingdom of Iudah, before the captiuitie of Babylon, with that which followed after the returne; wee shall well perceiue that it gained at that time more than it lost before.

There returned but a small handfull of people indeede, in comparison of the great multitude which had been led captiue thither. Moreouer, they inhabited not freely in their owne country, but by way of lone: and they were to pay tribute to the Persians, so as they held not any appearance in a manner of their first dignitie. Who would not then haue preferred the flourishing estate which was in

the house of David before this? Yet notwithstanding the Prophet affirms, that this last estate, howsoeuer it appeared much lesse, and more miserable, is yet neuertheless to be preferred before the first flourishing estate and glorie of it. Hee shewes also that there shall bee greater ioy then, than when there was abundance of all sorts of riches and good things: which *Agge* likewise witnessed, *Hagg. 2. 10* to wit, that the beautie of the last Temple should be greater than the first; although to outward view it should seeme farre otherwise. It is as much then as if *Isaiah* should haue said, There was neuer greater ioy, no not when the multitude of people was much more: for howsoeuer we be few, and a small number, yet notwithstanding thou hast reioiced vs by the light wherewith thou hast shined vnto vs, that there was no ioy in the former estate comparable to this. For this deliuerance was as an entrance of the true and perfect saluation, which was at the last brought and offered by Christ.

Before thee. Its meaning is, that the ioy shall not be light nor momentanie. For men often reioyce; but it is with a vaine and a false ioy which brings nothing in the end but sorrow and tears. Now he declares that the roote of this ioy shall be so stedfast, as it shall neuer perish nor be moued. And herunto appertaines the particle *before thee*, because there is nothing that glads the hearts of the faithfull more, then when God causeth the light of his countenance sweetely to shine vpon them. They are not caried hither and thither with a franticke and blinde ioy, after the manner of the children of this world, but their full and perfect ioy is to repose themselves in the louing fauour of God. It may be also that the Prophet alludes to that sentence which is so often found in the bookes of *Moses*: Thou shalt reioyce before the Lord thy God, Deut. 12. 12. For although hee there speaks of the Tabernacle, yet may this manner of speech be fitly applied to the present purpose, namely, that the ioy of the godly shall not bee prophane, but shall arise from hence that they know God; and by faith beholde him to bee the author of their saluation.

Others expound it somewhat more strictly, as if the faithfull should reioyce before God in their consciences, because in the world they finde nothing but sorrow and continuall cause of griefe. Now although this be true, yet notwithstanding wee may gather a lesse constrained sense from the circumstance of the place, to wit, that the faithfull which should be miraculously deliuered, should reioyce with true gladnesse, because they were assured by this deliuerance that God was their father, and therefore might boldly reioyce, as being for euer exempt from all euill, when they shall be reioiced into his protection. This sets forth a perpetuall ioy then, as I said erewhile.

The similitudes which he addes of the *haruest*; and *spoyle*, whereby he amplifies the greatnesse of this ioye, are cleare enough of themselves. To conclude, it appears by this

Exod. 21. 8.

2. King. 19. 35.

The faithfull are not caried away with a blind ioy, as the children of this world are.

Leuit. 23. 40

Joh. 16. 10.
What manner
of joy it is
which Chriſt
brings vs.

this place, what profit Chriſt brings vnto vs; to wit, a ſtedfaſt & perfect joy, which can by no means whatſocuer, bee plucked away from vs; no, not although we be aſſailed with waues and ſtormes, yea and preſſed with all manner of anguiſhes. For howſocuer we be weake and feeble, yet muſt we reioyce and be of good courage: for our joy conſiſts not in muſcitudes, neither in riches nor outward appearances; but in a ſpirituall felicitie which wee obtaine by the preaching of the Goſpell.

Verſ. 4. For the yoke of their burthen, and the ſtaffe of their ſhoulder, and the rod of their oppreſſion haſt thou broken as in the day of *Midian*.

HE ſhewes the cauſe of this joy; to wit, that the faithfull being deliuered from an horrible and cruell tyrannie, ſhould eſtreme of this benefit euen as much as if they had been drawne out of the iawes of death. Now to the end this fauour might bee the better illuſtrated, *Iſaiah* ſets forth the vile and inſupportable ſlauey wherewith the Iewes were oppreſſed: and herunto belongs this heaping vp of wordes, *cauſe yoke, rod of the ſoulders, ſtaffe of the oppreſſor, or, exaſſor*. For although wee bee ouertender and delicate when afflictions preſſe vs; yet notwithstanding as ſoone as the bitterneſſe is paſt, we by and by forget them. To the end then that this redeemed people might keepe the ſingular benefit of God in remembrance, and in a reuerend regard, the Prophet would haue them to conſider how hard and lamentable this ſeruitude was, wherein they groined and bowed vnderneath heauy burthens, when as the *ſtaffe* neuer moued from off their ſhoulders, being preſſed by a Tyrant which inſulted ouer them: for which cauſe they might well reioyce and be glad of their deliuerance.

And hee yet extolles the excellency of this fauour by another circunſtance, in regard that God did openly diſplay his ayme and power in their deliuerance, euen as it were from heauen it ſelfe. And therefore he brings in an ancient and memorable exauple: that as God had in times paſt diſconcerted the hoſt of the *Midianites*, by a wonderfull and incredible means, without the ſtrength and ſuccours of men: ſo now alſo he would diſplay euen the very ſame power; to wit, that he will deliuer his people from vnder that tyrannie which ſhall oppreſſe them, without the helpe of any man: euen then, when none of the poore Iewes ſhall dare to liſt vp their finger (as they ſay.) We muſt alſo obſerue, that God ſuccours his, that ſometimes hee ſerues himſelfe of ordinary means: but when hee ſees that theſe means will bee hurtfull vnto men, and hinder them from looking to the hand of their deliuerer; he then works alone and by miracles, leſt any thing ſhould ouer ſhadow or linder men from the manifeſt being holding and knowledge of his power. Thus the ayme of the Lord appeared from heauen

in this victorie of *Gedeon*, where the enemies were cut off without any helpe of mans hand at all. For what had *Gedeon* but a noiſe of broken pitchets, with which hee ſhould very hardly haue feared a ſort of poore miſe: hee had a little handfull of me againſt a great hoſt: and in ſtead of all ſorts of weapons, they had vaine and ridiculous ſearcrowes.

For this cauſe he compares the future deliuerance of the people to this other deliuerance, and ſheweth that the manifeſt power and vertue of God ſhall bee knowne vnto all in this laſt, as well as in the victorie of *Gedeon*. Some expound this place ſimply of the Law; which may well be called a heauie yoke & a ſtaff: burthening the ſhoulder. But this expoſition agrees not with the text; for ſo it might ſeeme that the Prophet ſpake from the purpoſe, which were as much as to offer violence (as it were) to this place. Let vs hold the meaner then whereof I haue ſpoken before; to wit, that God hauing brought his people out of *Babylon*, continued on this benefit ſtill euen vnto the coming of Chriſt. This is the ſenſe then; Thou haſt taken off theſe burthens, vnder which thy people was vniuſtly and cruelly oppreſſed.

Others apply this to the deſtruction of *Ieruſalem*, which was vnder *Veſpaſian*. But they have no ground for it. Almoſt all the Iewes referre this to *Herzechias*, when the Lord deliuered the Citie from the ſiege of *Senacherib*, and did cut off his hoſt. But this interpretation cannot agree, becauſe *Herzechias* raigned not tyrannically ouer the Iewes. Moreover, the Lord deliuered his people then out of the danger, and from the feare wherein they were, and not out of any ſeruitude. Whence it appears, that the Prophet looked further off; and that our expoſition is both true, and ſutes beſt with the text.

Verſ. 5. Surely euery battell of the warrior is with noiſe, and with tampling of garments in blood: but this ſhall bee without burning and deuouring with fire.

Almoſt all the expoſitours agree in this, that *Iſaiah* meant to oppoſe all other victories to that which God ſhould giue vnto his people. For other conquerours obtaine victorie in ouerthrowing their enemies: but here the Lord ſhall ouercome by his immediate hand. He expounds this ſpeech then, *As Verſe 4.* in the day of *Midian*, more fully. The Lord ſaith, hee ſhall not vſe many mens helpe in this worke: but ſhall winne the victory from heauen. Now when God workes thus himſelfe alone, hauing reiected all impediments, wee can cleerly diſcerne that hee is the author of our life and ſaluation. Seeing alſo there is an oppoſition which ſhewes the difference betwene the common manner of warfare, and the miracle of deliuerance, the conjunction *and*, which is in the miſt of the verſe, ſhould be reſolued into a particule aduerſatiue: as if hee ſhould ſay; Enemies are wont to bee put to flight by a furious fight: but God will worke otherwiſe; becauſe hee will cut off the enemies.

Judg. 7. 22.

Why God
deſerues
ſometimes to
ſuccour vs
by meanes.

Judg. 7. 16.
19. 21.

enemies of his Church, as if he shot forth his lightnings, and should send downe fire from heauen vpon them. Wee may well receiue their opinion who expound it, With a breath; namely, that all warriors shal be astonied, and, In burning of fire. But the first sense agrees best, and is confirmed euen by the Prophets owne words. It appears also that the Prophet speaks not here onely of that deliuerance which the people receiued vnder Cyrus, who gaue them libertie to returne into their Country; but wee must apply these things also to the kingdome of Christ.

Verf. 6. *For vnto vs a child is borne, and vnto vs a sonne is giuen, and the gouernment is vpon his shoulder: and *hee shall call his name Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The *euertlasting father, The Prince of peace,*

*Or, they. Or, his name shall be called. *Or, of the world.

Isaiah shewes now the finall cause, wherefore this deliuerance was to bee preferred before all other benefits of God; because hee will not onely bring his people out of captiuitie, but will also establish Christ in his royall throne; vnder whose Kingdome there shall be seene a soueraigne and an eternall felicitie. And thus he shewes that this deliuerance shall be no temporary or perishable benefit, seeing hee comprehends the whole time wherein the Church should be preferred vntill the coming of Christ. Neither is it any meruaile if the Prophet passeth forthwith from the returne of the antient people, to the full & whole restauration of the Church, which notwithstanding should not come to passe many ages after. For we haue said heretofore in the seventh Chapter, verse 14. that all the promises of saluation are grounded vpon the Mediator, for whose sake onely God is mercifull vnto vs; and therefore the Prophets were often wont to propound this pledge and earnest penny, as oft as they would encourage the faithfull, and raise them vp to a comfortable expectation of deliuerance. And thus it came to passe, that the returne from the captiuitie of Babylon, was a beginning of that restauration of the Church, which in conclusion happened in the perfection thereof; to wit, when Christ appeared: in regard whereof, there is no absurditie in this so continual a progresse of time. And therefore *Isaiah* teacheth, that they were not to stay their mindes in the beholding of the present benefit, but to consider the end; and thereunto to referre all these things: as if they should haue said; Our happinesse consists in our deliuerance from death; not to leade our liues onely in the land of Canaan; but rather that we should aspire to the kingdome of heauen.

This place adinonisheth vs, that we should not swallow vp the benefits which wee receiue from God, so as we should forthwith put them to forgetfulness; but ought rather to lift vp our mindes vnto Christ: for otherwise it will bee but a flashing and vaine

ioy; because such benefits will not make vs taste the sweetnesse of the loue which God our Father beares vs, vnlesse his free election ratified in Iesus Christ goes before. Lastly, the Prophet would not haue this people to rest in the pleasure of that one outward and transitory deliuerance, which they obtained; but that they should consider the end thereof; to wit, the conseruation of the Church vntill such time as Christ the onely Sauour and redeemer should appeare. For hee it is who ought to bee the matter and end of all our ioy.

To rest in the enjoying of outward benefits, without hauing an eye vnto Christ, will proue but a vanishing ioy in the end.

A child is borne to vs.] The Iewes doe impudently wrest this place: for they expound it of *Hezekias*; who was born notwithstanding before this prophesie was published. But hee here speaks as of a new and rare matter; yea, which more is, it is a promise to confirme the faithfull in the hope of a thing to come; whence wee may truly gather, that such a child is here spoken of as should be borne afterward. He is also called the *Sonne of God*. I deny not but the name of *Sonne* stretcheth very far in the Hebrue tongue, but it is when some other word is ioyned therewithall. Euerie man is the sonne of his Father: those who haue attained to the age of an hundred yeeres, are called *Sonnes* of an hundred yeeres: the wicked are called *Sonnes* of iniquitie: those which are blessed, *Sonnes* of blessing. Heretofore in the fifth chapter, verse 1. *Isaiah* called the fruitfull hill, the *Sonne of the Olive*. But this word *Sonne* by it selfe, can be vnderstood of none but of the *Sonne of God*. And here it is attributed vnto Christ by way of excellencie, to the end we might know that by this marke he is separated from all other men. Neither is there any doubt but the Prophet had respect to that famous Prophesie which was so often in the mouthes of all; *I will be his Father, and he shall be my Sonne*, *Psalm 86.27.* as it is said in the second *Psalme*, *Thou art my Sonne*, this day haue I begotten thee. For had it not been a thing commonly knowne, that the *Messias* should be the sonne of God, the Prophet had vnaptly and to little or no purpose mentioned the name of *Sonne* barely and simple. This title therefore depends vpon the Prophesie before going: from whence the Apostle concludes, that Christ is more excellent then all the Angels, and is exalted farre aboue them, *Heb. 1.5.*

Chap. 65. 20.

2. Sam. 7. 14.

Moreouer, although Christ should be contemptible in the person of a little child, yet notwithstanding his dignitie is adorned with the title of *Sonne*. I confesse indeede that he might also haue been called the *Sonne of Dauid*: but it is better referred vnto God. Now the other titles following (we know) doe in no sort belong to *Hezekias*. And I will hereafter reiteate at large the cauils wherewith the Iewes arme themselues to corrupt this place. Let them barke as long as they will, yet is the thing cleare and most apparent vnto all such as will iudge thereof peaceably, and with sound iudgement. There is also great weight in this which he adds, that this sonne is giuen so the people: to the end the Iewes might know their

2. Cor. 1. 20. All the promises of saluation grounded vpon the Mediator.

their ſaluation, and alſo the ſaluation of the whole Church was included in the perſon of Chriſt. And this gift is one of the principall articles of our faith, for the birth of Ieſus Chriſt ſhould little auaille vs. vnto theſe were giuen vnto vs. Now in the verſes following, *Iſaiah* ſhewes what this child, and his condition ſhall be.

His government is laid vpon his ſhoulders. It is vtterlie frivolous to thinke (as many do) that the Prophet alludes to the Croſſe of Chriſt. He bare his Croſſe vpon his ſhoulders, and thereon triumphed gloriouſlie ouer y^e prince of the world. But ſeeing it is heere ſaid, *That the government is laid vpon his ſhoulders*, in the ſame ſenſe as it is ſaid, that the key of the houſe of *Dauid* is laid vpon the ſhoulders of *Eliakin*, as we ſhall ſee in the 22. Chapter, we haue no need to coine new inuentions without a foundation. We thinke heere is rather a cloſe oppoſition betwene the government which the redeemer ſhould beare vpon his ſhoulders, and the yoke which was mentioned before, verſe 4. wherewith the tyrants oppreſſed the poore captiues. This expoſition agrees well, and is not ſubiect to any cauill whatſoeuer. The Prophet ſhewes then that the Meſſiah ſhall in nothing reſemble thoſe fooliſh kings who giue themſelues to laſciuiouſnes, neuer taking thought for the diſcharge of their duties, for he ſhall be ſtrong and mightie to vndergoe the burthen impoſed vpon him. Thus he extolles the maiestie and excellencie of Chriſt, becauſe he ſhall obtaine honor and authoritie by his owne power, and ſhall not execute his office with his fingers ends only, but with his whole ſtrength.

His name ſhall be. Although the verbe be of the actiue ſignification, yet notwithstanding becauſe it is taken indefinitely, I haue been bold to render it in the neuter gender: for it is as much as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid in the plurall number, They ſhall call. This manner of ſpeech is in vſe amongst vs Frenchmen, ſaying, * They ſhall call. For whereas the Iewes reſerre this vnto God, and reade it thus, Wonderfull, Counſeller, The mightie God, The eternal father, and Prince of peace, ſhall giue him his name; wee ſee eaſily that they do this of ſet purpoſe, and with an affectation of darkning the glorie of Chriſt: for were they not ſo obſtinate as to deſire to ſpoile him of his Deitie, the text would run exceeding well as our men haue turned it. Beſides, what need was there to adorne God with theſe epithites, if the Prophet had only meant to ſay that he ſhould giue the name to Meſſiah? For the epithites which are wont to be giuen to God are either perpetuall, or applied to the matter which ſhall be handled, which we ſee is not ſo in this place. Furthermore, it were a peruerſing of order, to put the name of God in the miſt of diuers epithites, but it ſhould rather be put before the verb *ſhall call*, to wit, *The mightie God ſhall call*, &c. Moreover, I ſee not how the name of *Counſeller*, can ſimply agree vnto God: for it muſt be referred to thoſe which are aſſiſtants or counſellers to kings, or ſome others.

If any cauiller will yet reſt himſelfe too obſtinately in this wrangling of the Rabbins, he ſhall do nothing elſe but manifeſt his impudencie. Let vs follow that which is plaine and cleare.

Wonderfull. We muſt note, that theſe titles be no vaine things, but ſubie applied to the preſent occaſion: for the Prophet teacheth what a one Chriſt ſhall ſhew himſelfe to be towards the faithfull. Now he diſputes not of his incomprehenſible eſſence, but extols his vertues, wherof we ſhall haue experience by faith. Which we ought ſo much y^e more to keepe in mind, becauſe men for the moſt part content themſelues with the bare name of Chriſt, without conſideration of his vertue and ſubſtance; the which indeed we ought euen more chieflie & principallie to weigh and conſider. In the fiſt epithite he prepares the minds of the faithfull to the conſideration of a very rare thing, to wit that they ſhould expect ſome more excellent and greater matter from Chriſt, then that which we ſee in the courſe of Gods ordinarie workes. As if he ſhould ſay, There are ineſtimable treaſures, & *wonderfull things*, hidden in Chriſt. And the very truth is, that his redemption farre ſurpaſſeth the worke of the creation of heauen and earth. So then the ſumme is, that the grace which God hath manifeſted in Chriſt is more excellent then all other miracles.

The ſecond epithite ſignifies, that the redeemer ſhall come adorned and decked with all wiſedome. But heere we muſt call that to mind which I haue touched before, namely, that the Prophee diſputes not in this place of the hidden and ſecret eſſence of Chriſt, but of that vertue which he manifeſted towards vs. He calles him not *Counſeller* then becauſe he knowes and vnderſtands all his Fathers ſecrets, but rather in regard he iſſued out of his Fathers boſome, and therefore performed all the parts of the office of a ſoueraigne and perfect Teacher: ſo as it is not lawfull for vs now to be wiſe further then his Goſpell; to the praiſe whereof alſo this appertaines, for therein the wiſedome of God is fullie contained, as *Saint Paul* alſo often ſhewes; and therein alſo Ieſus Chriſt manifeſts and declares whatſoeuer is neceſſarie for our ſaluation; and that ſo familiarly, that he ſpeakes no more to his diſciples as vnto ſeruants, but as vnto friends, *Iohn 15. 14. 15.*

The mightie God] *El* is one of the names of God, which notwithstanding is deriued from might or power, ſo as ſometimes it is added in ſtead of an epithite. But here we may perceiue it is a proper name, becauſe *Iſaiah* contents not himſelfe therewith, but hath added the epithite *Gibbor*, which ſignifies ſtrong. And truly if Chriſt were not God, it were ill done to reioyce in him; for it is written, *Cursed is he that truſteth in man, Iere. 17. 5.* The maiestie of God then muſt of neceſſitie ſhine in him, that in him we may place our confidence, becauſe we can not reſt vpon any creature without high ſacrilege. He is called the *Mightie God* then, for the ſame reaſon that he was heretofore called *Immanuel*, *Chap. 7. 14.* For if in Chriſt we only find ſtrength

Chriſts
birth ſhould
h. d. e. auaille
vs vnto theſe the
Father had
giuen him
vnto vs.

Iohn 19. 17.
18.

* On appeal
Iere. 2.

1. Wonder-
full.
Theſe titles
giuen to
Chriſt be no
vaine things.

ME are wont
to content
theſelues
with the bare
name of
Chriſt, with-
out conſide-
ration of his
power.

2. Counſel-
ler.

Iohn 1. 18.

1. Cor. 1. 24.

30.

Ephes. 1. 17.

Col. 3. 9.

3. The might-
ie God.

and the nature of man, our reioycing should be fruitles and peruerse, and the stay of our hope should be grounded amisse, and without any stedfastnesse. But if so be he shew himselfe to be a God to vs; yea a mightie God, then may wee boldly and securely repose our confidence in him. There is also very great reason why the Prophet calles him the Mighty and Strong; for we haue to fight against the diuel, death, and sinne; enemies that are farre too mightie and strong for vs to deale withall, who would quickly master vs, if wee were not clothed with the inuincible strength of Christ. By this epithite then wee are taught that Christ is strong enough to vphold our saluation, to the end wee should desire none but him: for he is God, and wil shew himselfe strong for vs. This application is the key of this place, and of others like vnto it; to wit, that we distinguish betwene the incomprehensible essence of Christ, and that power by which he manifesteth himselfe vnto vs.

If Christ be
God, yea a
mighty
God, then
wee may
boldly re-
pose our
confidence
in him.
Eph. 6. 12.

Christ is a
strong God
for vs.

4. Eternall
Father.

Eternall Father.] The Greeke Translator hath added, To come: and in my iudgement hath rightly expounded it; for it sets forth the Eternitie: vnlesse wee had rather say, that a perpetuall and continuall order of times and seasons should agree better, lest the heauenly life, which is yet hidden from vs, should needlesly be restrained to this place. It is true that the Prophet also comprehends that, yea, and admonisheth vs that Christ shall come to make his elect immortal: but because the faithfull being yet in this world, must passe from death to life, this time to come, is referred to the eternall estate of the Church. The name *Father*, is taken for Author; because Christ maintaines his Church in all ages, and giues immortalitye as to the whole body thereof in generall, so to euery member in particular. Whence wee learne, how fraile and brittle wee are, being out of him. For be it that wee liue very long, according to the manner of men, what shall become of this old age at the last? Let vs therefore lift vp our mindes to that eternall and blessed life, which wee possesse by faith and hope, although wee see it not visibly with our bodily eyes.

5. Prince of
peace.

The Prince of peace.] Behold the last epithite; whereby the Prophet declares, that Christ shall bring full and perfect felicitie with him at his coming; or rather a quiet and blessed securitie. For the word *peace*, signifies as much oftentimes amongst the Hebrewes, as prosperitie, in regard that among all blessings, none are found better or more desirable then *peace*. The summe is, that all those who will subiect themselves vnder the gouernement of Christ, shall leade a quiet & a happy life vnder his obedience. Whence it follows, that where this King raignes not, mens liues are most miserable and full of troubles. But herewithall wee must obserue, that the nature of this *peace*, and of this *kingdome* are both alike. For it hath his principall seat in the consciences of men: otherwise it must needs be that wee should be alwaies in conflicts, and exercised through continuall assaults. And therefore *Isaiah* doth not pro-

mise an external peace only, but such a peace, whereby wee may enter againe into fauour with God, from whom we were utterly estranged and enemies before. Being iustified by faith, we haue peace with God, saith *S. Paul*, Rom. 5. 1 Now after Christ hath quieted our consciences, this very peace shall haue the chiefe place in our hearts, so as we shall carry our selues patiently vnder all afflictions: and besides, from this fountaine we shall see outward prosperitie to streame downe vnto vs, which is nothing else but an effect of the blessing of God.

Phil. 4. 7.
Col. 3. 19.

Now to the end we may apply this doctrine to our vse; as oft as wee are vexed with any diffidence; and that all meanes doe faile vs, yea when all things seemes in a confusion before vs, let vs remember that Christ is called *wonderfull*; because hee hath incredible meanes in his hands to aide his withall, and is able by his power to surmount farre above all that we can imagine. And when we shall be destitute of counsell, let vs remember that hee is that *Counsellor*. And if our power and strength doe faile vs, yet let vs remember that hee is the *mightie God*. And when we shall see new feares euer and anon to terrifie vs, and that many deaths doe enuiron vs on all sides, let vs rest and reliee vpon his *mercie*; whercof hee is not called the *Father* for nothing. And let vs learne to sweeten all the miseries of this world euen by this remedie. And if it fall out that wee be tossed vp and downe with diuers tempests, and that Satan labours to disquiet our consciences, let vs remember that Christ is the *Prince of peace*, who can easily quiet all our troubles. And thus these epithites shall confirme vs more and more in the faith of Christ, and shall fortifie vs against Satan and hell it selfe.

1. Wou-
derfull.

2. Coun-
seller.
3. The mightie
God.

3. The eter-
nall Father.

5. Prince of
peace.

Vers. 7. The increase of his gouernement and peace shall haue none end: hee shall sit vpon the throne of David, and vpon his kingdome, to order it and to establish it with iudgement and with iustice, from hence forth euen for euer: the zeale of the Lord of hostes will performe this.

HE here begins to expound and confirme that which he had said before, where he called Christ The Prince of peace; to wit, that his gouernment must endure for euer, and that there shall be no end of his dominion, nor of his peace, which also was repeated by *Daniel*, The Angell *Gabriel* in like manner had respect hereunto when he brought the message to the Virgin; or rather hee expounded this place, because it can be vnderstood of none but of Christ. He shall raigne, saith he, ouer the house of *Iacob* for euer, and of his Kingdome there shall be none end. Luke 1. 33. Now wee see by experience, that the greatest dominions in the world, doe quickly fall to the ground through sudden mutations, no lesse then if they were built vpon yce. We may also know both by histories and examples of things which fall out euery day, how variable and vnstabl

Dan. 7. 27.

Earthly Kingdomes vnto the Kingdome eternall.

vnto the Kingdome eternall. There is none but this government onely then, which is immutable and eternall.

Now this ſpreading and *perpetuall* whereof *Iſaiah* here ſpeakes, containes two members: for it referreth it ſelfe as well to the time, as to the ſtate thereof. Now albeit the ſtate of Chriſts Kingdome be ſuch, as it ſeemes euer & anon likely to periſh: yet notwithstanding God contents not himſelfe onely to defend and keepe it, but doth alſo *enlarge* the bounds thereof faire and wide; and then vpholds it, and cauſeth it to ſtand faſt *for euer* and euer. Which we are diligently to note, to the end the continuall aſſaults wherewith the Church is aſſailed, doe not ſhake our faith; becauſe we are here aſſured, that amidſt theſe furious threats, yea amidſt the very ſwords of the enemies, *the Kingdome of Chriſt ſhall ſtand ſtedfaſt* by the inuincible power of God: ſo as in deſpite of the whole world, it ſhall flouriſh *for euer*. Indeede we muſt not iudge of the ſtedfaſtneſſe thereof by the appearance of worldly things, but by the promiſe; which makes vs certain of the eternitie and continuall increaſings of this kingdome.

We muſt not iudge of the ſtedfaſtneſſe of Chriſts Kingdome by worldly things.

The *eternitie of peace* is added to the government, and not without cauſe, ſeing the one cannot be ſeparate from the other: adde alſo that it ſhould be impoſſible for Chriſt to be a King, but by meanes thereof hee muſt hold his ſubiect in a happy and quiet *peace* vnder him, and alſo enrich them with all manner of bleſſings. But in regard they are ſubiect daily to infinite ſorts of troubles, bearing many hard brunts, yea tremble and are preſſed with feares and perplexities; therefore they ought to apprehend this *peace of Chriſt*; which hath the chiefe ſeat in the heart: to the end they may continue ſafe and found, yea and may ſtand faſt in the miſt of the ſhakings of this whole world.

Whereas the letter *mem*, placed in the word *Temarbeh*, is cloſe, contrary to the common maner of the writing of the Hebrewes; ſome thinke it ſignifies the bondage wherein the Iewes ſhould bee till the coming of Chriſt. Others thinke that by this ſigne, this people were excluded out of the fellowſhip of the kingdome, becauſe of their diſloyaltie: and for mine owne part I reiect none of theſe expoſitions. But yet can we ſcarcelly affirme that the Prophet wrote thus; notwithstanding becauſe it hath been giuen vs from hand to hand, and that the Rabbines are ſuch diligent obſeruers euen of the leaſt pricke or point, we cannot thinke that this was done vnaduifedly.

If we grant that the Prophet wrote thus of ſet purpoſe, mee thinke it is an aduertisement very profitable to the faithfull, leſt they ſhould imagine that the Kingdome of Chriſt was to flouriſh in outward pompe; alſo leſt hereupon they ſhould forge any carnall triumphs through a vaine hope; but might rather bee aſſured onely amidſt ſo many afflictions, that the Kingdome of Chriſt ſhould grow, no man perceiuing how; becauſe they had a promiſe thereof made vnto them.

Upon the ſtone of *Dauid*. Becauſe the Lord

had promiſed *Dauid* that the redeemer ſhould be borne of his ſeede, and that the kingdome of *Dauid* was nothing but a little ſhadow of a more perfect and happy eſtate which God had determined to eſtabliſh by the hand of his Sonne, the Prophets are accuſtomed to call Chriſt the *Sonne of Dauid*; to the end they might bring the people backe to the remembrance of this ſo memorable miracle. For howſoeuer the name of ſo holy and renowned a King was for iuſt cauſe precious and honourable; yet notwithstanding the faithfull much more eſteemed the promiſe touching the reſtoring of ſaluation which was promiſed vnto *Dauid*; yea and the very remembrance of this prophetic was famous amongſt all; ſo as there was none, no not the ſimpleſt which did not recurrence it, being aſſuredly perſwaded of the truth of it. I will not heape vp together all the teſtimonies wherein the Prophets promiſe the aſſiſted that they ſhall be reſtored in the perſon of *Dauid*, or of his Sonne. For they ſometimes ſay, that *Dauid* ſhould be King, who yet notwithstanding was dead long time before. So *Iſaiah* in this place ſhewes that hee propounds nothing of his owne head, but onely reſtretcheth their memories with the conſideration of that which God had in times paſt promiſed touching the eternitie of this Kingdome. By the way then, hee toucheth that which *Amoſ* had handled more fully; to wit, that the throne of Chriſt which had been ouerthrowne for a time, ſhould be ſet vp againe, *Amoſ* 9. 11.

Ier. 23. 5. & 33. 15.
Ier. 30. 9.
Ezech 34. 23. 24. & 37. 24.
Iſaiah 3. 5.

Iſaiah alſo deſcribes the eſtate of this kingdome, but it is vnder a ſimilitude taken from earthly kingdomes. For he ſaith; that Chriſt ſhall be a King, who ſhall *order and eſtabliſh his kingdome by iudgement and by iuſtice*. Theſe indeede are the two meanes whereby worldly governments doe flouriſh and ſtand ſtedfaſt; which on the contrary doe by and by fall to ruine, when they are governed by violence and tyranny. Therefore in regard that *iuſtice* is an excellent defence and fortrefſe of kingdomes and governments, and that the felicitie of the whole people depends thereupon; the Prophet by this particular teacheth, that the Kingdome of Chriſt ſhall bee an example and paterne of an excellent government.

Iuſtice the fortrefſe of Kingdomes.

But this *iudgement* and *iuſtice* whereof hee here ſpeakes, appertaines not to outward policie; becauſe we muſt hold the proportion which is between the kingdome of Chriſt and the conditions of it. Now it being ſpiritually, it is eſtabliſhed by the power of the holy Ghoſt. Laſtly, all this ought to be referred to the inward man; to wit, when we are regenerate of God to be made truly righteous. The outward iuſtice indeede followes forthwith; but it is neceſſary that this renovation of the ſpirit and heart doe goe before. We are none of Chriſts then vntleſſe wee bee giuen to vprightneſſe and equitie, bearing that righteous in our hearts, which he hath engrauen and fixed there, by his holy Spirit.

Chriſts Kingdome ſpiritual.

We are none of Chriſts vntleſſe we be giuen to vprightneſſe.

Where it is added, *from hence forth*, it ſeemes it ſhould rather be referred to the perpetuity of

of iustice and doctrine, then to the eternitie of the Kingdome; to the end wee should not thinke his lawes resemble those of Kings and Princes, which continue in comparison but three daies, or a very smal time, and are sometimes renewed, that a little while after they should come to nothing; but that wee might know how the vertue and power thereof endures for euer. For they are established as *Zachariah* saith (in his song) that wee might serue God in *holinesse* and *righteousnesse* before him all the daies of our life. For as Christs Kingdome is perpetuall, because himselfe dieth not; so also iustice and iudgement endures for euer, and cannot be changed by any tyme.

Luke. 1. 75.
Rom. 6. 9.

The zeale of the Lord.] By zeale, I vnderstand a burning affection and care which God will manifest in the conseruation of his Church, by removing all difficulties and impediments which otherwise might hinder the deluerance of it. For euen as when wee enterprife some difficult and hard matter, our affection, vehemencie, and ardent desire surmounts all the hinderances which lie in our way to breake off or let our inducours: so *Isaiah* shewes that God will be inflamed with a rare and singular desire to saue his Church, that if the faithfull in their vnderstandings cannot comprehend the promise which hee erewhile made them, yet they should not cease therefore to be of good comfort, because the way and course which God holds, is wonderfull and incomprehensible. Lastly, hee signifies that the Lord will not come with a light and slowe arme to deliuer his Church, for hee will alwaies be inflamed with an inestimable loue which hee beares to his faithfull ones, and with the care of their saluation.

Verf. 8. *The Lord hath sent a word* ^{Or, is fallen.} *to Iacob, and *it hath lighted vpon Israel.*

Here follows a new prophecie. And as I thinke, this Sermon is diuided from the former, because the Prophet speaks now of the future estate of the Kingdome of Israel, which was then aduersarie to the Iewes. Now wee know that the Iewes were terrified with the forces and power of this Kingdome, and not without cause: especially when the Israelites made a league with the Syrians, because the Iewes were too weake to resist their power. Wherefore for the comfort of the faithfull, hee shewes what the estate of the Kingdome of Israel shall be. He takes *Iacob* and *Israel* for one and the same: but this variety hath his elegancie; when hee shewes that the wicked shall gaine nothing by their deuices, in seeking to winde themselues out of Gods iudgements, and to blot out the remembrance thereof. He alludes to the speech of those, who thinke to escape by scoffes and raunts, turning whatsoever the Prophets doe threaten, vnto sport and matter of merriment: as if some wise man would strue to beate backe a tempest, by blowing against it with his mouth. It is a yeelding of the thing vnto them then by way of derision; as if hee

should say, You are of opinion that God will bring euery thing to passe which hee hath threatned, vpon others: but all the menaces which he pronounceth against *Iacob*, shall also fall vpon *Israel*.

The verbe *To send*, is taken, To appoint, or ordaine. The particule *Beth*, signifies, *into Iacob himselfe*. For the word of God must abide and rest there; because it cannot be, that the same should vanish away without his fruite. So then he teacheth that in this place, which he will repeat hereafter in other teatmes, My word shall not returne to me in vaine: Chap. 55. 11. because looke what hee hath once decreed, is neuer published but it fructifieth. For by the word to *fall*, he shewes the certaine effect and euent of the thing: as if he should say, I imagine not, neither doe I foresheew these things out of mine own braine; but it is God which hath spoken, who can neither change, nor be deceiued.

Verf. 9. *And all the people shall know, euen Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, that say in the pride and presumption of their heart.*

By the word *people*, I vnderstand not the Iewes, but rather the Israelites: as also that herewithall the Prophet looseth this knot, by naming *Ephraim* expressly. He addes *Samaria* thereunto, which was the capitall citie of this people, or of ſten Tribes; because the strong and best furnished Cities, which thinke themselues out of all danger, are for the most part much more proud then others. For they thinke by agreeing with the enemy, to be alwaies able to escape out of danger; although all the rest of the Country villages be destroyed. And therefore *Isaiah* threatens, that it also shall be enwrapped in the very same destruction with others. Hee saith also, that all shall feele, that the prophecies which are come out of the mouth of God, shall not be pronounced in vaine. And by the word *To know*, which is to be referred to experience it selfe, hee priuily taxeth their infidelitie; as if hee should say, Because I speake but to deafe eares, and to such as make none account of my admonitions, experience shall make you wise; but yet too late.

Which say.] Heere the Prophet inueighes against the obstinacie and rebellion of this people; who having been chastised many times with the rods of God, and that very sharply, were yet notwithstanding so farre off from repentance, that they hardened their hearts more and more, as if they had been made fat with blowes. Truly those who mocke thus proudly at the Lord, cannot be brought within compasse, till they be wholly ouerwhelmed. Now such a conspiracie doth manifestly prouoke God to anger, and that of set purpose. This is the cause why the Prophet saith, that this proceeds from *pride and presumption*: whence it followes, that it is iust with God to apply to hard and knotie wood, hatchets harder then it,

Verf. 10.

Verſ. 10. *The brickes are fallen, but we will build it With breuen ſtones: the wilde fig trees are cut do vne, but we will change them into Cedars.*

THEſe were the words of the rebellious, and deſpiſers of the calamitie which was befallen them, as though it had bin for their profit; becauſe they take occaſion thereby to decke their houſes and fields the more richly. *We will build more bricely ones* (ſay they.) *The houſes of bricke are fallen,* that we may dwell in excellent palaces. *The trees are cut downe,* but we will *plaine them with more fruitfull ones,* This vice hath not raigned in one age alone; for wee ſee the like obſtinacie euen now in the world. With how many calamities hath Europe been afflicted within theſe foure hundred yeares? with how many ſcourges hath it been called to repentance? and yet notwithstanding wee perceiue not that any one of them hath done it any good; but exceſſe contrariwiſe increaſeth day by day, the voluptuous inflame themſelues, and perſeuer in their vices and wickedneſſe with greater boldneſſe then euer before. In a word, it ſeemes that afflictions are euen prouocations to pride and exceſſe: what muſt we looke for then, but to be broken with harder blowes then any of the former?

Verſ. 11. *Neuertheleſſe, the Lord will raiſe up the aduerſaries of Reſin againſt him, and ſoyne his enemies together.*

BECAUſE the Iſraelites were puffed vp with the confederacie which they had with Syria, and thought that all things ſhould fall out according to their wiſh, *Iſaiah* threatens a ſudden change which ſhould cut off all their hope, and ſhould wholly ouerthrow all their plots. For the Aſſyrians roſe vp ſoone after, and made warre with the Syrians. And *Reſin* being ſlaine, the eſtate of that kingdom was wholly overthrowne. He amplifies the matter when hee addreſſes, *he will gather together.* For his meaning is, that the Lord will aſſemble and mingle diuers enemies together, whom he will ſend to deſtroy the King of Syria; as indeed the army of that great Monarch of the Aſſyrians was compoſed of diuers nations.

Verſ. 12. *Aram before, and the Philiftims behind, and they ſhall deuoure Iſrael: With open mouth: yet for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

THE Prophet ſhewes what this change ſhall be, and what ſhall come to paſſe after the death of *Reſin*, who banded himſelfe with Iſrael againſt Iudah: to wit, that whereas the Syrians were friends to the Iſraelites before, they ſhould preſently after the death of their King, become their enemies, and make

warre vpon them, which alſo came to paſſe. And this is his meaning when he ſaith that Syria ſhall be before. For their expoſition who by Syria, vnderſtand them of the Eaſt; and by the Philiftims them of the Weſt, is not agreeable. The plainest ſenſe is, that the enemies ſhall nouriſh and aſſaile them on all ſides, becauſe thoſe whom they thought to enjoy as faithfull friends, ſhould riſe vp round about them to ouerthrow them. Where he ſaith *before,* and *behind* it answers to the common manner of ſpeech, ſo as we need not ſeek a new or ſtrange expoſition. Let vs learne by this example what it is to put confidence in the power of men, and in confederacies with Princes, and eſpecially when we wax ſecure, being ſnared with vnlawfull bands: for whē the Lord will, thoſe who before were on our ſide, in an inſtant ſhall band themſelues together for our deſtruction: and the remedies which we ſhall take to be profitable, ſhall be hurtfull vnto vs, and ſhall compaſſe vs round *before,* and *behind.* We muſt alſo obſerue, y^e God manifests not his plagues all at once, but when we ruſh againſt him obſtinately, and prouoke him more and more, then he augments and redoubles alſo his blowes, and ſends new chaſtiſements, to the end he may tame and breake our rebellion and ſtubbornes. *With all the mouth,* ſignifies the ſame which wee haue in our common phraſe of ſpeech, With full mouth, as if he ſhould ſay, Iſrael ſhall be expoſed as an open pray vnto his enemies, ſo as he ſhall be deuoured *with open mouth,* as of the Syrians; ſo of the Philiftims.

Yet for all this.] This is a harder ſentence then all the reſt, and ought to haue terrified the vnbeleeuers more then any thing whatſoever. For although they haue ſuſtained many puniſhments, yet are they not at an end: he hath ſtill new rods readie prepared againe for them, becauſe by going on in their rebellion they draw the wrath of God more and more downe vpon them. For men take occaſion to become vterlicke obſtinate and to ouerflow in all euill whiſt they ſuffer but ſome light puniſhment, thinking they ſhall ſuffer no more, and ſo become the more ſtuffenecked. They alſo perſwade themſelues they ſhall be deliuered from the iudgement of God, imagining that all his rods are ſpent or worn, ſo as they giue themſelues the bridle, and ſhake off the yoke, as if they were wholly eſcaped out of his hands. For this cauſe *Iſaiah* threatens that *the hand of the Lord is ſtretched forth ſtill,* that they ſhould not ſuppoſe they were able to eſcape the ſame.

Now he rather vſeth accuſation, then doctrine, although the threatenings tend alſo to this end that the doctrine may be the better vnderſtood. But becauſe he had to deale with deſperate people who had profited nothing at all for any blowes they had received, therefore it is that he ſhewes the end of their calamities is not yet accompliſhed: ſo that although God ſeemed to ceaſe ſtriking for a time, yet notwithstanding he had not ſpent all his ſcourges, but had his hand ſtill ſtretched out to afflict them with a new plague.

The ſtate of Europe.

What it is to put confidence in confederacies.

*Or, gather him, &c.

*Or, Syria.

*Or, with all the mouth.

1 King. 16. 9

2 King. 17. 3

* O., bur yeo. Verſ. 13. * For the people turneth not vnto him that ſmiteth them, neither do they ſecke the Lord of hoſtes.

They expound this as if the Prophet yeelded a reaſon why God ceaſed not to ſtrike them blow vpon blow with new chaſtiſements, to wit, becauſe the people are ſo obſtinate and ſtiffe-necked, that they will not come to an acknowledgment of their faults, nor to amendment. For wherefore ſhould God giue place to the obſtinate, in whom he ſees no repentance? ſo it might ſeeme they were ſtronger then he. This is the cauſe then why he continues to ſmite them more ſharply. And ſeeing Iſrael amended not for any correſtion whatloeuer, his deſtruction was juſt: ſuch was their extreme obſtinacie, that not ſo much as any one of them were moued, or turned any whit, although they had been chaſtiſed and beaten ſo often. This forme of chiding is terrible. For when the Lord not only admoniſheth vs with words, but pricketh vs forward, and conſtraines vs by his works, namely, by diuers chaſtiſements, and yet we remaine obſtinate, not enduring that hee ſhould pluck vs from our wicked delights: is it not a ſigne of a deſperate malice; and can one thinke or ſpeake of a thing more horrible? It is too much when men ſubmit not themſelues to his doctrine as ſoone as it is propounded vnto them: but the ſinne is yet greater when they are not moued by any reprehensions; but greateſt of all is their ſinne when they harden themſelues againſt the rods of God, yea kick and wince, or by their brutiſhnes inflame the wrath of their Iudge more and more againſt them: neuer calling themſelues to account wherefore they are ſmiten, nor what it is to which the Lord thereby calles them. When the remedies then profit nothing, what ſhould we thinke, but that the malice of ſuch is become incurable and paſt all hope of amendment?

Now this reprehension appertaines not to the Iſraelites only, but to vs alſo. For the Lord hath alreadie chaſtiſed all the world in ſuch wiſe by diuers plagues and calamities, that there is almoſt no part thereof free. And yet notwithstanding it ſeemes that all haue obſtinately coſpiied againſt God, in ſo much that albeit he do his vtmoſt, yet they are alwaies like themſelues, neuer ceaſing to goe on ſtill in their leaudnes. The Lord then may juſtly take vp this complaint againſt vs. And the truth is, that he ſpeakes now to vs by his Prophet *Iſaiah*: neither ought we to looke for another Prophet which ſhould threaten new chaſtiſements, ſeeing our caſe diſcreeth in nothing from that of the Iſraelites, being guiltie of the ſame iniquities with them.

When he ſaith, that *they haue not ſought the Lord*, he therein expounds the firſt member of the verſe; for God ſmiteth, to draw ſuch vnto him as recoile back from him. And yet it ſeemes notwithstanding that by this meanes he driues men farre off from his preſence: but becauſe his proprietie is to draw thoſe out of their graues whom we thinke he hath overwhelmed with his chaſtiſements, he hum-

bleth poore ſinners by fearing them only, to the end they ſhould returne vnto him. And truly the beginning of our conuerſion, yea the only rule of good life is, *ſo ſecke God*. If we ſecke any other way, we goe vterlie awrie. But let vs now ſee what it is *ſo ſecke God*, or how we ought to do it. For hypocrites will alwaies alledge this for themſelues, that they carefulie humble theſelues before the Lord to obtaine remiſſion of ſinnes by prayer, faſting, teares, and other outward ſhewes of ſorrow. But God will be ſought farre otherwiſe, to wit, The Sinner being humbled before him in good earnest, muſt willinglie receiue the yoke of obedience which before he had ſhaken off, and whollie imploy himſelfe in his ſeruiſe, whom he before deſpised.

How the Lord will be ſought.

Verſ. 14. Therefore Will the Lord cut off from Iſrael head and taile, branch, and ruſh in one day.

15. The ancient and the honorable man, he is the head: and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the taile.

His meaning is, that the vengeance of God ſhall be vniuerſall, and that it ſhall wrap all eſtates in it: for the whole people was corrupt, and the contagion thereof had ſo invaded the whole countrie, that there was nothing whole nor found amongst them. Now then when impietic hath thus gotten the ſwinge, men begin to flatter themſelues, and euery one thinks to frame goodly excuſes when they haue many to beare them companie; and imagine that they haue ſufficient reaſons to defend themſelues withall, when they make compariſon of themſelues with others. This is the cauſe then why he denounceth this vengeance againſt *all in generall*, becauſe they were all alike infected with a common diſeaſe. By *branch* he vnderſtands the mightie and ſtrong: by *ruſh*, or *riede*, the weakeſt; that is, the people of baſe eſtate, who in a maner had no wealth at all. He ſhewes then, that the wrath of God is readie prepared, which ſhall ſpare neither *weake* nor *ſtrong*, neither *ſmall* nor *great*, becauſe there was none which were pure and cleane from the common contagion of filthineſſe.

But in the next verſe hee expounds that which he ſpake allegorically of *head* and *taile*, plainly and without figure; and ſaith, that the *ancient* and *honorable* which ſwayed the common affaires, and had the managing of the Commonwealthe, are the *heads*: to whom he ioynes the *ſaile* Prophet, which he comprehends vnder the word *taile*. Now he explains both the firſt part of the former verſe, making no mention at all of *branch* and *ruſh*. But wee may yeelde a good reaſon why hee omitted this. For his meaning was to preſſe them chiefly which ſinned moſt, and thereby drew others to ſin alſo by their example, becauſe they were reſpected in regard of their eſtates. Hee brands the Prophets with this name of *taile*, not that they were abiecds and contemptible, as ſome thinke: but his meaning is to expreſſe the loweſt part of the body.

dy. The magistrates and Iudges are in the head or highest ranke, because they are promoted to the chiefest place: he puts the *fisse Prophet* in the *tail*, because they abused the people by their cunning and hypocritie: as it hee compared the one to Lyons or bears, and the others to foxes. We are heere admonished not to sleepe in our vices, although iniquitie raigne in all estates; yea although there should not be a man left that were pure and vpright. For by how much the more wickednesse increaseth, so much the more will the wrath of God bee kindled both against small and great. Which wee ought to take good heed of in this deluge of all mischiefs which wee see at this day; namely, lest when the wrath of God shall once beginne to burne, that all things bee not viterly consumed by it.

Verf. 16. *For the leaders of the people cause them to erre: and they that are led by them are deuoured.*

Others translate, They which blesse thee, or speake blessedly: as if hee should say, There is no greater petillence amongst people then flatteries, which nourish all licentiousnes of dissolutions. But yet I will follow that reading which I haue approued of before; where wee met with the very same word: Chap. 3. 12. Now his meaning is, that the gouernours and magistrates, whose office it was to leade, and hold the people in good order, and in an honest course of life, gaue liberty and licence to all to doe what them listed, suffering them to follow vice and wickednesse; and that in regard thereof, they were worthily esteemed seducers and corrupters: for the corruption flowed from them vpon all the people, as from the head into the members. Magistrates and Pastors are chosen to repress the dissolutions of people; to ordaine that which is good and right; and especially to maintain the honour of God. If they contemne these things, they are rather to bee esteemed impostors then Pastors. because they bring in horrible confusion. And when euery one gouernes as he listeth without any order; what is to be expected but some wofull euent? Where as the people bee so chastised for their offences, wee must not therefore say, that the gouernours should looke for lesse punishment: for they made none account of the charge which was committed vnto them, and in so doing, were the cause of all the e uils.

When hee addes, that those which are led, are deuoured: although by this particule his meaning is to say, that wicked Princes, and those who rule as they list, cannot but bring all things to ruine: as also because the teachers deceiue and abuse the people, in stead of shewing them the right way, because the people perish through their owne default: yet notwithstanding he therewithall shewes, that neither the one nor the other is to be excused: as if the wicked gouernours should serue as a couert for their faults, as commonly men are wont to imagine. For if the blind leade

the blind, as Iesus Christ saith, they shall both fall into the ditch, *Matth. 18. 14.* It being certaine that there was none of them all who was not willingly misled. And therefore those onely who tooke delight to bee deceiued, were deuoured by the wicked and disloyall leaders.

Verf. 17. *Therefore shall the Lord haue no pleasure in their young men, neither will hee haue compassion on their fatherlesse, and of their Widowes; for euery one is an hypocrite, and wicked, and euery mouth speaketh folly: yet for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out.*

* Or, shall not be, &c.

Here *Isaiab* shewes more plainely how horrible this vengeance of God shall be against all estates. So farre off is it that the guilty should saue themselves, that euen children, young men and widowes, shall not escape; although they haue been wont to spare such, and that in the cruellest warres. Which mercy, histories doe shew hath been practised euen by the very heathen at the sacking of Cities. But the Lord shewes heere, that he will haue neither respect to age nor sexe. Although yet another sense will not bee amisse, to wit, that though the battels depriue many women of their husbands, and children of their fathers; yet that God will not cease for all that to chastise both widowes, children, and fatherlesse. But because this sense concerns the principall point very little, I therefore stay not my selfe in it. Now to the end they should not accuse God of crueltie, hee therewithall shewes good cause why hee ought to be thus seuer towards them; because they shall bee found wicked; and therefore worthy to bee equally cast headlong into destruction, and that by a most iust sentence.

Hypocrites.] I minde not to differ from the common opinion touching this word, although *Cananah*, signifies a wicked one, disloyall, & corrupt. For it seemes he toucheth the chief spring and fountaine of all euils; saying, that there was no sparke of the true feare of God amongst them. Hee speaks not of some light dissimulation then, but of an inward contempt which benummeth mens consciences, so as they cannot be moued by any admonitions at all: as if hee should say, They are wholly sunke deepe in their rebellion. But for as much as iniquitie drawes the hands, feete, and other parts of the bodie with it, after it hath once gotten possession of the vnderstanding: therefore the Prophet addes, that they are all wicked. In the third place hee affirms they overflowed so farre, as without blushing to boast of their sins. The word *Abalah*, which some translate *folly*, hath oftentimes a larger signification among the Hebrewes: for it is taken for villanie, wickednesse, and frensie. The Prophet therefore as I thinke, meant to say, that they are so giuen to iniquitie, that there need none other witness to be takē against theē, then their own tongues.

Gen. 34. 7. *Isa. 7. 15.*

Yes for all this &c.] He againe repeates this sentence, which indeed ought often to be repeated, because it sufficeth not to be once instructed how grievous the iudgements of God are against the vngodlie, seeing we easily and quicklie forget them; and thereof it comes that we soone cast off all care and feare. And besides, a false opinion beguiles and blindfolds vs, which is, that after God hath chastised vs only once, we think his power is spent. Wherefore as oft as God corrects vs, it is good we hold vs to this principle, namely, that by y^e first, God threatens vs with a greater calamitie, vnllesse we repent betimes. And seeing the Lord reiterateth this admonition so oft, let vs learne thereby to set it alwaies before our eyes; to wit, that the wrath of God is not yet appealed, although it seemes he hath sharplie corrected mens iniquities. What are we to iudge then when hee giues vs but a fillip and away? as at this day indeed we have been afflicted; but what is it in regard of these extreme calamities wherewith this people were oppressed; and yet the Prophet threatneth that the Lord prepareth new rods for them? What will become of vs then? Truelie the Lord will doe his office, and will alwaies bee like himselfe. If this terror do not awaken vs, our blockishnesse is intollerable. I haue translated the verbe *To burne*, in the time to come; to the end the sense might bee the more cleere: for although he speaks as of a thing past, yet notwithstanding he threatens a continual successioⁿ of punishments to y^e rebellious.

together; to wit, that the chastisements of the wicked did procede from the iudgement of God; and yet that the fault is wholly in the sinners; to the end they might not mutter as if God had dealt cruelly with them. But his manner of speaking hath an elegant degradation: for experience shewes, that when the fire is kindled in any low place, it increaseth by little and little, and then spreads it selfe more and more, euen till it hath attained the top. *Isaiah* shewes that in such wise shall the wrath of God be; because it should not inuade the wicked at the very first, but should kindle by little and little, so as at length it should ouerspread farre and wide. In the beginning, the Lord proceeds moderately: if hee gaine nothing by touching and going, then he doubles his blowes. But if he see vs altogether indurate, then he sets his wrath on fire, vterly to destroy and consume vs, euen as the fire burnes vp a thicke forest. Lastly, as the other Prophets say; Wee shall finde our felues to be but straw and stubble, when the wrath of God is once kindled.

Verf. 19. *By the Wrath of the Lord of hosts shall the land be darkened, and the people shall be as the meate of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.*

HAVING shewed that the cause of all euils proceeds from our felues, to whom they therefore ought to be imputed; hee teacheth by consequence, that God reuengeth himselfe iustly. For seeing men draw miseries and calamities vpon themselves, God permits them not to escape his hands. Not that hee is inclined to crueltye, (for hee is louing and gentle) but because he is iust, and cannot indure the wicked. Hee expresseth the vengeance of God by the similitude of smoke and darkenesse, then which nothing is more heauie and dolefull; because so fearefull a iudgement could not well be expressed, but vnder borrowed speeches. Although it seemes hee alludes to the smoke whereof hee had spoken before. For when a fire is growne to such greatnesse, and burnes so on euery side, the brightnesse must needes be obscured by the darknesse of the smoke.

No man shall spare his brother.] In this last particule, and in the verse following, the Prophet describes by what meanes the Lord will execute his wrath after it shall bee so inflamed. For though wee discern no enenies which might astonish vs, God can arme one of vs against another to destroy our felues. As if he should haue said, that God will not be much to seeke in bringing his vengeance vpon you which he hath threatned; because although others should let you alone, & not molest you, ye the can overthrow you eue by ciuill warres. Now it is an horrible thing and monstrous to say, that none should spare his brother: and that euery one shall deuoure his flesh. For a man neuer hated his owne flesh: *Ephes. 5. 19*. But when God hath blinded vs, what letteth that wee should not destroy one another? And although this bee odious, yet

The first stroke God giues vs is a fore-unner of a greater, vnllesse we preuent the same by timely repentance. See *Leuit. 26. 18. 21. 24. 28.*

*Or, vabehic.

Verf. 18. *For wickednesse burneth as a fire; it deuoureth the briars and the thornes, and will kindle in the thicke places of the forest: and they shall mount vp like the lifting vp of smoke.*

THE Prophet taxeth the wicked, who make a trade of discharging themselves of their faults, to lay them vpon God. For either they seeke starting holes by perswading themselves that they are innocent, or they extenuate their sinnes, if they be conuined; as if God were too rigorous. And the truth is, that they will neuer confesse God to bee iust in correcting them, vnllesse it bee by constraint: and albeit they dare not excuse themselves openly, yet they fiet and grumble inwardly. The Prophet minding to repress such a stubbornnes, compares the calamities to a fire; but hee adds, that the impietie of men is the wood and fell which kindles Gods wrath: as if he should say, They all of them cry out and complain that the wrath of God burnes fiercely, and yet they consider not in the meane while, that they kindle and enflame the same by their sinnes, as with bellows, and that these sinnes doe adde new matter daily to this fire: yea euen they themselves burne and consume inwardly in the fire of their iniquities.

That which he saith of the *briars and thornes*, is as much as if hee had said; that this flame should spread it selfe throughout all the quarters of Iudea. Now he expresseth two things

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Chap 33. 11
Chap. 5. 24.
Psal. 83. 14.
Chap. 40.
24. & 41.
2. & 47. 14

Gen. 1. 27.
 & 9. 6.

it comes to paſſe every day. There is neither conjunction of blood, nor of religion, nor of the image of God, which we all beare, that can hold vs in, although euen the very heathen ſometimes deferred to do euill, being bound with nothing elſe but the common band of naturall ſocietic, becauſe they knew that the beaſts themſelues agree together, taking knowledge of one another, not exerciſing crueltie to any of their owne kinde: for one Wolfe will not eate another, neither one Beare another. It is much againſt nature then that men, from whom the name of humane proceeds, ſhould be ſo cruell, as to eate one another; therein ſurpaſſing the rage of wilde beaſts. This euill then can not fall out but by reaſon that God hath blinded them, and giuen them vp vnto a reprobate ſenſe: for when as men are in peace, they thinke themſelues free from all dangers, and feare nothing. But the Lord derides ſuch ſecurity, and thewes, that he will execute his wrath vpon them, euen *by their owne hands*, which he wil arme and prouoke againſt them.

Verſ. 20. *And he ſhall ſnatch at the right hand, and be hungrie; and he ſhall eate on the left hand, and ſhall not be ſatiſfied: every one ſhall eate the fleſh of his owne arme.*

This is a common ſpeech, To pull and hale on all ſides: and this phraſe ſets forth an inſatiable or cruell auarice. Alſo this deſire of *ſnatching* prickes men forwards vnto crueltie. Now he expreſſeth their inſatiable deſire with greater vehemencie, in that being prouoked by a blinde crueltie, & poſſeſſed with more then a brutiſh furie, their teeth alſo ſhall be ſet on edge with no leſſe appetite to ſuck the blood of their brethren, then to eate the fleſh that is bought in the ſhambles. This circumſtance greedly aggravates the ſharptnes of the vengeance, to wit, that the children of *Abraham*, and the holic poſteritie of the choſen people ſhould ouerflow into ſo horrible a rage. Let vs remember then that it is a token of a fearefull puniſhment of God when brechten band themſelues one a-

A ſigne of ſome fearefull puniſhment enſuing, when brethren bite and teare one another.

gainſt another, with a furious deſire or luſt to teare one another in pieces.

Verſ. 21. *Manaſſeh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manaſſeh, and they both ſhall be againſt Iudah: yet for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

THEſe two Tribes were ſpeciallie linked together, for beſides that they deſcended of one father *Abraham*; there was yet a neerer conjunction, in that they tooke their originall of one Patriarke *Joſeph*, *Abrahams* great grand-child. Now although they were ſo neere allied, yet notwithstanding God ſhewes that he will cauſe them to haue ſuch conflicts together, that they ſhall deſtroy each other, euen as if they ſhould *deuoure the fleſh of their owne arme*; in regard whereof, they ſhould neede no ſortene enenies. He addes alſo, that when *Manaſſeh* and *Ephraim* haue wearied themſelues in fight, both of them ſhall ioyne together and let vpon *Iuda* to deſtroy them alſo.

Yet his wrath.] If any man ſhall ponder in his mind what calamities *Iſaiah* hath ſet forth; he will, I doubt not, be aſtoniſhed, and wonder very much in himſelfe to ſee that he yet denounceth ſharper puniſhments then the former. But the Lord deales thus with the wicked, neuer ceaſing to afflicte them, till he hath whollie ouerwhelmed and rooted them out, becauſe they hauing been often ſummoned to repentance haue reſuſed, and *ſtill reſuſe* to be reconciled vnto him. We are not therefore to maruell if plagues after plagues be heaped vpon them, as is alſo declared by *Moſes*, namely, that he wil yet ſend ſeuene times more puniſhments vpon thoſe which would not come to repentence, leſt they ſhould imagine that after they had been chaſtiſed once or twiſe, all their puniſhments were then at an end. Now when he ſaith, that the *hand of God is ſtretched forth ſtill*, he means, that new rods are ſtill in making, which he hath in a readineſſe to ſmite them withall: for the Lords anger is not like to that of women; but his correſtions and wrath go both together.

Gen. 41. 50

Leuit. 25. 18
 21.

THE X. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Woe vnto them that decree wicked decrees, and write grieuous things.*



Lsaiah now preſſeth y people ſomewhat ncerer to the quick, as he hath done in the firſt and ſecond Chapters, to the end they might perceiue y they were iuſtly afflicted. For men will neuer confeſſe they haue deſerued the paines which they indure, vnleſſe they

be conſtreined therunto, and manifeſtly conuincid. Now although they were ſufficiently conuincid euen by the former teſtimonies, yet was it needfull to ſpecific thoſe things againe, by which their hypocriſie might be diſcouered. For men are ſo impudent, that they thinke themſelues ſafe if they can frame ſome excuſe, and in the meane while blaſpheme God wittingly. He handled them not too ſharply, neither did he exceed meaſure in acuiſing them, no, though in deſpight of them he ſtopped their mouths, ſeeing they were come to ſuch an impudencie.

Psal. 7. 14.

Chap. 1. 10.

22. 33.

Auen and *Amal* are oftentimes conioined together in the scriptures. *Auen* signifies vanitie, and iniquitie; but the latter signification agrees best to this place. *Amal* is as much to say as vexation; and oftentimes that which is the very cause of it, to wit, the wrong or oppression which the rich and mightie oppress the poore and weake withall, abusing them by their power and authoritie. For euen as he hath heretofore shewed that the well-spring of an euill life proceeds from the gouerners themselves, so he now placeth their ill example in the first ranke, to the end they might receiue due punishment for the wickednesses wherof themselves were the cause. Which we ought diligentlie to obserue, because such as are promoted vnto the highest rooms, thinke they are then freed from the common condition of men, so as they ought to yeeld none account of their doings vnto God. Therefore hee shewes that they shall haue this priuiledge before others, euen to be first chastised. Whereas some establish here two orders; and distinguish betwene makers of decrees, and those that vniue them: I approue not of it. For in general, without any distinction at all, he taxeth such Princes and magistrates as oppressed the people in such wise, by their vnjust and tyrannicall decrees, that their gouernement tended wholly to plaine theuery. He therefore comprehends all sorts of gouernours and superiours.

Verse. 2. To keepe backe the poore from iudgement, and to take away the iudgement of the poore of my people, that widowes may bee their pray, and that they may spoile the fatherlesse.

TO keepe backe. Others translate, To cause them to turne from: but the true sense is, To keepe backe the poore from defending their quarrellor. To make them lose their suite. This is the iniquitie and oppression which hee mentioned in the former verse; to wit, that they plucked from the poore that right which belonged vnto them. They were defrauded that the rich might be gratified; and being vtterly spoiled of their luings, they carried nothing away with them from the seate of iustice, but taunts and reproches. Now hee names the poore chiefly, because they are lightly destitute both of mony and other helps. Whereas the Iudges and Magistrates then ought to haue aided them before the rest; they on the contrary rooke the greater liberty to oppress and tread them vnder foote with greater inuicacie. For those who haue most riches, friends, credit, and fauour, are not so liable to oppression; because they haue weapons in their fists wherewith they may both defend and reuenge themselves. But the Lord saith, hee hath a singular respect vnto the poore, which yet notwithstanding are for the most part despised: yea hee so regards them, that hee will not suffer the wrongs and iniuries which haue beene done vnto them to remaine unpunished. For he hath not taken vp, on him the title of the protector and defen-

der of the poore for nothing. In him it is then that the poore and weake ought to seek consolation; and therefore to endure their troubles and miseries patiently, because God hath care ouer them, and will not suffer the harme that is done them to goe vnrueged.

The rich and mightie are heere also admonished, that they therefore laugh not in their sleeue, although God deferre their punishment: for bee it that the poore be left destitute of their right through iniustice; yet the Lord will iudge their cause, and take the maintenance of their right into his hands, who were thought to bee destitute of all helpe.

Verse. 3. What will yee doe now in the day of visitation, and of destruction, which shall come from farre? to whom will ye flee for helpe? and where will ye leaue your glory?

*Or, where will yee be safe.

THE Prophet doth heere sharply threaten the Princes that slept securely in their sinne. For it is the common custome of such, who are drunken with their greatnesse, proudly to despise al danger. He shewes then, that although God seeme for a while to deferre and winke at their doings; yet notwithstanding the time of his iudgement is prescribed, and shall speedily knocke at their doores ere they be aware. And because they were growne secure by reason of the victorie ouer their enemies; as also because they were backed by the league which they had made with a most puissant nation; therefore the Prophet expressly telles them, that their destruction shall come from farre.

The word *visitation* is taken here for iudgement; because God also visits vs two waies: in mercy and iudgement. For he reueales and manifests himselfe and his power vnto vs in them both. First, when in taking pittie vpon vs, he deliuers vs out of the dangers wherein we are plunged. And secondly, when he roots out the wicked, and contemners of his word. The two significations tend to one end; because God manifests not himselfe vnto vs, but by his workes; and we thinke hee hath forsaken vs, vnlesse hee giues vs some signe of his presence. The Scripture applies this word *visitation* then to our capacite, because when wee are pressed with afflictions, and the wicked in the meane while let loose the bridle to all dissolutions, it seemes to vs that God is farre off from vs, and that he takes no care of our matters.

In what sense this word visitation is taken generally.

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Visitation therefore in this place must bee taken for iudgement; by which God will take the wicked by the necke, so as they shall not escape him: also that he will oppose himselfe against their boldnesse and rebellion.

And how it is taken in this place.

Now if there be such horrible iudgements of God heere in this world, how fearefull and terrible will he be when he shall come at the last to iudge all men? For all the examples of chastisements, which now astonish and amaze vs, are but small beginnings of that last vengeance, wherein hee will thunder vpon the

the

The weakest goes alway to the wall.

The Lord hath taken the protectiō of the poore into his own hands.

Exod. 22. 23

Deut. 15. 9.

Chap. 24. 15.

Psal. 68. 6.

the reprobate: and hee alſo referres and deſerres many things which hee ſeemes to paſſe ouer in ſilence, euen of ſet purpoſe vntil that day. And if the wicked be not able to beare the blowes wherewith he ſmiteth them here below; how much leſſe well they be able to ſuſtaine his fearefull and incomprehenſible Maieſtie, when they muſt come before his tribunall ſeate of glory, at whoſe preſence euen the very Angels are aſtoniſhed?

When he ſaith, *from ſarre*; note that wee ought not to waxe ſenſeleſſe whe' proſperitie abounds: for all ſuch as extenuate the power of God by a falſe ſecuritie, which rockes them aſleepe in their vices, ſhall feele, that in an inſtant he can, and alſo when he will, ſhake both heauen and earth, euen from the one end thereof to the other.

To whom will ye flee? He ſhewes how they ſhall reſt vpon their forces in vaine, becauſe they ſhall auail them nothing at all to reſiſt the hand of God. He alſo ſhewes, that as they haue been cruell towards others, ſo it ſhould be a moſt iuſt recompence, that in their need they ſhould finde ſuccor neither from God nor man: for there ſhall be iudgement without mercie vnto thoſe that ſhew no mercie, lam. 2. 13. This ſhall happen eſpeciallie to the Iudges, who ought to haue been a refuge for the whole people, becauſe it is their office to defend and maintaine the poore and afflicted: but if in ſtead thereof they deſpiſe, betray, or ſpoile the; is it not good reaſon they ſhould feele how much their crueltie diſpleaſeth God, & that eu' in their own deſtruction?

As touching that which follows, *Where will ye leaue your glorie?* The expoſitors take it as if Iſaiab ſhould ſay, that they ſhall be deprived of their dignitie. And they thinke the Prophet in deriſion asks what ſhall become of this their high preheminance, wherewith the great ones haue no leſſe proudly then fooliſhlie aduanced themſelues, when God ſuffered them to take their pleaſure? But becauſe this would be too much conſtrained, I rather thinke that Iſaiab inquires where they will finde hiding places to ſecure their glory. And in this ſenſe I take the word, *To leaue*, namely, To put in ſafetie: and the two particles answers therunto, *To whom will you flee for ſuccor?* Where will you finde refuge that you may hide your excellencie? Vnleſſe any had rather retain the expoſition which I haue put in the margin, becauſe the verbe *Azab* ſignifies, To aſſure, as well as To leaue. To conclude, if God confound and overthrow Princes in this wiſe, that are ſo high exalted, what ſhall become of thoſe that are of baſe condition? There is none then that hath any cauſe to flatter himſelfe: for wee muſt needs become all as ſtubble, when the wrath of God ſhall be kindled againſt vs.

Psal. 83. 14.
15.

* Or, if they fall out.

Verſ. 4. * *Without me they ſhal fall among the boord, they ſhall fall among the ſlaine: yet for all this his wrath is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

BEcauſe the ſignification of the Hebrew particle is ambiguous, the expoſitors

bring many interpretations. Some take it excluſiueſly, as in many other texts of the ſcripture, euen as if he ſhould ſay, They ſhall only fall among the priſoners and ſlaine, becauſe they ſhall be led captiue, or put to death. Others tranſlate, *Without me*: and if this reading agree, the Prophet ſhewes what the cauſe of their deſtruction is, to wit, they are reuolted from God: and this is the cauſe indeed of all euils, namely, to leaue the fountaine of life, of ſaluation, and ſo conſequentely, of all good things. And thus he toucheth the ſottihnes of the wicked to the quick, who thought themſelues ioly fellows when they had forſaken the Lord; euen as if there could not haue befallen them a more deſireable and pleaſant thing, then to be ſeparate ſarre enough from him: and thus it ſhould be a kind of bitter reproch in regard their calamitie ſhould proceed from no other cauſe then from the abſence of God, whereof they ſondlie reioyced. Others thinke this ſhould be a broken or an abrupt wayner of ſpeech, to wit, that they ſhould haue no refuge but in hiding themſelues vnder them that were fallen and ſlaine. And alſo it may be a forme of an oth. Now this ſenſe will agree well, that God ſhould ſwear with indignation that he would not pardon one of them, but would deliuer ſome ouer to their enemies, who ſhould cut their throates; and would cauſe others to be led into captiuitie. This ſentence then ſheweth what deſtruction ſhall befall all thoſe who being admoniſhed by the word of God, repent not. We alſo gather from the text following, that the Prophet threatens them with a fearefull deſtruction; for he repeats that which he hath ſaid alreadie, to wit, that *the wrath of God is not yet appeaſed*, and that he will finde out greater chaſtiſements then the former, to auenge himſelfe vpon them. This teacheth vs, that there is nothing better then to be touched with true repentance, and in good earneſt to acknowledge our faults betimes, to the end the Lord may ſhew vs mercie.

Verſ. 5. *O Aſſur the rod of my wrath! the ſtaffe alſo in their hands is mine indignation.*

THat which now follows hath ſuch reference to the denunciation of puniſhment, that yet there is alſo mingled therewithall ſome conſolation to ſweeten the troubles of the faithfull; yea, the ſpeciall drift of the ſpeech is to ſhew, that all the euil which the Aſſyrians ſhall do them is but a ſcourge ſent of God for a time only; and yet after the wicked ſhall haue triumphed with ioy aboue meaſure, it muſt needs come to paſſe that they ſhall be tamed in the end. The Hebrew word *Hoi*, ſometimes ſignifies a bitter exclamation. Sometimes it is taken as an aduerb of calling; and ſometimes alſo it ſignifies a woe, as indeed the old tranſlator hath turned it: yet it may not be otherwiſe expounded heere, but as if the Lord called the Aſſyrians; or ſpeakes as a man ſighing in

himselfe, that he is constrained to chastise his people by them.

And yet while I consider better of euery circumstance, I rather condescend to this opinion; namely, that the Lord calles the Assyrians heere, as if hee armed them by his edict to make warre. He told the Iewes before that they should come: but hypocrits are so senselesse, that they are neuer touched with any feare of God, but when they see his plagues; or rather indeed till they feele them. This is the cause therefore why he now saith, Come: as if the Iudge should call for the executioner, and command him to binde the malefactor; or rather to cut off his head. Thus the Lord calles the Assyrians, to the end he might execute his vengeance by their hands.

Also the staffe. This may be referred to the Assyrians, and we may resolve it as if it should be a repetition of the same speech, the words onely being a litle changed. And yet I so distinguish them; that the Assyrians are called the *staffe of Gods wrath*; moreover, that the swords and weapons wherewith they were furnished, are nothing else but the wrath of God himselfe: as if the Prophet should say, God serues himselfe (as it pleaseth him) of the Assyrians, euen as offwords to execute his vengeance withall. Lastly, that they are no otherwise to be feared, but so far forth as God shal display his wrath by their meanes towards the Iewes, although they be furnished with munition. In a word, he shewes that all the force of the enemies shall proceede from the *wrath of God*, who by a secret instinct shall driue them forward to ouerthrowe this people: for otherwise they could not haue moued so much as one of their fingers. God also pronounceth, that the *staffe* which the Assyrian beareth, is his indignation; to the end the Iewes might know that the assaults and indeauours of the enemies were governed by his prouidence. For I approve not that which others translate, in the place, or, in their region: both are too much constrained. To be short, the Lord calles the Assyrians as executioners of his vengeance, to the end hee may punish the sinnes of his people by their hands; and protests, that whatlocuer they hold in their hands, is his indignation.

Now this doctrine hath two vses. First, to terrifie the wicked, and that they might know how God threatens not to roote them out in vaine: as also he shewes how hee will punish them. Which serues much for the awaking of the vnfaithfull, who mocked at all these sermons and threatnings of the Prophet. Moreover, this doctrine was not a litle profitable, when the people beganne to be afflicted by the Assyrians. For then they easily perceived that that which the Prophets had foretold, was not spoken in vaine, neither came it to passe at aduenture. But some wil here ask, why he now calls him the *staffe of his indignation*, seeing he said before, that the Assyrian was the *rod* of his wrath? For one would thinke hee should speake thus, The Assyrian is my wrath, and the *staffe* which he beares is mine indignation. But we are not curiously to stand vpon the word, seeing wee vnderstand the Pro-

phets meaning. Now he calles men the *staffe of Gods wrath*, because he serues himselfe of them as of a *staffe*: he saith, that the weapons of men are the *wrath of God*, because they are not handled at the pleasure of those which beare them, but are testimonies of Gods wrath.

The Prophet then hath spoken aptly, to the end we should not thinke the wicked are carried away with the rains in their necke, whither their appetite shall leade them: but are slaid and held short, so as they can doe nothing at all without the will of God. From hence we may gather, that God works by the hands euen of the wicked. But wee must be wise according to sobriety, and speake modestly herein: for we ought wisely and iudicially to distinguish betwene the worke of God, and the actions of men. God then works and serues his turne of men three waies. First, in respect that all of vs haue our being and doe moue by him: whence it followes, that all our actions proceed from his power. Secondly, he driues forward, and bowes the wicked by a particular meane, whither it pleaseth him: and although they thinke nothing at all thereon, yet doth hee serue himselfe of them, to the end they may kill and destroy one another; or to the end hee may chastise his people by their hand: and of this kinde doth the Prophet speake in this place. Thirdly, when hee gouernes his elect by the spirit of sanctification, which is peculiar to his chosen onely. Wherefore, bee it that tyrants, spoilers, or others molest vs, bee it that strangers lift themselves vp against vs; yet in the midst of all these contused garboiles, full of all vexations, wee must lift vp our eyes to the hand of God, neuer imagining that any thing fallles out by chance.

Vers. 6. *I will send him to a dissembling nation, and I will giue him a charge against the people of my wrath to take the spoile, and to take the pray, and to tread them under feete, like the mire in the streetes.*

HE goes on still with the former sentence, wherein hee called *Assur* the rod of Gods wrath. For euen as a father takes not the rod in hand for nothing, but determines to correct his child: so the Prophet shewes that the rod of the Lord shall not walke at random; but is ordained and appointed to chastise this wicked and vnthankfull people. He calles them a *dissembling* or froward nation; because there was no vprightnesse nor sinceritie in them: so then, dissimulation is opposed to integrity, which is the beginning of all vertues: as contrariwise, hypocrisie is the mother of all vices. Moreover, hee accuseth not the Israelites lightly heere, but reprocheth them with a thing more execrable then any other. And therefore he presently after calles them *the people of his indignation*. As elsewhere hee saith, that the Idumeans are the people of his curse, Chap. 34. 5. But albeit

How God is said to worke by men.

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hee declares that hee is angrie againſt the Iewes, yet the mince of the Hebrew phraſe hath a farre greater weight; for it imports as much as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, that this people is deſtinate to perdition, becauſe there is nothing elſe in them but matter of wrath. It is certaine that God is neuer angrie, vnleſſe he be prouoked thereunto by our wickednes; but when impietie is come to the higheſt degree, then his vnappeaſable wrath and *inſignation* burneth. Thus he takes away all hope of reconciliation from the hypocrites and contemners, who ceaſed not to heape ſinne vpon ſinne.

Afterwards it is ſaid, he gaue the reins to the rage of the enemies, that they ſhould deuoure and ouerflow into all kinds of *pilling* and *exorſions*. And yet we muſt not take this as if becauſe the Aſſyrians had commandement from God, they might therefore excuſe themſelues: for God commands after two ſorts, to wit, by his ſecret counſell, whereof men haue no knowledge: ſecondly, he commands by his law, which we ought chiefly to haue regard vnto; that ſo we may anſwere a companie of fantaſtical ſpirits, who diſpute prophanely of the counſell of God, whē they will excuſe their owne and others impietie.

Wee muſt then wiſely diſtinguiſh betwene theſe two ſorts of commandements: for ſeeing the Lord declares his will in his law, I ought not to mount vp to his ſecret counſell which he hath hidden from me, but ought rather to bring my ſelfe ſimplic vnder his obedience. If any ſhall alledge that he obeyes God when he plungeth himſelfe into diſſolutions, he is a lyar, and accuſeth God in vaine to be the author of his wickedneſſes, whet eoſ his owne heart knowes himſelfe to be guilty, for in this reſpect there needs none other witneſſe, but euery mans owne confidence. I grant that God ſerues his turne of the wicked, but ſe wicked haue no purpoſe therein to ſerue God. Therefore when he works by the wicked and reprobate; it is a thing accidental in regard of men: for they haue no intent of ſeruing his will, neither haue they any will thereunto. If therefore they take this pretext, they may be eaſily conuincid as vtter rebels againſt God, ſeeing they only do that which pleaſeth themſelues: for they haue the expreſſe will of God in his law, ſo as they ſeeke it in vaine any where elſe. In regard of them then, they do not the worke of God, but the diuels, becauſe they ſerue their owne luſts. It is certaine that the Aſſyrians did not ſo much as looke for any reward for their paines at Gods hands, but were caried away with their luſts, ambition, and auarice: in the meane while the Lord ordered their endeuors and counſels to another end, which was to them vtterlie vnknowne. Now the ſumme of this place is, that a rare and extraordinary teſtimonie of Gods vengeance ſhould be maniſteſted, when the Aſſyrians ſhould ouerflow with a furious licentiousnes, becauſe they ſhould be ſent of God not to deale mildlie or moderateli with his people, but to pill and ſack them as in open warre. He addeth alſo *To be trod vnder ſeet*, which is the vttermoſt of

all rage, for what can men do more then with thame and contempt to ſtamp them *vnder ſeete* whom they haue vanquished?

Verſ. 7. *But he thinketh not ſo, neither doth his heart ſeem: it ſo: but he imagineth to cut off, and deſtroy not a few nations.*

BECAUSE the wicked doe trouble the consciences of the weake by caſting out the ſome of their rage, as if God had not the power to hold their hereceniſſe and furie ſhort; the Prophet presents this betimes, and exhorts the faithfull to know, that they are iuſtly afflicted by a ſecret iudgement of God, although the wicked ouerflow into all diſſolution. So then he ſhewes that which we touched erewhile, namely, that the Aſſyrians ſhall mude nothing leſſe then to ſerue God, and to be executioners of his vengeance: but we ſhall ſee by and by to what end they did it. For ſome might obiect thus: Thou art the Ambaſſador of God, why doeſt thou menace vs with the Aſſyrians? As if belke this furious beaſt would yeeld obedience to the commandement of God. To this he anſwereth, that God is ſuch a wonderful worke-man, that he knoweth how to draw thoſe to do him ſeruiſe, who thinke nothing at all thereon, or which otherwiſe would not obey him. *Although (ſaith he) thou their endeuors and counſels ſend whollie to another end, yet nothing ſhall hinder God, that euen by them he ſhould not execute and fulfill that which he hath ordeined.* For many might replie: What a prepoſterous courſe is this? Will God ſubiect his choſen people to profane nations? There is no equite at all in it, that our eſtate (be we ſinners as we are, in the higheſt degree) ſhould be made worſe then ſe condition of theeues, who by their wickednes and impietie had deſerued a moſt ſeuere puniſhment. The Prophet declareth then that the Aſſyrians ſhould haue their turne alſo, and ſhould be iuſtly puniſhed in their time: and yet ought no man to thinke it ſtrange if they afflict, pill, deuoure, & maſſacre others, ſeeing they ſhould not want their recompence.

Besides, the Prophet comforts the faithfull, and aſſwageth their trouble and perplexitie; ſhewing that God holds the pride of theſe wicked ones ſhort, leſt they ſhould exerciſe whatſoeuer pleaſed them. He teacheth then, that howfoeuer the wicked furiouslie rage, that God notwithstanding moderates his owne iudgements from heauen, ſo as he rakes a ſpeciall charge of the ſaluation of his Church. And therefore although that *Aſhur* be inflamed as a cruell beaſt after his pray, yet he commands the faithfull to liſt vp their eyes vnto God, whoſe counſell is farre remote from this blind furie of the enemy.

Verſ. 8. *For hee ſaith, Are not my Princes altogether Kings?*

THE Prophet ſhewes the cauſe why the Aſſyrian will not thinke himſelfe to be the

Obiect.

Anſ.

We muſt diſtinguiſh betwene Gods ſecret, and reuealed will.

Obiect.

Anſ.

The wicked do Gods will, yet it is not with a minde to ſerue him, but their owne luſts.

rod of God; namely, because hee was so blinded with pride, that he acknowledged not any power about his owne. Neither can it otherwise be, that those should in any sort submit themselves vnder the providence of God, who resting vpon their greatnesse, attribute this and that vnto their owne forces. For then are wee said to giue the chiefe dominion vnto God, when we beleue that it is vnpossible to moue the least finger without his will. Contrariwise, whosoeuer thinks himselfe to haue any power of his owne, hee vsurpes Gods power vnto himselfe, with a pride full of sacrilege: as in this place the Prophet describes the insolencie of a profane King in lincly colours, who proudly vaunted as one hauing all things. This especially happens to great Princes; for they are so blinded with abundance of riches, munition, and power, that they hardly can be brought to thinke themselves men. Of which wee haue too much experience: for what Prince shall we see at this day, who thinks or remembers that he is a man, and subiect to the miseries of this present life? They are so carried away with giddinesse of spirit, that they thinke to attaine to the top of whatsoever they haue determined by and by, and that in despite of all impediments whatsoever.

Verf. 9. *Is not Calno as Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria as Damascus?*

Heere hee names certaine Cities, although others affirme that they are regions. Notwithstanding it is more probable that they were Cities, or some strong places. *Shall it not happen* (saith he) *alike to the places which I haue not yet subdued, as to these which haue resisted me?* He compares Calno, Arpad, and Samaria (which he vanquished afterward) to Carchemish, Hamath, and Damascus, which hee had vanquished before, and saith, that these should not be stronger then they. Thus haue the wicked been wont to boast and glory in their deeds past; so as they thinke to breake thorow all impediments, as if nothing were able to hinder their counsels and enterprises: and which is yet worse, they thinke to come to the end of all things in despite of God himselfe, and without his knowledge. When we reade this historie, let vs learne not to be proud if wee haue been strong at some time, or if all things haue fallen out according to our wish. For he who hath exalted vs, can quickly also abase and cast vs downe. And if hee reprocheth the Assyrian for his ouer weening, how much more ought they to be reprobued, who attribute the praise of holinesse and righteousness vnto themselves, as if they could regenerate themselves by their owne proper vertue? For wee need not doubt but such do rob God of his honor, and take that to themselves which is proper vnto him.

Verf. 10. *Like as mine hand hath found the kingdomes of the idols, seeing*

their idols were about Ierusalem, and about Samaria:

11. *Shall not I, as I haue done to Samaria, and to the idols thereof; so doe to Ierusalem, and to the idols thereof?*

Heere pride ouerflows his banks yet further: for the Assyrian not onely exalts himselfe against men, but euen against God also: yea, against the gods which he worshipped. He boasteth that the gods vnder whose protection other nations were; could not let him that he should not subdue them, and that the God of Ierusalem and Samaria should resist him no more then the former. For infidels are so full of pride, that attributing the victories which they get, to their owne forces, they make no bones to exalt themselves against God and all diuine power. They make faire shewes indeed, as if they stood in some awe of their gods; that is to say, of the idols which themselves haue forged; to whom they bow and offer sacrifice; whereby they seeme to confesse, that they hold all their victories of these treen gods: but by and by they offer incense and sacrifice to their owne nets, (as Habacuck saith, speaking of Nebuchadnezzar) Abac. 1. 16. when they brag and glory themselves in their goodly acts, counsels, prudence and industrie. For then they discover their hypocrisie, then they lay open their secret thoughts, which were hidden before vnder these close sayings: which wee may easily discerne, when they suddenly take that to themselves, which before they seemed to attribute to their god. Wee neede not wonder then if Senacherib exalted himselfe about all that is called God; for such is the fruite of impietie.

Now there is heere a double blasphemie. First, in that hee aduanceth himselfe about God, *thinkeing himselfe stronger then hee*. Besides, in that hee matcheth the true God with the false. Hee shewed his impietie more then enough, when he exalted himselfe about idols; for although idols be nothing; yet in regard that the worshippers of them attribute a certaine vertue and diuinitie vnto them; if they lift vp themselves against such forged gods, they shew themselves contemners of all diuine power. Their owne conscience then witnesseth against them, that they bid open defiance to God; neither is there any ignorance which can excuse them, because they perswade themselves that God is inclosed in their images. For be it that this tyrant derided Apollo, or Iupiter; it is certaine that he despised them not simply as idols; but as hauing some diuinitie in them. The other blasphemie of this tyrant was, that hee placed the living God in the ranke of the counterfet gods of the heathen; and was so bold and presumptuous to exalt himselfe against him, as well as against other gods, and to despise the confidence of Israel, as if the vertue and power of God ought not to be esteemed greater then that of the idols.

Idolaters reuerence their owne idols but in shew onely.

Idolaters shew themselves contemners of all diuine power, in contemning the gods which themselves haue forged.

We must be ware how we waxe proud of our good successes,

For he that hath exalted vs, can soone deiekt vs.

Verſ. 12. *But when the Lord hath accompliſhed all his worke upon Mount Zion and Ieruſalem, I will viſit the fruit of the proud heart of the King of Aſhur, and his glorious and proud looks.*

Hitherto the Prophet hath ſhewed vs what the pride of the Aſſyrian ſhould be, after he had overcome Iſrael: but now he declares what ſhould befall *the Aſſyrian himſelfe*, and what the counſell of the Lord ſhall be againſt him. The vnbelieuers doe all things as if God were not in heauen, or were not able to breake all their enterpriſes. For what meane theſe haughty and proud wordes elſe; *My hand hath found the kingdomes of the idles*; but that he thought to exalt himſelfe about all gods? But God oppoſeth himſelfe here againſt his indevours; ſo that hauing once ſerued his turne of him, hee will alſo puniſh him. This ſentence contains two members: firſt, *Iſaiah* ſhewes that God will frame a puniſhment for this wicked and miſdell King. Secondly, he ſhewes that the time thereof is not yet come; to the end the faithfull might wait for it with patience.

Now hee teſtifies, that the fit time to bring this to paſſe is, *after* God ſhall haue chaſtiſed the finnes of his Church: as if the Father of a familie would firſt quiet the ſturres which are bred in his owne houſe. This is the drift of this counſell; to wit, that the faithfull ſhould not waxe out of heare, though they ſaw this curſed tyrant to triumph in this ſort, neither yet to deſpaire of their deliuerance, as if there were no means at all to bridle his furie. In a word, God promiſeth, that after he ſhall haue permitted the Aſſyrian to exalt himſelfe beyond meaſure, yet that he will execute iuſtice in the end. Secondly, that it is his office to abate the pride of fleſh, which is ioyned with ſuch an execrable ſacrilege. And therefore the particle *ſur*, hath great weight; as if hee ſhould ſay, that the haughtineſſe wherinto the Aſſyrian is exalted, ſhall bee no let why the Lord ſhould not pull it downe well enough.

He takes the *fruit* by way of ſimilitude, becauſe the wicked thinke themſelues bleſſed when they are ſwollen with pride and outrage, euen as if they gathered ſome fruit. He placeth the *heart* firſt, which is the ſeate of pride, which being ſtuffed with arrogance, vomits nothing but iniuries and crueltye. Afterwards hee addes the *eyes*, wherein the inward affection of the heart manifeſts it ſelfe, which by the eye-lids lifted vp, are meſſengers of the vice which is ſecret. Although then that the Aſſyrian lifts vp his creſts, yet God declares, that hee hath means in his hand ſuddenly to conuert the glorie of this King into diſhonour and ſhame. Wherefore hee heere comprchends the contempt, diſdaine, pride, and other arrogant behauiours and ſignes of vaine glory; all which are to be ſeene in the proud. Now he brings in

God ſpeaking: for that which God pronounceth with his mouth, hath greater vehemencie then it hee ſhould haue ſpoken by the voyce of the Prophet. From hence we are to draw a generall doctrine; namely, that God cannot indure the inſolencie of the proud, but hee muſt needs downe with it; becauſe hee is at perpetuall warre againſt them: *1. Pet. 5. 5.*

Let vs alſo note that this ſentence comes in by way of reſtraint, to the end the Prophet might preuent the ouer great haſtineſſe of men, ſaying, that this ſhall come to paſſe *after* that the Lord ſhall haue accompliſhed his worke. For as ſoone as we ſee a man proud, wee meruaile how the Lord can ſuffer him. But *Iſaiah* ſhewes heere that God indeede ſuffereth this tyrant, although hee proudly and ſincerely exalts himſelfe, becauſe hee is minded to ſerue his turne of him: and that the time is not yet ſeaſonable wherein the Lord ſhould ſhatter the wicked too peece; but that they muſt wait with patience. For *after* he hath aſſiſted the kingdomes of *Iudah*, as bringing his owne houſhold firſt into order, he will not then be ſlowe nor ſlothfull to puniſh the enemie ſtranger: as fathers who are wont either to caſt away, or breake the rods wherewith they haue beaten their children.

Hee takes the *mountaine of Zion*, for the Church, by a figure called Synecdoche; to the end that by the Temple and royall Citie, hee might decipher out the whole body, as by the head or principall part.

He expreſſly ſaith, *all the worke*, becauſe wee willingly hold backe the Lord from his worke by our inconsiderate haſtineſſe: yea many times when he hath but euen new begunne. For we are wont to make ſuch wiſhes againſt the reprobate, as it is hard to reſtraine our impatience; vneſſe God apply himſelfe to our affections in puniſhing them by and by. To abate ſuch heate, the Prophet commands that wee ſhould let God alone, and leaue the fit time free vnto himſelfe when to exerciſe his fatherly chaſtiſements.

All the worke then, is taken for a juſt meaſure. Behold here a very profitable doctrine, and of great conſolation. We ſee the wicked are wonderful proud, and how they liſt vp themſelues audaciouſly againſt God, as if they were ſtronger then he: alſo how they purſue his doctrine with iniuries and ſlanders; ſo as we can hardly expreſſe the fierceneſſe of their arrogance with words. If the Lord ſhould agree to our will, hee ſhould runne by and by and thunder from heauen againſt them, and vterly roote them out. But his purpoſe is before hee doth this, to correct his Church by them. For he ſpeakes not heere of Egyptians, or Aſſyrians; but of the *Iewes*, of *Zion*, of the Temple, his dwelling place, which it pleaſed him to dedicate and conſecrate to his honour.

So at this day there are diuers diſeaſes in the Church which the Lord will purge and heale. True it is that he hath alreadie begun: but wee decieve our ſelues if wee thinke his worke to be now perfect. Hee will not ceaſe then, till he hath ſo tamed vs, that being touch-

We of times linder the Lords working by our inconsiderate haſtineſſe.

This word All, hath great emphasis heere.

Note.

God begins firſt with his owne.

Note.

ched with a true feare of his name, we submit our selues vnto him with such modestie and teachableness as is fit. Wherefore wee must not maruell if he lets loose the bridle to Tyrants, and suffereth them still to exercise their crueltie against his Church: for the consolation is readie, to wit, *having vsed them as his vassals to correct his people, he will visit their pride and arrogancie.* And it is no wonder if God in smiting his chosen first, do therein declare that he hath a speciall care of their saluation.

I. Psal. 4. 17. Judgement then must begin at the house of God first: and afterwards he proceeds on in judgement against strangers, who shall be yet more grieuoulsie punished.

Verf. 13. Because he said, by the power of mine owne hand haue I done it, and by my wisdome, because I am wise, therefore I haue remoued the borders of the people, and haue spoiled their treasures, and haue pulled downe the inhabitants like a valiant man.

THe Prophet doth againe repeat the open blasphemies which the Assyrian would disgorge; for he attributes all the victories which he obtained to his *wisdome* and *power*. By the *strength of his hand*, he meanes his armed souldiers gathered out of diuers nations; but withall he brags also, *to haue bene a valiant king*: and thus is the custome of these vaine braggers, to attribute all that to themselves which is done in their name; although they in the meane while giue themselves to feasting and ease vnder the shadow. Afterwards he boasts of his *wisdome* and *warinesse*, as we commonly say, *I haue bene very discreet and expert.* And no doubt but he adorns his fraudes and deceits with the title of honestie, wherewith yet hee had circumcumented his neighbours. For behold the craft and cunning of Kings and Princes, euen to trouble and vex the Countrie by indirect meanes, to seeke pretence of lawes, to sow discords, and lastlie, to mingle heauen and earth together (as they speake) by their practises.

When he saith, *I haue remoued the borders of the people*, it is as much to say, I haue stretched out the bounds of my government, and haue added other countries to mine owne, so as there is no bound nor distinction. As if we should say, that the French King hath taken away the limits of Brittainie, Burgonie, Aquitaine, Prouence, and other regions, in ioyning them to his kingdome. He adds also, that no *treasures* lay so secret and hidden which he discovered not, & got to himselfe: as if he should say, By my wisdome I haue drawne all nations round about into my nets; I haue emptied their treasures; and griped all that was hid into mine hands.

Verf. 14. And mine hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people, and as one gathereth egges that are left, so haue I gathered all the earth, and there was

none to moue the wing, nor to open the mouth, or to whisper.

HE further adds, that it was no hard matter with him to ouercome Kings, and lay their riches on an heape: and he makes this y more plain by a similitude; as if he should say, If a man should seeke a nest and finde the birds gone, he may take the egges away without any difficultie. For if the birds sit vpon their egges (as they haue a naturall affection to keepe their nests) either they will flie vpon him that would take them away, and peck at him with their billes, or else they would indeuour to driue him away by hissings and shrill cryings. But this Tyrant boasts that there was no bodie durst so much as *open his mouth* against him, and that by meanes thereof he conquered all kingdomes without any great adoe; and therefore he attributes all these things to his wisdome, acknowledging no prouidence of God at all. Now the Prophet hath set forth these brags of set purpose, and that euen by the mouth of the Tyrant himselfe, to the end he might shew that these boastings of his were so many bellows (as it were) to kindle the wrath of God. For if such a proud caytiue were not to be borne with among men, how much lesse can the Lord suffer or endure such an one?

Verf. 15. Shall the axe boast it selfe against him that he veth therewith? or shall the saw exalt it selfe against him that moueth it? as if the rod should lift vp it selfe against him that taketh it vp, or the staffe should exalt it selfe, as if it were no wood.

HERE the Lord doth more apparantlie deride the follie of this outrageous Assyrian, by which hee promiseth vnto himselfe mountaines and wonders. For saith the Lord, it is all one, as if the *axe* or *hammer* should despise the hand that holds it, and should brag of their nimbleness: whereas it appears well enough that these are but dead instruments, without any proper mouing. But before wee further expound the sentence at large, I will touch something brieflie as concerning the Prophets words. The second member of the verse is somewhat obscure. True it is that the sentence is plaine, but there is some ambiguity in the manner of speech, which also causeth great diuersitie among the expositors. All things being well weyed then, me thinks the sense which I haue giuen sorts best with the text. What? Were it not a monstrous spectacle, if y staffe should exalt it selfe against him that takes it vp, as if it were no wood? For the particule *Esh* often signifies as much as Against; and the Copulatiue *Vau* is also often superfluous. And thus we shall haue a cleare exposition, and such a one as agrees with the Prophets meaning. Heretofore he reproched the king of Aithur because he attributed the victories which he obtained to his counsels and forces: but now he saith, that herein this Tyrant exalted himselfe against God, neither more nor lesse then

Fay esté bien entendu & expert.

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if the ~~we~~ deſpiſing the hand that ruled it, ſhould appropriate the praife due to the workeman vnto it ſelfe: or that a *ſtaffe* ſhould riſe vp againſt him that handleth it, as if it were ſome other thing then wood; which yet is dead and without ſtrength. Whence wee may know that men exalt themſelues againſt God, when they attribute vnto themſelues more then is meete, and that they war not ſo much with men like themſelues, as with the Lord himſelfe. Let vs then reiect theſe proud ſpeeches ſo full of blaſphemies, as; I haue done this by my power; I haue directed this by my wiſedome; I haue brought ſuch a thing to paſſe by my induſtrie. For the Lord is a iea- lous God, Exod. 20. 5. and cannot abide to giue his glory to another. *Iſaiah* 42. 8.

Now let vs obſerue theſe comparifons, whereby he likeneth men to instruments. But fiſt of all we muſt referre this to the prouidence of God in general, by which all creatures are ordered and governed, as ſome doe who confeſſe indeede, that all are moued of God, becauſe that they neither will nor chuſe; but they adde, that euery creature is moued according to his naturall inſtinct, as the Sun, the Moone, the heauens, and ſuch like things. Thus they imagine that man is carried hither and thither by his owne will and free choice; becauſe God doth nothing elſe but continue the power which hee gaue at the beginning. Now their errour tends hereto, that the frame of the whole world is indeed ſuſtained by the hand of God; yet ſo, that it is not need- fully particular mouings ſhould be ordered by his prouidence. And thus they attribute vnto God the office to ſend raine and faire weather, in as much as hee is the creator of nature; and yet neuertheleſſe, that God commands nothing; but the raine is ingendred of the vapors; and faire weather procedes from ſome other naturall cauſes. Now this con- fuſed gouernement which they leaue vnto God, is ſcarcely the one thouſand part of the dominion which he attributes to himſelfe. *Iſaiah* therefore rightly eſtablisheth him as preſident ouer all actions, ſo as hee diſpo- ſeth of men according as it pleaſeth him beſt, no leſſe then if they were *rod*s in his hand. He bowes their counſels, ordereth their enter- priſes, and moderates their actions; to the end wee might know that all things depend vpon his prouidence, and not vpon the appetite of the wicked.

Yet they reply, that there is no reaſon wherefore men ſhould bee thus called axes and ſwords; and that in the meane while their will, iudgement, and whatſoever elſe that diſtinguiſheth them from beaſts, ſhould be taken away from them; ſo as of men we ſhould make trunkes of wood or ſtones. But the an- ſwer is ready: for although God compares men to ſtones, it followes not therupon that they ſhould be altogether like them. For that which is like, is not the ſame, but agrees in ſome point. For although a ſtaffe cannot moue it ſelfe hither and thither, yet notwith- ſtanding is fit to giue blows: ſo the wicked haue ſomething in nature, and yet can they turne themſelues neither one way nor other

further then they be ſtill guided by the prouidence and ſecret counſell of God. Thus this fitting or agreement of things, hindereth not that the whole action ſhould not be attributed to God onely.

But it is very farre from the purpoſe that ſome doe heere moue that queſtion touching the will of man. For although God be ſaid to hold the counſels of men in his hand, and turnes their enterpriſes and executions to what end it pleaſeth him; doth it therefore follow that they conſult not, or ceaſe to de- uſe this or that? For wee muſt not here ima- gine any conſtrained will, as if God drew men whether they would or no: but hee rules all their mouings by a wonderfull and an in- comprehenſible manner; yet ſo as their owne will remaines vnto them ſtill. Now *Iſaiah* tea- cheth chiefly in this place, that all the in- deuours of men are vaine, if the Lord giue not an iſſue vnto them: and therefore that the King of Aſhur could haue done nothing, what enterpriſe ſoever hee had taken in hand; if God had not giuen him his victories. In re- gard whereof, hee hath no cauſe to attribute the praife of thoſe things to himſelfe, which hee obtained not but by the meanes of God. And this is it which hee conſirms by another ſimilitude, when hee ſaith, that the *liſing vp of the ſtaffe*, comes not from the nature of wood, but from the will of him which hand- leth it.

Verſ. 16. Therefore ſhall the Lord God of hoſtes ſend among his fat men leannes, and vnder his glory ſhall hee kindle a burning like the burning of fire.

HE goes on ſtill with the former doctrine, ſignifying that God will ſhow the Aſſyri- an how hee hath liued vp himſelfe too much, and that hee will bring that his arro- gancy downe to the ground; wherein hee fooliſhly pleaſed himſelfe. For in as much as hee put his truſt in his forces, and in the multi- tude of his munition, *Iſaiah* declares that God will take all this away from him; and this vnder the ſimilitude of *fat* and *leanne*. For by this word *fat*, hee ſignifies as well riches, as ſtrength of warre; and by the word *leanne*, the want and neede of theſe things, wherein the Aſſyrian truſted too much: as if he ſhould ſay, The Lord will cauſe all the *fat* and well fed things of the Aſſyrian to waxe *leanne*. It is no new thing to compare proſperitie vnto fatneſſe: for euen as horſes that are ouermuch pampered, become proud, ſo as they are ready to caſt their rider, or wince and ſling with their heeles if any offer to come neere them: ſo abundance makes men become wild and cruell, inſomuch that a man cannot maſter them but by bringing downe their fiſh.

The other ſimilitude is yet more proper, to wit, that the fire ſhall be kindled vnder his glorie: for his meaning is, that by how much the more his felicitie increaſed, the hotter ſhould the flame bee which ſhould conſume it. And therein alſo he ſhewes, that the Aſſyrian ſhall

be utterly brought to nothing, euen as if one should plucke vp a tree by the rootes, or should raze an house to the very foundation. For if a man should onely loppe off the branches of a tree, it would easilie bring forth other branches: or if the roofoe of an house were onely burned, all the other parts would remaine safe and sound. He leaueth nothing then to the Assyrian, but affirms that hee shall be utterly consumed. By this word *As*, or like, which imports a similitude, hee fitly shewes, that the flame shall bee such that it shall consume all the *glorie* of the Assyrian.

Vers. 17. And the light of Israel shall be in fire, and his holy one shall be as a flame, the which shall burne and consume his briars and thornes all in one day.

HE makes an elegant allusion to this burning, wherewith he had threatned the Assyrians. For there are two things in fire, to wit, light, and heate: and as God consumeth his enemies by his heate, to he also mighteneth his faithfull ones with his light. Now it is well enough knowne that God is sometime called deuouring fire in one place, and light in an other (as Psal. 36.9.) in diuers respects, because the power which he sheweth towards the faithfull is not like vnto that which he manifests against the vnfaithfull. In a word, he so threatens the Assyrians with destruction, that therewithall he comfortts the faithfull, and that two waies; first, because they shall see that God will be reuenged vpon the iniuries done vnto them: in the second place, being gladded with his light, they shall receiue new strength, and life.

He plaine y without any figure sheweth what this light is, when he addeth, *his holy one*, so as there needs no long exposition, to wit, that he wil defend and keepe this people whom he hath clec't and chosen to himselfe as his owne from amongst other nations. He saith then, that the fauour of God which *shines* vpon Israel, shall be as a *fire* to deuoure the enemies at the last. *In a day*, that is to say, it shall burne with a sudden fire. For he signifies a fearefull and vnaccustomed burning, which we commonlie see to befall the wicked euen then when they thinke themselves safest and furthest off from danger. To conclud, he shewes that all the forces which they shall oppose, shall be as *Tow*, which being once set on fire shall quicklie come to nothing.

Vers. 18. And the glorie of his forrest shall come to an end with his fruitfull territorie, from the soule to the flesh: and shall be broken, as the breaking of a standard.

HE continueth still the same similitude of burning, and declareth that the fire shall as well consume the high things as the low, and shall leaue nothing sound: for it may fall out that the fire will seaze vpon the top of a

place, and in the meane while it shall leaue y botome vntouched. The word *Carmel*, which is put here, is not a proper name, as I thinke, but is rather to be taken for a fat and fruitfull territorie: and there would also be some absurditie in it, to say that Mount Carmel was in the land of Assyria. The sense therefore is, that not only the ruin of the *forrests* of Assyria shall bee neere, but also that the *graine* or *corne* shall be consumed by the same fire, because it shall not only run vpon the vpper parts of the land, but shall pearce downe euen into the bottoms. He addes also another similitude taken from man, Euen as a man is composed of *body* and *soule*, so his diseases shall seaze vpon him one by one, till euery part be smitten. For it often fallies out that the body will be sick and impotent, and the spirit will be sound, and so on the contrarie; but when both together are smitten, it is very dangerous. By this similitude then he threatens, that nothing shall remaine in good plight to the Assyrians, who are now destinate to destruction, because they shall perish, both *soule*, and *flesh*: not that mens *soules* are mortall, but because God will openly shew his vengeance vpon them. Surely this is very terrible; for the end of corrections are, that the *soule* might be saued, although the bodie should perish, 1. Cor. 5. 5. but when the *spirit* also is destroyed with the bodie, can we imagine any thing more miserable? For the flame onelic togetheth the faithfull, but consumes them not, as it doth the vnfaithfull: in whom it findes nothing but fewell fit for the fire,

As the breaking of a standard. There are here a meeting together in the Hebrew words, which cannot be expressed in another language. But it is the same thing which he hath set before vs in his other similes, to wit, an extreame discomfiture: for when the standard is beaten downe, the whole armie is put to flight. For when ensignes are taken, then there is the greater bloodshed. As when the Historiographers mention any great slaughter, they say that the standards are taken. Now the Prophet threatens not the Assyrians thus in fauour towards them, that they being admonished, might profit thereby, and be touched with true repentance: but it was to comfort the faithfull, to the end they should not thinke the Assyrian should escape vnpunished, when he had exercised his cruelties against the people of God: as also lest they should imagine, that the Lord had forgotten his promise, or that he was not able to bring the enterprises of his enemies to confusion. And in deede, vnlesse the Prophet had speedily prevented the matter this way, many such doubts would haue come into their mindes.

Vers. 19. And it shall bee easie to number the rest of the trees of his forrest: for a little child shall tell them.

THE Hebrew phrase shewes that there shall be a very small number left; and thus hee onely confirms the former sentence, to wit,

that there ſhall be ſuch a waſte after the Lord ſhall haue brought the Aſſyrians downe, that the reſidue ſhall be *caſtie* ſold. And yet he goes on further in ſaying, there ſhall be ſo few, that a *little child* ſhall be able to tell all that remaine: for we know that little children haue much adoe to count to three or foure. Thus then the kingdome of the Aſſyrians, which in times paſt appeared as a great foreſt, the trees thereof being cut downe and ouerthrowne, ſhall become like to a ſmall number of trees ſcattered a great way off one from another.

Verſ. 20. *And it ſhall come to paſſe in that day, that the remnant of Iſrael, and thoſe which ſhall eſcape of the houſe of Iacob, ſhall reſt no more vpon him that ſmote them: for they ſhall reſt vpon the Lord, the holy one of Iſrael in truth.*

NOW hee returns to the choſen people, and deſcribes the fruit of the chaſtiſement which was at hand. For in as much as it is an hard and difficult thing to be moleſted and afflicted, and that wee flee it as much as poſſibly we can: the Lord ſhewes vs the fruit of afflictions, that ſo hauing learned to conſider the end thereof, we might indure them the more cheerefully: as if hee ſhould ſay, I know you would ſaine that the Aſſyrian were farre off from you, that ſo you might inioy your commodities quietly; but yet think with your ſelues, that this affliction is as neceſſarie for you, as a potion for a ſicke ſtomacke; for you know not the power of God, and therefore withdraw you your affiance from him, to ſet it vpon the wicked. Now what a miſerable thing is it to put the hope of our ſaluation in thoſe that are Gods enemies, and to ſlay our ſelues vpon them which ſeek nothing but our overthrow? For the Iſraelites reſted one while vpon the Aſſyrians; then vpon the Egyptians. And therefore there was no loſſe in leſſening of the people, becauſe this *little handfull which remained*, learned thereby to put their truſt in God. And in this reſpect alſo wee may know how needefull it was that God ſhould chaſtiſe the Iſraelites.

Now the moderation which he addes, contains an excellent and wonderfull conſolation, to wit, that notwithstanding this, yet a remnant of the Iewes ſhould remaine, amongſt whom the true ſeruiſe of God ſhould be reſtored. For the particel *In truth*, is not ſuperfluous: for before the Lord afflicted the, they all made profeſſion to be of the true religion, and called vpon God together: but it was in hypocriſie. *Iſaiab* then deriding this counterit holineſſe, ſaith, that their hope ſhall be found and ſincere, when they ſhall once be purged from their ſainings and deceits. For although they proudly boaſted themſelues to reſt onely vpon the Lord, yet did they reſt in deepe vpon the helpe of the Aſſyrians. When the Aſſyrians therefore ſhould chaſtiſe them, they ſhould then learne to truſt in God onely, and to turne away their

heart from looking for ſuccours from men. Hence we may gather, that we cannot ſolely reſt our ſelues vpon God, vnleſſe wee wholly plucke away all our truſt from creatures. Becauſe we ought ſo to ſtay vpon him, as to renounce all other things willingly for his ſake. Where this confident truſt is not, there hath truth no place, becauſe the heart is double and parted in twaine.

Verſ. 21. *The remnant ſhall turne, the remnant of Iacob to the ſtrong God.*

THE remnant ſhall be conuerted. This is a confirmation of the former ſentence, although hee ſeemes to allude to that place of the ſeuenth Chapter, where the ſonne of *Iſaiab* was called *Shear-iſhab*. For we haue there ſaid, that this name was impoſed vpon him accidentally; to the end hee might be as it were a pledge of that deliuerance to come, of ſ which his father had prophesied. It was needfull alſo that the Iewes ſhould be confirmed diuers waies, to the end they might be aſſured that the Lord would bring them back in the end. Wherunto alſo appertaineth that which he addeth, *In the ſtrong God*, that is to ſay, to him, whom the people being conuerted from their reuolt, ſhall acknowledge to be the protector of their ſaluation. For this epithite is attributed vnto God, according to the circumſtance of the place. It ſhould ſeeme that the word *El*, which ſignifies God, ſhould haue expreſſed his power ſufficiently, but he would alſo adde *Gibbor*: that is to ſay, Mightie, or Strong, to the end he might ſtirre vp the people to truſt the more confidently in him. For how could it come to paſſe that the people ſhould returne from vnder the Aſſyrians and Egyptians, vnleſſe they were perſwaded that God was alſufficient, who ſhould doe the deeде? This then is the wellſpring of all our euils; to wit, when wee are not reſolved that whatſoever wee can with or deſire for our ſaluation, is in God.

Verſ. 22. *For though thy people, O Iſrael, were as the ſand of the ſea; yet ſhould but a remnant be ſaued. The conſumption determind ſhall abound in iuſtice.*

HEE excludes hypocrits from their fooliſh confidence: for it was enough in their conceit for them that they were the children of that holy perſonage *Abraham* according to the fleſh onely: and vnder this bare and naked pretext of their originall, they would be thought moſt holy. In the meane while he exhorts the faithfull to patience; to the end they might learne with a mecke and quiet ſpirit, to wait for this diſcomfure and diminution of their multitude; to the end that whē it ſhould come to paſſe, they ſhould not be troubled at it as at ſome new thing. He comforts them then for feare they ſhould not beare ſuch a waſting patiently; becauſe therout the Lord was purpoſed to gather a ſmall

remnant at the least. The Hebrew verb signifies To finish, and sometimes also To consume. The latter signification agrees best, for he calles this diminishing of the people, a Consumption, and that Accomplished: and herein hee speaks excessiue (as they say) for it would be a thousand to one that they were not all destroyed, and therefore a very few should escape.

The name of *Israel* may be taken here in the genitiue, or in the vocatiue case; so as in this latter sense he should speake to the Patriarke *Jacob*, or to all the faithful in his name. But seeing *Y* meaning is cleare inough how-focuer we take it, the matter is of no great moment. It may be taken also in the genitiue. For mine owne part I rather thinke it is a proper name to point out as it were the true and obedient *Israelites*, for he vtters a vehement speech in turning himselfe to the Patriarke; and God in speaking to him that was dead testifies to the liuing, that that which he had long ago promised, to wit, that the posteritie of *Abraham*, which should be innumerable as the sand of the sea, should not stretch it selfe to a confused multitude, who had cast off all true godlines, but that there should be an interruption in this degenerate people, till that a litle while after they should be renewed.

He addes also another consolation, to wit, that this litle handfull shall abound in iustice. For we are in danger to be out of heart, and to doubt of the mercie of God, when we see the Church of God oppressed with such grievous calamities, so as it seemes it must fall in ruin. To those who are touched with true repentance know by experience that this is the heauic temptation of al others. It was needfull therefore that the hearts of the faithfull should be fortified against it, that by considering the fruit which should come vnto them from this discomfiture, they might feele their grieife asswaged: which fruit was this, that thereby the whole earth should be ouerspred with iustice, euen as a riuer that ouerfloweth. He touched this point before, when he said that this remnant should rest vpon the Lord their God in truth.

The word *Iustice* is diuersly expounded. Some referre it to the preaching of the Gospel, because the righteousnes of God is reuealed fro faith to faith by it, as *S. Paul* saith *Rom. 1. 17*. Now the Gospell was published throughout the whole world by the ministrie of the Apostles, who were as a small remnant of the *Iewes*. Others had rather to take it thus, as if this Consumption were a testimonie or witness of the iustice of God, who did so grieuouse chastise his people. But I had rather expound it more generallie thus; *This Consumption shall iustice so fill the whole earth with iustice*. Those which shall remaine, be they neuer so few, shal yet iustice notwithstanding to cause the riuers to run with iustice, in such wise that the whole world shall be covered therewith.

Verf. 23. For the Lord God of hostes

Will make a Consumption, and shall place the bounds in the midst of the earth.

This repetition doth againe pluck away the meanes from these proud contentners of God wherein they flattered themselves. For it was a thing almost incredible that the *Iewes* should perish as it were in a moment, who had so many promises made Gen. 17. 7. them, and with whom God had contracted a perpetuall covenant: it also seemed to be repugnant to the nature of God, which is immutable. The Prophet threatneth then, that the Lord is the author of this Consumption, to the end he might beate downe the pride of the wicked, who trusting in their present felicitie, thought themselves out of all danger, and being puffed vp with this vaine confidence, laughed at all admonitions and warnings. God, saith he, shall bring your land to a desert, so as in the most flourishing part thereof shall be scene a consumption most like vnto a wildernes. For he takes the midst of the earth for the heart of it, that is to say, for the places most strong and best fortified. Many thinke the word Consumption should be an adiectiue: but I had rather affirme that it is a substantiue, according to which sense it is taken in *Daniel*, and in other Dan. 9. 24. places. 27.

Saint *Paul* alledgeth this text, but it is somewhat different in words from these of the Prophet in this place, to wit, according to the vulgar exposition which was then most receiued. Now although the Apostle spake properlie, faithfullie, and according to the Prophets meaning, yet the words which he reciteth being drawne from the Greeke interpretation, haue occasioned many to erre from the true sense of the Prophet. For in regard that the Greeke translator had turned it *Logos*, that is to say, The word, many haue defacated vpon the Gospel, and thereupon haue affirmed, that the abolishing of the law is here signified, because the Gospel puts an end to the figures and ceremonies: and coequectiue, that it is a word abbreviated & compendious, wherby we are discharged of *Y* yoke of the law vnder which the people sighed. But this comes nothing nere *Y* Prophets intention, for he calles consumption heere a decreasing, by meanes whereof the people shall be almost brought to ruin: and therunto tend both senses, namely, that of *S. Paul*, and of the Greeke interpretation also. For by Word, they vnderstood that which the *Hebrews* expresse by the word *Davar*. And although the Prophet hath not the word *Davar*, yet notwithstanding that which he hath in the text signifies a thing determined, that is to say, a Consumption, and both of them haue one and the same meaning. To conclude, the Apostle repeates that in this place which *Isaiah* said now touching the future consumption of the people, and reacheth that this prophetic was chiefie accomplished in his time when as the *Iewes* for their vnthankfulness were cut off from the kingdome of God, some small remnant only reserved,

Verf,

Verſ. 24. *Therefore the Lord God of hoſtes, ſaith; My people which dwell in mount Zion, feare not Aſſur. Hee ſhall ſmite thee with the rod, and ſhall liſt vp his ſtaffe vpon thee, after the manner of Egypt.*

*Or, example

Hee goes on with the former conſolation, which onely pertained to the faithfull, who in very deed were then a ſmall number. For many gloried in the name of God, and would be taken for his people; but very few there were who ſhewed that by their practice, which they professed in word. He ſpeakes not to all then indifferently; but to thoſe onely which ſtood in neede of conſolation. For ſeeing they were in danger to loſe all their hope, when they compared their condition with others, and that the kingdom alſo was deſtroyed: for this cauſe, I ſay, it was very expedient they ſhould be comforted. And this diſtinction is to be noted: for otherwiſe it had been abſurd to haue directed ſpeeches ſo diuers, vnto perſons of one condition. He adds the reaſon of the conſolation; to wit, that this diſcomfure ſhall be nothing elſe but as the *liſting vp of the rod*, which ſhall be onely to chaſtiſe them, and not to deſtroy them.

The letter *Deret*, is a particule of ſimilitude. The word *Deret*, ſignifies example. I expound it then, After the example of Egypt; as if hee ſhould ſay, Although the Aſſyrian be cruell, and by all meanes will ſeek thy ruine; yet he ſhall not kill, but ſhall onely ſmite thee. Hee alledgeth the example of Egypt then, the bondage whereof was very hard; and yet not deadly. For in the miſt of perplexities and conſuſions, the Prophets are wont to bring the people backe to the contemplation of this redemption, whereby God deliuered his choſen people miraculoſly from the hand of this cruell tyrant *Pharaoh*. The ſenſe therefore is, euen as the Lord was the ſtrongeſt then, and deſtroyed the Egyptians, who practiſed your deſtruction: ſo will he now alſo eaſily overcome the Aſſyrians.

Exod. 1. 14.
Exod. 12. 31.

Exod. 14. 24

Others expound it, *In the way of Egypt*, in regard the Aſſyrians made warre with the Jewes, becauſe of the Egyptians. But this expoſition cannot agree; and if wee looke narrowly into the text, we ſhall finde none more fit then that which I haue alledged; as alſo it is approued of the beſt expoſitors. For there are heere two members one oppoſite againſt another; to wit, *the affliction* wherewith the Egyptians had vexed this people; and the calamitie wherein they ſhould be wrapped vnder the Aſſyrians. As the puniſhment which the Egyptians inflicted vpon them was not mortall, no more ſhould that of the Aſſyrians be. As if it had been ſaid in theſe or the like words; Thou knoweſt my force and power againſt *Pharaoh*; ſo alſo ſhalt thou know it againſt *Senacherib*. Neither would the knitting together of theſe ſentences match well, vnleſſe we ſhould expound it thus.

Verſ. 25. *But yet a little while and mine indignation ſhall be conſumed: and my wrath ſhall be kindled to deſtroy them.*

Hee meanes not onely the ſiege which *Senacherib* planted with a mightie armie be-^{2. King. 18.} fore *Jeruſalem*, but the other diſcomfures alſo^{17.} whereby this citie was deſtroyed, the Temple raſed, and the people carried away captiues. For it was needfull that the faithfull ſhould be fortified againſt theſe grieuous aduerſaries with ſuch promiſes as theſe. Which wee are diligently to obſerue; becauſe if wee lightly paſſe this ouer, as other expoſitors doe, wee cannot ſidly ioyne theſe things together. Thus the captiuitie of the people was as a conſumption; becauſe *Babylon* was as their ſepulchre, and their exile as a kind of death. When neceſſitie then appeared, and that *Senacherib* with his armie beganne to preſſe neere vpon them, ſo as they were in great diſtreſſe being thus beſieged, this very conſolation was exceeding neceſſarie. For it might ſeeme that *Iudea* was vtterly conſumed, and there was litle or no hope of ſuccour left touching outward appearance: as if hee ſhould ſay; Obſerue therefore this conſolation diligently; to wit, the Lord will ſpare thee: true it is hee will deſerre it for *a litle while*, and will hold his ſuccour hidden as he were from thine eyes; but in the end *hee will deliuer thee, and will be reuenged vpon thine enemies*, whom hee hath determined vtterly to conſume.

If any will take the verbe *Calab*, To conſume: he ſaith, *he will conſume his wrath*, in the ſame ſenſe, as we are commonly wont to ſay; we conſume the yeares and our age: that is, I will giue way to mine indignation, till ſuch time as I haue vtterly deſtroyed the Aſſyrians. But the word, to accompliſh, is more proper; as if hee ſhould ſay, Till I haue executed mine indignation. And this is the deſtruction wherewith hee threatens the vncircumciſed elſewhere. For when the Lord hath taken away all hope of mercy, hee then executeth his iudgement againſt the vnfaithfull.

Verſ. 26. *And the Lord of hoſtes ſhall raiſe vp a ſcourge againſt him, as the plague of Madian, in the rocke of Oreb, and his ſtaffe vpon the ſea: and ſhall liſt it vp* in the way of Egypt.*

*Or, after the manner of Egypt.

Iſaiah vſeth heere the word *ſcourge*, and not rod: thereby ſignifying, that the Lord would handle the enemies much more roughly and ſeuerely then they handled the Jewes. For he threatens them with an vtter deſtruction: and declares the ſame more plainly by two examples: the fiſt is of the *Madianites*, who were horribly deſtroyed in the valley of *Oreb*; which was thus nominated becauſe of their king: the ſecond is of the *Egyptians*, which were drowned by the Lord in the red ſea; when they purſued his people.

ple. Iudg. 7. 22. Exod. 14. 21. Now in the first place he recites the historie which was alittle fresher in memorie then the other: in the second, that which was most auncient. Whence we learne, that the Lord displayeth his power for the maintenance of his Church, to the end that in the midst of the greatest confusions in the world, we might remaine steadfast in faith, that being vpheld and stayed vpon his fauour, we might be of good cheere, and of good hope. For his custome hath bin to deliuer his Church by wonderfull and vnexpected meanes, as wee may see came to passe in the time of *Moses*, and *Gedeon*. Wee ought euermore the to call these his benefits to mind, to the end we may so much the more couragiously learne to put our trust in God, and to perseuer constancie.

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God manifest his power in all times for the preservation of his church, that in the midst of the greatest confusions our faith might remain vnshaken.

- 2 We may also gather from hence, that all the afflictions which compass vs about, are the rods wherewith God beates vs; and yet in the meane while he suffreth neither Satan nor none of his instrumets to hurt vs deadlie.
- 3 Contrariwise, an horrible destruction is prepared for our enemies, as wee see came to passe to the *Madianites* and *Egyptians*. This is then a singular consolation, that when we shall compare our condition with theirs, we shall indeede see them merrie, and proudly insult over the children of God; but it is only for a time: for we shall by and by heare what an horrible sentence is pronounced against them, to wit, that they are ordained to a deadlie and an eternall destruction.

Verf. 27. *And at that day shall his burden be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck: and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.*

2. Chron. 36.
22. 23.
Ezr. 1. & 2.
2. Kin. 19. 35

IT is vncertaine whether he heere speaks of the deliuerance which hapned vnder *Zorobabel*, or of that admirable discomfiture of *Senacherib*, whē he besieged Ierusalem with a mightie armie. All almost agree to this latter exposition: and in very deed, the drift and scope of the text approues it, for he will adde a description of the wayes and chiefest places wherby *Senacherib* should passe to come to Ierusalem: so as it should seeme nothing should hinder him from inioying the citie at his pleasure. I somewhat assent to this exposition; I only extend this prophesie further off: for *Isaiah* meant to comfort the faithfull who were pressed with the present calamitie: and the promise also might seeme vaine, seeing the calamities which should come vpon them afterwards were whollie contrarie vnto it. As for example, if the Lord should promise me prouision for the next yeere, and should yet leaue me destitute of it, what credit could I giue to the promise made vnto me; the accomplishment whereof I must wait for so long a time, if he deliuer me not from the present necessitie? Thus the promise of the Lord, who had said he would deliuer his people out of Babylon, and would perpetuallie assist them, might

seeme as good as vanished, when the people should see themselves laid open to the throate of this rauenous wolfe. The Prophet then minding to preuent this difficultie, comprehends both the points before mentioned, to wit, that God will keepe his people, and in the end deliuer them from death. Others reframe this to the discomfiture of the host of *Senacherib*. But because *Isaiah* promisseth that the yoke shall be dissolued, or broken, I make no question but he speaks of the deliuerance from the captiuitie. In a word, he affirmes, that God will not only deliuer them out of Babylon, but will also giue them succor euen against the siege of this Tyrant *Senacherib*, whom he will not suffer to passe beyond that which is threatened.

His burden shall be taken from off thy shoulder.] He expresseth this tyrannie two waies, that he might the better amplify the benefit of the redemption. If any will referre this to *Senacherib*, there was not as yet any such heauie burthen imposed vpon the shoulders of the Iewes vnder his tyranny. The people only payed him a certaine tribute, as we may discern by the holy historie. Wherfore then hath hee expressed this tyrannie vnder two termes? It is very likely that he had respect vnto the present perill, in regard this proud tyrant had already deuoured y whole countrie of Iudea (like a cruell beast as he was) by his insatiable couetousnes: and had so oppressed them, that it might seeme his yoke could neuer be remoued fro off their necks. But I haue already giuen the exposition which seemes best vnto me, to wit, that the Prophet speaks here of the continual course of Gods grace, euen till the time of redemption.

Some expound this which followes of the face of anointing, by the word *Fanctie*, which noynt the yoke: but this exposition is too strict. Others are better aduised, who take the word *Schamen* in his accustomed signification, to wit, for oymnt, or oyle. For he brings them back vnto Christ, shewing, that by meanes of him it shall come to passe they shall be deliuered from vnder this tyranny. Now hee calleth *Anointing*, the kingdom which had bin consecrated by the Lord, and for this cause would he keepe it pure and entire. And when the Prophets will set forth the maiestie of this kingdom, they make mention of the anointing wherewith the Lord in speciall maner had adorned it, because it was a figure of Iesus Christ. For although God had established the rest of their neighbour kingdomes, yet were they prophane notwithstanding; but this was an holy kingdom in respect of others, because the Lord ruled after a speciall maner in Iudea; and vnder this figure of the kingdom, he represented Iesus Christ vnto them. For this cause also the promise was made to *Salomon*, that the throne of this kingdom should be perpetual, 1. King. 9. 5.

Whereas some expound this word anointing, of the King himselfe; it is too much constrained, neither contains it any substantiall doctrine in it. Thus then the Prophet shewes them

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2. King. 18.
14. & 23. 33.
2. Chro. 36. 3.

then the meanes whereby this tyrannie shall be brought to nothing : for there was little or no hope left in outward appearance, that they should thus easlie shake off the yoke of so mightie a tyrant. Now he tells them then that this shall come to passe by meanes of the *anointing* of this heauenly kingdom : to the end all might vnderstand that this benefit did wholly depend vpon the vertue of Christ, and not vpon fortune, nor vpon the power of men.

Verf. 28. *He is come to Aiath: he is passed into Migron: at Micmash shall he lay vp his armour.*

BECAUSE the holy Citie should immediately be besieged, the Prophet sets all the furniture of *Senacherib* before their eyes, to the end that after the faithful had well bethought them of euery particular formerly mentioned, they might rest stedfast vpon God. And this description had great efficacy to appease their terrours, when they knew the Assyrians should not remove a foot but by wil of God, who by the mouth of his Prophet, had plainely chalked out all the way of the enemy. We need not stand much in expounding the situation of the places which are named here. It sufficeth vs to know that hee passed by these places, whereof the Iewes are heere aduertised. Whereas we haue translated, *he shall lay vp his armour*; others translate, *He hath numbered*: for the verbe *Pakad*, signifies also to number. I reiect not this interpretation; but yet I willingly receive the first rather; because it seemes to mee the Prophet declares that the King of Assyria *shall lay vp his armour*: that is to say, his victuals and other warlike munitions in *Mickmash*. We also know it is the manner of them that goe to warre, neuer to set forward without munition, which they lay vp in some safe and fit place, to the end the Campe may be provided of those things which are necessary for it. Now by the word *Armour*, or, *munition*, hee not onely meanes darts, and swords; but also all provisions and helpes of warre : for the signification of the Hebrew word stretcheth very farre, and comprehends all sorts of instruments; as also vnder the word *Vessels*, the Latins vnderstand diuers things.

Verf. 29. *They have gone ouer the floods: they lodged at the lodging at Geba: Ramah is afraid: Gibeah of Saul is fled away.*

SOME thinke hee speaks in this place of Iordan; but I know not whether one could wade ouer Iordan in that quarter or no. Howsoever it be, hee sets forth what an astonishment there should be when newes should come of the Assyrians arriuall; to wit, that all the Countrey shall be *overwhelmed with feare and terrour*; so as it shall fall into the hands of the Assyrians, euen as it were of it owne accord. For where so great a feare hath once

inuaied the heart, there the vanquished will easly yeelde themselues euen at the first fault of the enemy : so as the conquerours shall rob and spoile at their pleasure. Hee speaks in the plurall number, as hauing changed the person; because he mentioneth the King in one respect, and his host in another. He names *Ramah* chiefly, because it was the neereſt village : and describes also the flight of some, who being amazed with the onely bruit, should giue vp the Countrey into the enemies hands.

Verf. 30. **Lift vp thy voyce O daughter Gallim; cause Laish to heare, O poore Anathoth.* *Or, neigh

AFTER hee had spoken of so great terrour, by the word *neigh*, hee also mentioneth the cries and shrieks which should be heard in other parts. It is a verie common thing among the Hebrewes to call Cities by the name of *daughters*. Now hee shewes that the cry shall be so great, that the neighbour Cities shall heare it. For the lamentation which shall be made in *Anathoth*, shall be heard of *Laish*.

Verf. 31. *Madmenah is removed: the inhabitants of Gebim haue gathered themselves together.*

BY an excessiue manner of speech hee meanes, that this Citie *Madmenah* was shaken in such wise, as it seemed to remove out of the place. Which is to be referred to the tumults of the people, that fled : as if hee should say, The inhabitants of *Madmenah* shall make no lesse noise, then if the Citie should be turned vpside downe. As touching that which followes, *the inhabitants of Gebim haue gathered themselves together*; wee may expound it, that they should gather themselves vpon an heap with feare. Others vnderstand it as if they should presse one another, the way being too narrow for passage.

Verf. 32. **Yet there is a time that he will stay at Nob: hee shall lift vp his hand toward the mount of the daughter Zion, the hill of Ierusalem.* *Or, it shall be yet day, when hee shall come into Nob to slay there.

SOME expound that the Assyrian shall remaine yet one day in *Nob*, which was a little citie neere to Ierusalem, as *Seterome* and others witness. But I rather agree to their opinion, who thinke that the enemy should arise there very early, that he might make his preparations to goe the next day to besiege Ierusalem : for his meaning is to shew the diligence of the Assyrian; and how neere Ierusalem was to an vtter ruin : as if he should say, The enemy shall haue no great way to goe, and shall arise in Ierusalem before the day be at an end. That which followes *of the lifting up of the hand*, serues to augment the feare, because *Senacherib* hauing already

conquered all the countrie, will threaten Ierusalem, as if with his only looke he could take and sack it. By the word *Zion* he comprehends all the citie, taking a part for the whole, because this part was the highest, and overlooked all the quarters of the Citie. From the foolish overweening of this tyrant the Prophet shewes that the citie of Ierusalem was not farre off from an vtter downfall: for the whole countrie, yea the *Citie* it selfe was so astonished, that none durst oppose himselfe against the enemy. Thus the Prophet meant to amplify the benefit of God by these circumstances, to wit, that it was to be attributed to the speciall fauor and good wil of God, and not to mans help, which auailed nothing that Ierusalem was deliueted, euen as if a man should haue pulled a sheepe out of the iawes of the wolfe.

Verf. 33. Behold, the Lord God of hostes shall cut off the bough with feare, & they of high stature shall be cut off, and the hie shall be humbled.

34. And he shall cut away the thick places of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall haue a mightie fall.

Almost all the expositours doe expound this place of the Assyrians, for they think the Prophet threatens this destruction where with the Lord will roote them out after they haue besieged Ierusalem; as if he should speak on this wise, The Assyrian shall be so swolne with pride, that he will thinke himselfe sure of Ierusalem as soone as he shall haue once looked vpon it: and also, that all shall be astonished at his coming, so as some shall flee away, others shall yeeld themselves voluntarily; therefore he will by and by imagin himselfe Lord ouer all: but the Lord will disdainly ouerthrow all his desseignes, and will cut downe his high branches. Yet when we aduisedly consider euery thing, and especiallie that which is by and by added of *Lebanon*, with the consolation that followeth, I am of opinion that this place ought to be referred

to the Iewes themselves. So then *Isaiah*, as I thinke, continues still to threaten the calamities which should happen soone after to the people: as if he should say, the Assyrian shall not only come to Nob, but shall spoile the whole countrie; and therefore he shall waste and whollie roote out whatsoeuer is beautifull and good therein, euen as if one should cut off the boughs from the trees, or as if the tree it selfe should bee plucked vp by the roots.

The Chapter following confirms this interpretation, wherein the Prophet giues consolation against this calamitie, and that consolation is ioyned to this verse, and is added as a fit remedie to asswage the bitterness of so great heauines. I do not greatly allow of the diuision of the Chapter, which is often times cleane against the haire, and whollie confoundeth the sense of the Prophet: I thinke then that that consolation ought to be ioyned to this verse, as if there were no diuision at all.

Moreouer, this similitude is not easie to be expounded, for it sufficientlie appeares that by the *high and mightie trees* he means whatsoeuer is strong, excellent, and high; so as he foretels the ruine and destruction of Iudca, and compares it to the cutting downe of a forest, signifying that there shall be nothing so high and excellent in the countrie which the enemies shall not cast downe euen till they shall haue stripped the land of all her ornaments. He also makes mention of *Lebanon*, for wee know that it was a mountaine greatly renowned in regard of faire & goodly trees which were in it: but if he had spoken of the Assyrians, there should haue been no reason in it for him to speake of the destruction of *Lebanon*. Whence we gather, that he here threatens the Iewes againe, and that the preface of his Sermon agrees vry well when it begins at this particule demonstratiue *Behold*, *Verf. 33. Chap. 10.*

Reade the former Section saue one, for the better vnderstanding of the verse following.

THE XI. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. But there shall come a rod forth of the stock of Isaiah, and a grasse shall grow out of his rootes.



Because the description of so horrible calamities might astonish the faithful, and might therewithall minister matter of despaire vnto them, it was very requisite to set some word of consolation before their eyes. For the beholding of the kingdome wasted, the cities ouerthrowne, and all parts of the countrie destroyed, could not but worke sighes and deepe groanings in them, so as they might

very easly haue been shaken, and in the end vterlie become desperate if the Lord had not prevented them by this consolation. The Prophet then shewes what the Lord will do in time to come, as also how he will restore the kingdome. Now he still continues the similitude which he had vsed in the former Chapter, for there he said that Iudca should be brought to nought, euen as the fire consumes the forest. The deformitie of this countrie then should resemble a wast ground, where nothing can be discerned but ashes, after the trees haue been consumed with fire. But to the end there might be some resemblance betweene things opposite, he saith, that a *rod shall*

The beginning of the Chapter ensuing, depends still vpon the two last verses of this present Chapter.

Verf. 33. 34.

shall

ſhall come forth of a ſtocke, which yet ſhall become a tree, and ſhall ſpread his branches and fruits faire and neere. For this cauſe I haue choſen rather to tranſlate the word *Gueſſe*, A dry ſtocke; then roote; although the matter be not great whether of them both we vſe; and yet this word ſtocke, notwithstanding doth better expreſſe the Prophets meaning: for hee ſignifies, that howſoever the ſtocke be dry, yet the graffe which ſhall come forth of it, ſhall bee more excellent then all the forreſts in the world.

Whence wee gather, that this prophetic cannot agree to any other perſon then to Chriſt; becauſe no ſuch graff was ſeene to come forth, before hee came into the world. Verily this can no way be applied vnto *Hezekias*, neither yet to *Ioſias*; becauſe they were aduanced euen from their birth to be Kings at the length. As touching *Zorobabel*, he neuer came to the thouſand part of that dignitie which the Prophet extolleth in this place. Wee ſee then that the conſolation of the poore and deſolate Iewes, is heere ſet before them in one onely Meſſiah, and that their hope concerning the ſame, is deferred euen till his appearing. For when he was manifeſted, there was no hope left of any reſtoring, or reeſtabliſhing of the kingdome; neither in deed could they haue had any if this promiſe had not been added: becauſe it ſeemed that the houſe and lineage of *Dauid* was vtterly extinct. For this cauſe he mentions not *Dauid*, but rather the familie of *Iſhai*; becauſe the dignitie of this family was ſo diminiſhed, that it ſeemed rather the houſe of a countrey Farmer, then the houſe of a King: for ſuch indeed was the houſe of *Iſhai*, when *Dauid* (little thinking thereon) was called to the government of the Kingdome. Thus then after they had loſt their ancient glory, and had receiued ſo great a diſcomfiture, hee calleth it the familie of *Iſhai*, becauſe it was the moſt inferior of all others. And therefore I thinke that the conſolation rather beginnes heere, then at the end of the former Chapter. The Iewes might doubt in ſo horrible a deſtruction, who ſhould be their defender: *Iſaiah* promiſeth one vnto them, howſoever hee muſt come forth of a drie ſtocke.

He continues ſtill the former ſimilitude of the forreſt (as I haue ſaid) becauſe it hath greater elegancie then if he had ſimply ſaid, that Meſſiah ſhould come. For hauing ſhewed heretofore that the forreſt ſhould be vtterly conſumed, hee addes notwithstanding, that a rod ſhall come forth, which ſhall reſtore the abundance and beaurie of this burnt forreſt againe: and this rod is Ieſus Chriſt, who ſhould come to bee the protector and Sauour of his people. Now it is not needfull to ſhew how abiect and baſe the beginnings of this kingdome was. Truly all that was to bee ſene therein was ſo poore and weak, that to outward appearance all things (the original of the blood royall excepted) ſeemed to be directly contrary to this which ſhould be accompliſhed in the perſon of the Redeemer. Yea ſo low were they brought, that this royall race was as good as vtterly

extinguished: for who would haue thought that a poore Carpenter had been begotten of the royall ſeede? Beſides, in what place, I pray you, was Chriſt borne, and what was his bringing vp? To conclude, after he had ſpent his whole life in contempt, and continually expoſed to ſhame and deriſion; was he not cruelly and ſhamefully put to death, by which hee was to begin his kingdome? Yet notwithstanding all this, he grew into an infinite greatneſſe, euen as a great tree growes vp of a ſmall & litle ſeede: as Chriſt alſo himſelfe teacheth vs, Matth. 13.31. whereof we haue daily examples. For it muſt come to paſſe of neceſſitie, that the ſame ſhould befall his kingdome, which came to paſſe in his owne perſon.

Verſ. 2. *And the ſpirit of the Lord ſhall reſt vpon him: the ſpirit of wiſedome and vnderſtanding, the ſpirit of counſell and ſtrength, the ſpirit of knowledge, and of the feare of the Lord.*

Now he begins to ſpeake of Chriſt plainly and without any figure. It had been ſufficient to haue propounded the conſolation vnder the former ſimilitude: and ſtilly did the oppoſition anſwere betwene the burning of the forreſt, and the new reſtoring of it againe. He therein deſcribed the twofold eſtate of the people: for hauing ſpoken of the calamitie, he by and by addes the hope of reſtauration: the beginning whereof notwithstanding muſt come forth of a litle bud; but now hee manifeſtly ſhewes what this deliuerance ſhall bee, and what the condition both of Chriſt and his Kingdome ſhould be alſo.

Some thinke this ſhould rather be referred to *Ezekiah*, who was a figure of Chriſt: but how inconsiderately wee ſhewed heretofore. For when *Ezekias* was borne, the name and royall dignitie of the houſe of *Dauid* had yet vigor and ſtrength in his ſucceſſours: and beſides, hee was farre ſhort of this greatneſſe, whereof he will ſpeake by and by.

Moreouer, hence we gather, that the ſpiritual Kingdome of Chriſt was promiſed in times paſt to the ancient people, inasmuch as the vertue, power, and maiestic thereof is heere eſtabliſhed in the gifts of the Holy ghoſt. Now albeit Chriſt had litle neede of theſe gifts and graces: yet was it needfull for vs that he ſhould be thus enriched with them, becauſe hee tooke our fleſh vpon him; to the end hee might afterwards poure out againe all thoſe benefits vpon vs, whereof we ſhould otherwiſe haue been vtterly deſtitute. For out of his fulneſſe muſt we all draw grace vpon grace, euen as out of the fountain; according to that in Iohn 1.16.

The Spirit of the Lord.] We muſt keepe that in mind, which I touched erewhile; to wit, that this is to be referred to the humane nature of Chriſt; becauſe it could not be that hee ſhould haue been enriched with the gifts and graces of the Father, but as in reſpect that he was made man. Beſides, as hee deſcended

Mark 6.3.

Mark 4.32.

1. Sam. 16.
11, 12.
2. Sam. 7. 11
& Pſal. 78.
70. 71.

38.

ded fro heauen for our sakes; so did he also receive the gifts of the holy Ghost from heauen to adorne vs with them: and this is that anointing whereby he obtained this name of Christ, the which he communicates to vs. For whence comes it that wee are called Christians but by reason that hee receiues vs into his fellowship, and that he distributes to euerie one of his fulnesse, according to the measure of his free liberallitie? And in very deed, this place doth not so much teach vs what Christ is in himselfe, as rather what he receiued of the Father, that hee might fill vs with his abundance. Now albeit there is no great need that wee should stand long in opening the meaning of the words, yet notwithstanding if any will have a thort difference betwene *wisdom* and *vnderstanding*, I am of opinion that the word *wisdom*, doth generally comprehend whatsoever belongs to the order and rule of life: and then that *vnderstanding* is added in stead of the exposition thereof. For if we haue the foresaid *wisdom*, wee shall haue *vnderstanding* enough. This word *counsell*, signifies as much as the word *iudgement*; whereby wee are able to giue resolution in doubtfull things: for it were not sufficient to haue *vnderstanding*, vnlesse wee were therewithall endued with *counsell*, to guide vs safely in matters of importance. The word *strength*, is sufficiently knowne. As touching *knowledge*, or skill, it differs little from *vnderstanding*, vnlesse it should rather appertaine vnto *knowing*, and so it should declare the act. *The feare of the Lord*, signifies a sincere affection to serue and honour God. Now the Prophet reckons not y^e all the graces of the holy Ghost heere, as many haue thought, For the Papists haue foolishly and vnlearnedly drawne their seuenfolded grace from this place: and some of the auncients haue been no lesse absurdly deceiued therein then they. *Isaiah* mentioneth but sixe, & they haue added the seventh of their owne head. And as one error lightly follows another, so they haue endeouored to refrain the gifts and graces of the holy Ghost to be but seuen in number: and yet notwithstanding in other places wee see that there are as many epithites more attributed

Gal. 6. 1.

2. Tim. 1. 7.

vnto him, according to the diuersitie of his effects. Moreouer, it is a thing sufficiently knowne, that we our selues are made partakers of many other benefits by the meanes of Christ, then those which are heere recited; to wit, meekenesse, chastitie, sobrietie, truth, holinesse, and the like, which comes to vs from no other fountaine then from Christ himselfe. Hee recites not all the gifts heere then, which were conferred vpon the Lord Iesus, neither was it needfull so to doe: his meaning was onely to shew that Christ was sent vnto vs furnished and adorned with all graces fit to enrich vs with all.

If these things had not been added, peradventure wee might haue conceived the restoration of this kingdome to be carnall rather then spiritual, as the Iewes doe: or might haue imagined Iesus Christ had been vnfurnished of all necessarie graces. And therefore

hee shewes first generally, then particularly, that the gifts of the holy Ghost were powred into him, to the end we might boldly goe vnto him to aske those things we stand in need of. For he will enrich vs with *wisdom* and *vnderstanding* he wil giue vs *counsell* when things are confused, he will make vs *strong* and valiant in combats, and will beautifie vs also with godlinesse; that is to say, with the true *feare of God*: in a word, hee will furnish vs with all things needfull for our life and saluation. The Prophet then comprehends all gifts and graces heere, so as it is too foolishly done of them, who haue gone about to suppress that which is not heere expressed.

Now hee shewes that all graces are in Christ, to the end they might be communicated vnto vs: for which cause we are called his companions in the 45. Psalm, verse 8. For as the strength of the members flows from the head, so Christ powres out the vertue of his heavenly vnction vpon the whole body of his Church. Whence it follows, that those who are barren and dry, haue no communion at all with Christ, and therefore doe faully challenge vnto them the name of Christians. As often therefore as wee feele in our selues the want of any of these gifts, let vs accuse our owne infidelitic as the cause of it; because true faith makes vs partakers of all Christs benefits. Let vs humbly intreat the Lord then, that he will not suffer the lusts of our flesh to raigne in vs, that so Christ may wholly vniue vs vnto himselfe. Let vs also observe, that it is onely in Christ, in whom wee are to seeke all good things. For we greatly deceiue our selues, if wee thinke to obtaine any thing at the Fathers hand by any other meane.

Vers. 3. *And shall make him prident in the feare of the Lord: for he shall not iudge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove by the hearing of his eares:*

The verbe *Riach*, which is put heere in the coniugation of *Hiphil*, signifies properly to smell. It may also be expounded in the active signification, To giue a piercing smell, which I thinke agrees as fittest to this place; that this prudence might also be placed amongst the gifts of the holy Ghost. And this effect also agrees particularly vnto the person of Christ; to wit, that he is wise and prudent to gouerne his owne beyond all that the capacite of any of the faithfull is able to comprehend. First, we are to note the similitude of the verbe, To smell; which signifies that Christ shall so abound with iudgement and discretion, that he shall not neede to apprehend any thing either by sight or hearing, because hee shall be able by his onely smell, to discern the most secret and hidden things.

The most part of the expositours take the particle, *In the feare of the Lord*, as if all the affections of the heart should be discovered before Christ, so as hee should be able easlie to iudge who are the true seruants of God.

These gifts of the holy Ghost, namely, wisdom, vnderstanding, counsell, strength, knowledge, and the feare of the Lord, are therefore powred into Christ, that we standing in neede of all, or any one of them, might boldly beg the same at his hands.

But

But let the readers conſider if the ſenſe would not agree better to ſay, that the feare of God is taken here for a certaine rule of judgement. For the Prophet doth of ſet purpoſe diſtinguiſh the heavenly judgement of Chriſt, from the judgement of men; to the end we might know that the outward appearance of holineſſe or integritie, is nothing at all approved before him. The ſenſe then is, that when we come before the tribunal of Chriſt, he will not onely examine things according to the outward actions, as men doe in civill policie: but the life is there examined and ſquared out, according to the rule of true pietie. Neither indeed is it ſit for men to bee the ſearchers of the heart: and we ſhall often ſee, that there is onely a vaine appearance in thoſe whom we ſhall eſteeme honeſt men: but Chriſt judgeth not by the outside, becauſe he knoweth and foundeth the uttermoſt and hiddenſt ſecrets of the heart. His judgement then is far different from mans judgement, who though they be neuer ſo expert and witty, doe yet too fooliſhly oft times overſhoot theſelves. Thence it followes, that none can be the true ſervants of God, but thoſe whom Ieſus Chriſt approveth. Now they cannot bee approved of him, unleſſe they ſhew a pure and upright heart: for we cannot deceiue him by any falſe and vaine appearances.

Verſ. 4. *But with righteousneſſe ſhall he judge the poore, and with equitie ſhall he reprove for the meek of the earth: and he ſhall ſmite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhall he ſlay the wicked.*

Here he teacheth that Chriſt ſhall be the protectour of the poore: or rather he ſhewes who they are to whom the grace of Chriſt properly appertaines; to wit, to the poore and meek: that is, to thoſe who being humbled vnder the ſenſe of their owne miſerie; have throwne to the ground this high and proud conceit of themſelves, wherewith men are vually puffed vp. till being meekened by the word, they have learned to humble themſelves. The Prophet here proteſtes then, that Chriſt will not be the defender and protectour of all in generall, but of thoſe who acknowledge themſelves poore, and deſtitute of all good things. And this Ieſus Chriſt himſelf ſhewed to the Diſciples of *John Bap. 13.* when he told them that the Goſpell was preached to the poore: *Mt 11. 5.* For all are not indeede indifferently capable of this doctrine, but thoſe onely who being ſtripped of all ourweaning of the fleſh, have their recourſe to this heavenly ſaueguard and protection.

There is here then a cloſe oppoſition; to wit, that Chriſt governes not the rich: that is to ſay, thoſe who are blowen vp with a falſe opinion of themſelves: becauſe that howſoever he calls al men vnto him, yet notwithstanding the moſt pure reſuſe to ſubiect themſelves vnder his gouernement; for they are

the poore onely, which ſuffer themſelves to be guided by him. This text admoniſheth vs to ſtrippe our ſelves quite and cleane of all pride, and to put on the ſpirit of meekeneſſe and modeſtie, if wee deſire that Chriſt ſhould rule vs vnder his hand. Behold heere then the ſpirituall pouertie which the Prophet recommends to all the members of Chriſt, which is not to be ſwollen with an ourweaning, but truly to be humbled with the feeling of our pouertie and miſerie, to the end we may depend vpon Chriſt onely. Having once reſolued throughly vpon that, this King and faithfull protectour will take care of our ſaluation, and will defend vs euen to the very end againſt all our enemies: we alſo heere learne, who they be that he calles vnto him, Come to mee all you, ſaith he, that trauaile and are heauie laden: *Matth. 11. 28.* Needfull is it then that we trauaile and be preſſed vnder the weight of our burthen, if wee will ſeele and haue experience of his lucre.

Wee haue alſo to obſerue the order which the Prophet keeps heere: for firſt hee placeth pouertie, and afterwards meekneſſe or gentleneſſe: becauſe we muſt be poore before wee can bee brought to be meek and lowly. As long as we thinke our ſelves to be any thing, being puffed vp with a vaine confidence of our owne worth, our heart forthwith ourfloweth into all pride and conceitedneſſe; ſo as wee cannot be humbled nor brought into any order: but when we once know our own miſerie, then we beginne to abaſe our ſelves, and being weak and oppreſſed, wee are forced to ſigh vnder the burthen. He heere deſcribes then y condition of Chriſts people, as heerebefore hee had ſet forth the nature of their King: whence alſo we are to learne, that all doe not indifferently partake in theſe excellent gifts of the holy Ghoſt, wherewith Chriſt was adorned, as we haue ſeene heretofore, but the poore and humble onely.

Now this word, *to iudge*, ſignifies gouernment; the principall part whereof is, that Chriſt makes vs partakers of thoſe gifts which hee hath receiued of his Father, to the end hee might liue in vs, and we in him.

And ſhall ſmite the earth.] In this place the Prophet extolles the efficacy of the word, which is the royall ſcepter of Chriſt. For the rod of the mouth is as much to ſay, as a verball ſcepter: and in the ſecond member, ſpeaking of the breath or ſpirit of the lips, hee repeats the ſelfeſame thing: as if he ſhould ſay, Chriſt ſhall not neede to borrow ſtrength from others to beate backe his enemies, and to ouerthrow whatſoever is contrary to his dignitie and Empire; for his onely breath or word ſhall be ſufficient thereunto. Now this may be a generall ſentence, ſeeing it is of neceſſitie that the faithfull doe firſt die, to the end they may be renewed into a ſpirituall life. And in this ſenſe, the Goſpell is called the ſword of the Spirit, dedicated for the killing of the ſacrifices: but the latter part of the verſe requires another ſenſe. And yet notwithstanding, if any bee minded to vie a diſtinction heere, the ſmiting of the earth ſhall be referred

We muſt be poore before we can be brought to meekneſſe.

In the former verſes the Prophet did ſet forth the nature of Chriſt as he is the King of his Church: here he deſcribes the qualities and condition of his ſubiect.

Rom. 15. 16.

To whom theſe graces formerly mentioned doe properly appertaine.

All are not capable of this doctrine.

Heb. 4. 12.

referred as well to the elect as to the reprobate, because *ſ* Gospel is a two edged ſword, piercing into the inmoſt and darkeſt corners of the heart and diſcerning the thoughts and affections: but it wounds one of them after one maner, and the other ſort after an other. For in mortifying the virtuous nature of the elect, it kills their luſts, that they may be a living & ſweet ſmelling ſacrifice before God: but it ſmiteth and killeth the reprobates our-right, becauſe they rot in their perdition; yea, it is made vnto them the ſauour of death vnto death as the Apoſtle ſpeakes 2. Cor. 2. 16. And I could eaſily grant that he ſpeakes here of both effects in aed, were it not that the vſe of the Hebrew tongue doth contradict it, becauſe the Hebrews doe often repeate one and the ſame ſentence in diuers words.

Now it follows by and by after, that Chriſt is armed with the *breath of the lips* to ſlay the wicked withal; vnleſſe ſome will ſay that *Iſaiah* added this ſecond member for amplifications ſake. And in very deed it is much more to ſlay, then to ſmite only. Seeing then it is the propertie of the Gospel to humble all men generally, it is a thing accidentall in the reprobate when he ſtrikes them with a deadlie wound. Thus the Prophet ſhould conioine the ſpeciall to the generally, thereby ſhewing that the wicked fall vpon the ſword of Chriſt vnto eternall deſtruction, becauſe they are not conſecrated to be acceptable offerings. How cuer it be, vndoubtedlie this laſt member ought to be whollie reſtrained and referred to the wicked, and therefore it was added, in as much as this efficacy appeareth not at the firſt in the preaching of the Gospel: and contrariwiſe many deſpise and iſt at it, holding whatſoever Ieſus Chriſt hath ſaid in his word to be no better then a fable. But howſoever they feele not his power by and by, yet can they not eſcape it, but at the laſt they ſhall be ſmiten to death therewith. And yet it ſeemes the Prophets meaning ſhould not be ſufficientlie explained, becauſe he not only ſpeakes heere of the inward feeling wherewithall the wicked are touched whether they will or no, but alſo euen of that impietie it ſelfe which ſhall be ſcattered and aboliſhed by the vertue and efficacy of this ſcepter, as the Apoſtle *Saint Paul* expoundeth it in the 2. Theſſ. 2. 3. who queſtionleſſe had reſpect vnto this place when he ſpake of the ruine of Antichriſt, and in that place he opens vnto vs the meaning of the Prophet. He ſhewes then that Ieſus Chriſt ſhall cuer be without enemies, which ſhall induor to overthrow his kingdome, to aboliſh or ſtop the free paſſage of his Goſpell (otherwiſe the Prophet had ſaid this without cauſe) but Ieſus Chriſt ſhall deſtroy them by the found of his word, as well euery one of them in particular, as all of them in generall, with their head and Captaine alſo. Thus *S. Paul* ſets before vs a double vſe of this doctrine in another place, requiring this of a Paſtor, that he be not only fit to teach, but alſo that he conuince the gainſayers, Tit. 1. 9. For the Paſtor ought not only to feede the flock, but alſo to keepe and maintaine it againſt all harmes.

Chriſt performs all theſe things, and therefore he is furniſhed with force of armes fit and neceſſarie to ſurmount the lies of Satan, the crueltie of tyrants, and all ſorts of enemies. It hereby appeares, that falſe doctrines can nor otherwiſe be aboliſhed but by the Goſpel; for the Magiſtrate ſhall vſe the ſword in vaine (which yet muſt be vſed notwithstanding) to reſſeſſe falſe teachers and falſe prophets: all this, I ſay, will ſerue to no purpoſe, vnleſſe the *ſword of Gods word* be firſt walking: which we ought diligentlie to obſerue againſt the Papiſts, who being deſtitute of the word of God, haue their refuge to new weapons, by meanes wherof they thinke to make their partie the ſtrongest. And which is worſe, they are ſo impudent to brag that heretikes can not be overcome by the word, although both the Prophet, and the Apoſtle *Paul* alſo eſtabliſheth none other meanes but it.

When the Prophet ſaith by the *ſpirit of the lips*, we muſt not reſtraine it to the perſon of Chriſt only. For this is to be referred to the word which is preached by the miniſters of it; becauſe Chriſt works ſo in them that his will in their *mouth* ſhould be reputed his mouth; and their *lips* as his owne lips: that is to ſay, when they ſpeake by his *mouth*, and preach his word faithfully. On the other ſide; the Prophet ſends vs not heere to ſecret reuelations, that Chriſt might reigne in vs: but he openlie extols the outward preaching of the word, and teacheth that the Gospel preached and ſounded forth, is a royall ſcepter in the hand of Chriſt; otherwiſe he had vnſeldie made mention of the *mouth* and of the *lips*. Whence it followeth, that all thoſe which reiect the outward preaching of the Gospel, do as much as in them is to ſhake off, or at the leaſt would pluck from Chriſt the ſcepter which he holds in his hand: not that the efficacy wherof the Prophet ſpeakes depends vpon the voice of men, but in regard that Chriſt himſelfe works by his miniſters, who will not haue their labour to become vaine or vnprofitable, but that they ſhould bring in the elect vnder his obedience, and kill the reprobates, as *S. Paul* glories in a certaine place, that he hath vengeance readie againſt all vnbeleeuers and rebels, 2. Cor. 10. 6.

Heere we muſt againe remember what is the nature of the kingdome of Chriſt: for as he hath neither crowne vpon his head, nor yet materiall armor vpon his back, no more doth he rule in the world by force of armes, neither gets he himſelfe authoritie by ſhewes and great preparations; nor yet brings he his people to his obedience either by feare or constraint; but the doctrine of the Gospel is his kinglie banner, vnder which he aſſembleth the faithfull to his ſeruite. Wherefore in what place ſoener the doctrine of the Gospel is preached, there it is certain the Sonne of God reignes; but where it is reiected, there is his rule and dominion aboliſhed by the ſame meanes. Whence it appeares how ridiculous the bragging of the Papiſts is, when they ſay that the Church is amongſt them only, when as yet in the meane while they

Falſe doctrines can no otherwiſe be put to flight, but by the power of the Goſpel preached.

Luk. 10. 15.

The wicked may for a time take pleaſure in concerning the word of the Gospel, but in the end the Gospel ſhall ſmite them thorow vnto endleſſe perdition.

The nature of Chriſtes kingdome.

1
2
3

Note.

1
2

put

put Christ himſelfe to ſilence, and can not indure his voice: nay, doe they not on the contrarie diſgorge their edicts with full mouth, their lawes, decrees, and tyrannicall conſtitutions againſt it?

Verſ. 5. *And iuſtice ſhall be the girdle of his loines, and faithfullnes the girdle of his reines.*

Other tranſlate girdle: but becauſe the Prophet ſets Christ before vs decked as it were with his royall ornaments, I haue rather tranſlated it ſword-girdle, or hangiers: for this alſo is a kingly ornament. as was the ſcepter which was giuen him heretofore. And *Iob* minding to ſhew that God will ſtrip kings of their honour, ſaith, that he will vnloofe or vn buckle their girdle. *Iob. 12. 18.* Wherefore to be girt with a ſword-girdle is nothing els but to be placed in royall dignitie, as we alſo ſhall ſee hereafter in another place, *Chap. 22. 21.* Now the Prophet heere deſcribes two ſorts of girdles, to wit, *iuiſtice*, and *faithfullnes*: vnleſſe any had rather ſay that the word *faithfullnes* being a ſubſtantiu, ſhould be put in the place of an adiectiue, as if he ſhould ſay, that Christ ſhall be girt with *faithfull iuſtice*. For *faithfullnes* is not added here as a diuers thing from iuſtice; but to declare what this *iuiſtice* is wherewith Christ is girded. Some thinke he ſpeakes here of that *iuiſtice* which Christ communicateth vnto vs, ſo as it ſhould not only be in him, but in his members alſo. By faith or *ueritie* they vnderſtand that faith whereby we embrace the ſaluation which is offered vnto vs.

The Chalde Paraphraſt expoundeth it thus, The iuſt ſhall come about him, and the faithfull ſhall approach vnto him. But I take it more ſimple, as if he ſhould ſay, He ſhall not appeare as kings clothed with purple, & crowned with a diademe, or girt with a ſword-girdle, but *iuiſtice* and *faithfullnes* ſhall ſhine in him. I confeſſe that iuſtice is not ſo incloſed in Ieſus Christ that it alſo appertaines not to all his members: yet notwithstanding wee muſt obſerue this manner of ſpeech, that Christ *Girded with righteousnes*, comes forth to gouerne his members by it, the which alſo he forthwith powres out vpon them by a ſecret power of the holy ghoſt. If we diſtinguiſh the word faith from iuſtice, me thinks it ſhould be put for faithfullnes or ſtedfaſtnes; as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, that Christ will neuer deceiue thoſe that are his, becauſe he will alwaies continue like himſelfe.

Verſ. 6. *The wolfe alſo ſhall dwell with the lambe, and the leopard ſhall lie with the kid, and the calfe and the lion, and the fat beaſt together, and a little child ſhall lead them.*

7. *And the cow and beare ſhall feede, their young ones ſhall lie together: and the lion ſhall eat ſtraw like the bullocke.*

Hee againe deſcribeth the qualities and conditions of thoſe which ſhall be ſubdu-

ed vnto Christ. For becauſe there is a mutual correſpondency betweene the King and the ſubiects, he ſometimes aſcends from the body to the head, and by and from the head to the members: and we haue already ſaid, that Christ taigues not for himſelfe, but for his faithfull ones: whence it followes, that he frames our vnderſtandings to his will, by the operation of his holy Spirit. Yet notwithstanding the Prophet aimes at a further thing: for it is as if he ſhould promiſe an happy reſtaurment to the world, deſcribing as it were the order which was at the beginning, before that wofull and ſorrowfull change happened by the reuolt of man, vnder the which we are conſtrained to ſigh at this day. Whence comes it that the brute beaſts are ſo cruell, that ſuch as haue any ſtrength giue themſelves to ſnatch, rent, and deuoure with violence? Certainly there ſhould haue bin no diſcord betweene God and the creatures, if they had continued ſtedfaſt in their firſt and pure originall. When they riſe vp then one againſt another, and that the weakeſt haue neede of defence againſt the ſtrongeſt, is it not a teſtimonie of that conſuſion which is iſſued from the ſinne of man? Now ſeeing Christ is come to the end, that hauing aboliſhed the curſe, he might reconcile the world vnto God; it is not without cauſe that the reſtaurment of a perfect eſtate is attributed to him: as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, that the golden world ſhould returne, during which time all felicitie ſhould flouriſh: that is to ſay, before the fall of man, and the change and ruine which followed thereupon.

God by *Hyſea* ſpeaketh thus; I will make a covenant for them with the beaſts of the field, with the birds of the ayre, and with the creeping things: *Hoſe. 2. 18.* as if hee ſhould ſay, After that God ſhall become mercifull to the world for Christs ſake, he will therewithall ſhew the ſignes of his good fauour vnto it: to the end that whatſoeuer corruptions did proceed from the ſinne of man, might come to an end. To conclude, the Prophets vnder theſe figures, teach the very ſame which *S. Paul* aſſirmes plainly; to wit, that Christ *Col. 1. 20.* came to gather the things which were ſcattered both in heauen and in earth: *Ephel. 1. 10.* The ſumme of all then is, that Christ ſhall come to chaſe all hurtfull things out of the world, and to reſtore it to the firſt beautie in which it was before it was accuſed.

And therefore he ſaith, that the lion ſhall feede as the bullocke: for if the contagion of ſinne had not infected the world, wee ſhould not haue ſcene any beaſt giuen to blood nor to the pray, but the fruits of the earth would haue ſufficed all things; which kind of foodd iudged was preſcribed vnto them by the Lord. In the meane while, although *Iſaiab* ſaith, that the wild and the tame beaſts ſhould liue quietly together, to the end the bleſſing of God ſhould appeare & ſhine euery where; yet notwithstanding he aimes chiefly at that which I haue ſaid, to wit, that no hurtfull affection ſhall be diſcerned amongſt the people of Christ, neither yet any crueltie or inhumanitie whatſoeuer. And whereas before

Verſe 2.

Col. 1. 20.

Had not the contagion of ſinne infected the world, we ſhould haue ſcene no beaſt giuen to deuouring or bloodſucking, but the fruits of the earth would haue ſufficed all liuing creatures.

they had beene as lions and leopards, they should now become like lambe and sheepe; because they shall haue put off all cruell and brutish affection. For by these kindes of speech, he meant nothing else but to say, that those which in times past had been like outrageous and cruell beasts, should become gentle and tractable. And therefore he compares violent men and robbers, to *wolves* and *bearers*, which liue of the pray and spoile: and pronounceth that they should become tame and meeke, so as contenting themselves with a common and ordinarie diet, they will carefully auoid the doing of wrong or hurt vnto any.

Now here we must argue from the lesse to the greater; to wit, if Christ doe appeare and set the brute beasts at vnitie together, much more will hee nourish brotherly concord betwene men, whom hee will gouerne by the spirit of meekenesse. And yet it is not the Prophets meaning that any are thus gentle and peaceable of their own nature, before they be reformed by grace; but hee promiseth, y^e how peruerse soeuer their nature shall be, yet they shall forsake their crueltie, and shall become as meeke as sheepe or lambs.

Whereas hee addes, that a little childe shall leade them: it signifies, that those beasts which were otherwise cruell and vnrained, shall readily yeeld cheerfull seruice, so as there shall be no need to vse any violence to repress their crueltie. In the meane while, we must keep in minde the similitude which we haue touched; to wit, that those shall obey Christ, which shall be giuen vnto him, although they were outrageous beasts before; and shall obey in such wise, that they shall by and by follow him, and that at his least becke: as it is also said in the 110. Psalme, verse 3. Thy people shal come willingly. Neither ought they to be placed in the ranke of sheepe, which are not indued with this meekenesse. Let vs suffer him then to master and rule vs, and let vs willingly submit our selues to those to whom he hath giuen vs in charge, although they be like little children. Thus it seemes that the Ministers of the word should here be compared to little children, because they haue no externall power; neither doe they shew themselves to haue any ciuill authoritie.

Obicq.

But it may be demanded, whether there be not some who are meeke and gentle, who yet haue not been tamed by the doctrine of the Gospell. For it seemes indeed that the Prophet should say so, when hee compares some to sheepe, and others to beares and lions. I confesse we shall finde a meruailous diuersitie in men, who yet are led by the very instinct of their own nature: some are meeke and peaceable, others turbulent and inhumane; but yet it is certaine that all are sauage and outrageous, till Christ haue tamed them by the Gospell. All are puffed vp with ambition & pride, before they bee purged with this medicine. True it is that many may well counterfet a false appearance of modestie and humilitie, but in the meane while they burst with pride inwardly. To bee short, where the Spirit of Christ dwelles not, there let vs not looke to finde any true humilitie.

No true humilitie to be found, where the Spirit of Christ dwells not.

Verf. 8. *And the sucking child shall play upon the hole of the aspe: and the weaned child shall put his hand upon the cockatrice hole.*

HE continues his former speech; to wit, that when men shall be recciued againe into fauour with God, and that they shall be purged from their vices by the spirit of regeneration, they shall then also bee freed from their hurtfull nature. For men should not neede to feare the biting of venomous serpents, but in regard y^e they are vnworthy that God should subiect the parts of the whole world vnder their authoritie. And in that the serpents haue this libertie to hurt little children, truly it thence appeares, that all the posteritie of Adam is infected with sinne from the conception in the wombe. Now we are to obserue this similitude whereof wee haue spoken; to wit, that those who are filled with an hidden venome to hurt, shall in such wise change their naturall inclination, that they shall not hurt so much as little children.

The libertie of doing harme which one creature hath over another, argues that the whole posteritie of Adam is infected with sinne, euen from the conception.

Some are openly fierce and cruell; others carry and nourish their malice in secret, as a serpent doth his poison; as David also describes it, Psal. 55. 22. For some are more ready to manifest their malice; others more slow. In a word, whatsoeuer they be, he signifies that all must bee purged from their malice, as well open as secret, after they shall be once subiected vnder Christ. He also signifies, that hence forward there shall be a generall securitie euerie where, so as those who are destitute of all helpe, shall liue in safetie, in such wise as they shall aduenture to expose themselves euen to the most perillous dangers.

Verf. 9. *Then shall none hurt nor destroy in all the mountaine of mine holinesse: for the earth shall bee full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters that cover the sea.*

NOW hee plainly shewes, that euen men themselves hauing subdued their naturall perversitie, shall bee inclined to equitie. Hee speakes then of the faithfull, who are truly regenerated into newnesse of life. For although there are many hypocrits full of iniquitie, mingled in the Church with the elect of God; yet notwithstanding they are like to the Ishmaelites, whom God will driue out thence when his time is. To this purpose we are to note that which is said in Psal. 15. 2. & 24. 4. that none but the louers of iustice shall haue any settled or sure rest in the Temple of God, to dwell there perpetually. This then appertaines to the lawfull citizens of the Church to bee pure and exempt from all desire to doe hurt. Whence we gather also, that it is a singular gift of the holy Ghost, when men abstaine from violent courses; because ambition, pride, crueltie, and couetousnesse, will ordinarily push them forward to wrong their

their neighbours every kinde of way, and therefore the Prophet adds to very good purpose that this inestimable gift *flowes from the knowledge of God.* Thus then it behoues that all flesh be humbled, and that men learne to put themselves into the protection and safegard of God, and to maintaine brotherly kindnes betwene themselves when they know that he is the father of them all. For although many which are not yet renewed by the spirit of Christ may haue some appearance of humanitie, yet is it very certaine that they are caried away therein with the loue of themselves, because all haue this naturallie so rooted in them, that they will alwaies seeke their owne profit rather then the profit of another, and therefore thinke they are put in this world only to serue their owne turne and not their neighbours: yea, they would haue all the world at their command if it were possible, which *Plato* also wisely considered.

From hence proceed deceits, periuries, thefts, robberies, & an infinit other such like wickednesses, There is no fit remedie then to tame this vnbridled lust but the knowledge of God only. Now we see how the Prophet doth againe establish the dominion of Christ in the faith and doctrine of the Gospel, it being the meanes (indeed) without which he doth not ordinarielie gather vs to himselfe: for thereby he illuminates our vnderstandings to manifest vnto vs the heauenly life, which is nothing else (as himselfe witnesseth) but to know him to be the only true God, and him whom he hath sent, Iesus Christ, *Iohn 17.3.*

Moreover, the *abundance of knowledge* is here closely compared to that small taste which God gaue to the ancient people vnder the law. And albeit the Iewes were kept vnder such childish rudiments, yet vnto vs hath the perfect light of the heauenly wisdom shined by the meanes of the Gospel, as *Ieremiah* also foretold, They shall not euery one teach his neighbour, nor euery one his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, saith the Lord, from the least vnto the greatest, *Ier. 31.34.* If so be y^e this fulnes of knowledge then haue taken possession in our vnderstandings, it will purge and cleanse them fro all maliciousnes. This place also informes vs what manner of Church there is in the Papacie, where the light of holy doctrine being smothered, yea almost cleane extinct, their whole religion is, to be blindfolded in a brutish ignorance.

Now if it so fall out that we haue not a perfect knowledge at the first dash, yet we must endeavour day by day to profit more and more, *2. Pet. 3.18.* and that in such wise, that the fruit thereof may issue from this roote. Whence it appears that the greater part haue profited but very meanly in the schoole of Christ, when so many cosenages, extortions, and violences haue their full swing on all sides.

Verſ. 10. And in that day the roote of Iſnai which shall stand vp for a signe vnto

the people, the nations shall seeke vnto it, and his rest shall be glorious.

HE returnes againe to y^e person of Christ, and repeats the same similitude which he tooke vp heretofore in the beginning of this Chapter, to wit, of the roote, or sprig issuing out of the drie stock, which had no appearance of any sap in it. He saith then it shall come to passe that the *Gentiles*, who in times past had the Iewes in abomination, shall yet come and *doe homage to the King of the Iewes.* Now this might seeme a thing altogether incredible: and no doubt but this promise was a long time derided, because such a change should rather haue been expected when the kingdome stood & flourished in his full strength then after it was destroyed. But needfull it was it should be brought thus low, to the end it might afterwards be exalted; and that the glorie and power of God might hereby be better knowne, then if all things had been in their flourishing estate. For what is he that with the eyes of flesh could haue apprehended such a height, from a little sprig that it should be discerned of all people, and should draw the eyes of euery one vnto it? He compares it to a standard lifted vp on high: and we know that this was accomplished in the publication of the Gospel, yea much more excellentlie then if Christ had soared aboue y^e cloudes. Hereunto appertaines that which is said in *S: Iohn, As Moſe lift vp the Serpent in the wildernesse, so must the sonne of man be lift vp, Iohn. 3.14.*

Christ is then sought when wee run vnto him to obtaine saluation, as in many places of the scripture, where the seeking of God, is as much to say as to put our whole hope and confidence in him. And therefore the Greekes haue translated, They haue hoped, respecting the sense, rather then the signification of the word.

As touching that which immediatlie folowes, that *his rest shall be glorious*, all the expositors almost do expound it of the Sepulcher of Christ, taking a part for the whole, because they by and by after referre it vnto his death. And to say the truth, the buriall of Christ was but an appendance of his death. The sense then according to their opinion should be, that the death of Christ which was ignominious before the world, shall be full of glorie and maiestie. But when I consider all circumstances more narrowly, the Prophet in this place by this word *rest*, signifies the Church: as also it is said in the Psalms, This is my rest for euer, here will I dwell, *Psal. 132. 14.* And thus he decketh the companie of the faithfull with an honorable title, because in them he will haue his perpetuall mansion. Seeing then that the Church at that time was exposed to mocks and reproches, he promisseth that it shall be brought to a better and more happie estate, and shall yet againe recouer her first beautie. Here then we haue an excellent testimonie, which giues vs to vnderstand, that God will dwell for euer in his Church, although this shall not alwaies appear so vnto men.

There may be some appearance of humanitie euen in the vnegenerate, which yet sprigs only from selfeloue.

Plato.

Luk. 2. 31. 32

Nums. 2. 1. 9

Though we attaine not vnto a perfect knowledge the first day: yet we must endeavour to profit more and more continually.

Verf. 11. *And in the same day shall the Lord stretch forth his hand againe the second time, to possesse the remnant of his people (which shall be left) of Asshur and of Egypt, and* Parthos, and Ethiopia, and of Elam, and of Shinar, and of Hamath, and of the Isles of the sea.*

*Or, Parthe.

BECAUSE the prophesie touching the future glorie of the Church was incredible, hee now declares by what means it shall be brought to passe; to wit, that God will manifest the strength of his hand to performe as it were a famous and memorable act. Moreover, to confirme the elect people in good hope, hee brings to their remembrance the deliuerance past, to the end they might not doubt that God should not bee as well able to deliuer them now, as hee was to deliuer their fathers, who had experience thereof in former time in Egypt. For this word *againe*, aimes at that, and it is all one as if hee had said, Now also will God be the Redcemer of his Church. This hee confirms by another reason; to wit, although it seemed that God should despise his people; yet will hee not be deprived of his *inheritance*. The summe is, that God will take care of the saluation of his Church, to the end hee may not be bereaued of his right.

Exod. 12. 31.

Notwithstanding hee speaks expressly of the *remnant*, because this deliuerance should appertaine but to a litle handfull of seede. Lastly, hee repeats that which hee had said heretofore; Howsoever God separates and scatters his Church, yet can it not be that he should wholly reiect it; because it is no lesse precious vnto him, then our *heritage* is deare vnto euerie one of vs. Now he speaks not of the *Assyrians*, which had led the people into captiuitie, but also of *other nations* amongst whom the Iewes were scattered. For after the greater part of the people were carried into Babylon, some fled into *Ethiopia*, others into other regions; because they feared lest they should be led into the same bondage with others. As touching *Parthe*, in the text it is *Parthos*: some thinke it should be *Parthe*; and this is probable, although others say that it is Arabia the Stony. Vnder the word *Elam*, he comprehends the *Medes*, *Zoedians*, *Bactrians*, and other Easterne people. *Shinar*, or *Ethiopia*, is comprehended in *Chaldea*. By *Hamath*, some vnderstand *Cilicia*, and other neighbour regions about Mount *Taurus*. Vnder this word of the *Iles*, the Iewes vnderstand all the regions which are beyond the sea. For according to their opinion, Greece, Italie, and Spaine are Iles; because the sea is betwene them and others. We see then that the Prophet speaks not onely here of the deliuerance which was vnder *Zorobabel*, but aimes at a further mark: for the Iewes were not then carried into Egypt, neither into *Ethiopia*, nor yet into any other regions. This cannot be vnderstood then of the deliuerance out of *Babylon*, but ought to be

referred to the kingdome of Christ, vnder which this deliuerance hath been, and is accomplished by the preaching of the Gospell. Moreover, we must obserue, that this which is heere mentioncd, is a speciall worke of God, and not of men; because hee saith, that the Lord shall stretch out his hand; heerein attributing that to the diuine power of the Lord, which men cannot accomplish by all their strength.

We are also to note, that from the consideration of the benefits which the Lord hath done for vs in times past; wee ought to be the better confirmed in hope for the time to come: so as when we call to minde the deliuerance out of *Egypt* and out of *Babylon*, wee may boldly conclude, that the Lord is as mightie now as he was then; and that he will no lesse assist vs at this day, euen in setting vp the Church againe in her primitiue beautie and glory. Hee can performe the same thing the third, the fourth, yea many times, which hee hath done once or twice. Whereas the Prophet calles those whom God deliuers a *remnant*, let vs learne not to affect a great multitude, but let vs content our selues with our small number, and not bee abashed although we be but a few. For if so be the truth and right confines of God flourish amongst vs, we shall haue true and ample occasion giuen vs to rest therein securely.

Former deliuerances should encourage vs to hope for the like in time to come.
2. Cor. I. 10.

Multitudes not to be affected, vnlesse truth and righteousness doe also flourish.

Verf. 12. *He shall set vp a signe to the nations, and assemble the dispersed of Israel, and gather the scattered of Iudah from the foure corners of the world.*

THIS verse contains nothing in it but the explication of the former. Now this manner of speech is taken from a similitude, the sense whereof notwithstanding may be double; to wit, either that the Lord in making this signe, will amaze the enemies in such wise, as they shall not dare to stop the passages against the people which shall returne; or rather that hee will set up a signe to the poore banished, to the end they should make no difficultie to take their iourne home againe. Besides, the vse of this doctrine hath its force amongst vs euen at this day: for looke how the standard is lifted vp in the Campe, to assemble euerie one to his colours, and to hold himselfe in battel aray; so also is the standard now set vp before vs, to the end all of vs should gather our selues together thercunto; that is to say, The Gospell which the Lord hath lifted up amongst the Gentiles, and in the which Iesus Christ is preached vnto vs. From hence let vs obserue, that we cannot be gathered vnto the Lord, vnlesse wee come vnder this ensigne, and bee vnited vnto him by faith. For he will not acknowledge vs for any of his sheep, if we be not gathered in from our scattering, and that all of vs doe assemble our selues vnder this banner: as himselfe also saith, My sheepe heare my voice, and they follow me: John 10. 27. There is a repetition in the word *To gather*: for he shewes how effectuall the calling of God shall bee, because

becauſe he will ſet his people in their former eſtate, euen as ſoone as he ſhall be pleaſed to make but a ſigne onely.

The word *ſcattering*, is collectiue, and vnder it he comprehends the Iewes ſcattered here and there. It ſeemes alſo that he alludes (as hee often doth in other places) to one ſelfeſame text of *Mofes*, where the Lord promiſeth to gather together his people, when they ſhall be ſcattered to the remot parts of the world, yea euen into the *ſoure corners of the earth*: Deut. 30. 4. Now this was fulfilled vnder the leading and gouernment of Chriſt: at this day therefore ought wee to hope, that by the meanes of this good Captaine, the poore and deſolate Church ſhall bee reſtored. For otherwiſe there is little hope that this ſmall remnant ſhall bee gathered together, unleſſe the elect doe bend their eyes toward this enſigne. We ought often therefore to call theſe promiſes to mind; to the end wee being vnderpropped by them, may bee more and more eſtabliſhed and confirmed.

Verſ. 13. *The hatred alſo of Ephraim ſhall depart, and the aduerſaries of Iudah ſhall be cut off: Ephraim ſhall not enmie Iudah, neither ſhall Iudah vex Ephraim.*

HERE hee promiſeth that there ſhall bee ſuch great tranquillitie in the Church, that the Iſraelites and the Iewes ſhall not waite themſelues any more by ciuill diſſenſions, neither yet bee moleſted in any ſort by their enemies: alſo, that they ſhall not bee ſubiect to *hauel* nor *enmie*, as they were before. Not as if there ſhould no wicked ones at all be found ſtill among them; but that the Lord will roote them out at the laſt. Yet we are eſpecially to obſerue that which he addes touching the *pacifications of ciuill hares and diſſenſion*; to wit, that the children of *Abraham* ſhall no more moleſt one another, but ſhall be at vnicie in one religion, and in the true feare of God. For it was an odious and deteſtable ſpectacle to ſee them ſo long time ſworne enemies one to another. It is not for nought that he ſhewes the fountaine of diſſenſions; to wit, *enmie*, which was the cauſe why the ſucceſſours of *Abraham* did rent one another, when the Tribes of *Iudah* and *Ephraim* ſtroue amongſt themſelues for the excellencie. This curſed fire brand *enmie*, hath kindled all the warres in the world, when as no man will humble himſelfe, nor part with the leaſt iot of his right. In a word, the Lord promiſeth here, both an outward and an inward peace, which is an excellent and deſireable benefit aboue all things.

But ſome will ſay, that this was neuer yet accompliſhed, and that we haue rather ſcene the contrarie come to paſſe. For as ſoone as the Goſpell beganne to be publiſhed, diuers wars, tumults, and horrible perſecutions followed thereupon; and all the world almoſt was in an vprore and thriken: and ſince I pray you, what peace hath the Church had with in it?

Satan by ſowing of his cockle and curſed ſeede, hath ſtured vphorrible troubles euen amongſt Chriſtians themſelues; ſo as the Church hath had none more dangerous nor deadly enemies, then thoſe that haue been nourished and maintained in her owne lappe.

I aſſure, that the Prophet heere comprehends the whole Kingdome of Ieſus Chriſt, and not one age or generation. For in this liſe wee doe but onely taſte the firſt fruits as it were of this Kingdome. Moreover, although the Church be vexed with enemies, as well ſtrangers as diuiniſtical, yet euen in the miſt of them, God ceafeſſe not to preſerue and maintaine it: and this in the end ouerturnes all his enemies. Alſo, this prophecie properly appertaines to the true and lawfull children of *Abraham*, whom the Lord daily purgeth by afflictions and baniſhments; cauſing them by this meanes to forget all ambition and enuie: for we ſhall not vually find deſire of vaine glorie amongſt them, who haue been meekened and inſtructed in the ſchoole of Chriſt. Thus then, that which *Iſaiab* heere promiſeth, hath alreadie been fulfilled in ſome part, and is accompliſhed euery day. But we muſt goe on ſtill in theſe exerciſes, and haue fighting duly, as well within as without, vntill wee obtaine that eternall peace which wee ſhall ioy hereafter, with all felicitie in the Kingdome of God.

Verſ. 14. *But they ſhall ſtce upon the ſhoulders of the Philistines toward the weſt: they ſhall ſpcke them of the Eaſt together: Elym and Moab ſhall be ſtretching out of their hands, and the children of Ammon in their obedience.*

HIS meaning is, that the Lord will alſo aſſiſt his people by another means; to wit, that he will triumph ouer his enemies, & ſubdue them vnder his power. For as he hath hitherto ſpoken of the ſafetie of the Church, ſo now alſo he declares, that theſe ſhall obtaine victorie ouer her enemies. Now hee makes mention of the nations againſt whom the Iewes had continuall warres: the *Philistiſtims* aſſiſted and moleſted them on the one ſide, on the other ſide they had the *Ammonites* and *Moabites*, by whom they were conioyned both by ſanguinitie and neighbour hood. And on the other ſide were the *Itumans*, who were not withheld by any necereneſſe of kindred whatſoeuer, from being the ſworne enemies of the Iewes; they came of *Eſau* the brother of *Iacob*; the remembrance wherof ought to haue turned them from all hatred and rancour. And therefore the Lord promiſeth to his Church, that although ſhe ſhould haue enemies, that yet notwithstanding by ſuffering vnder them, ſhee ſhall conquer and bring them vnder in the end.

The *ſtretching forth of the hands*, ſignifies the domination which the Church ſhall obtaine ouer her enemies: for ordinarily the *hands*, ſignifies

Enmie the fountaine of diſſenſions.

Obiect.

Ant. 1 2 3

4

1 2 3

Gen. 36. 1. 8. 9.

The Church ouercomes by ſuffering.

signifies power, and the Hebrews vse the phraſe, To ſtretch out the hand, to ſubdue this or that. So as it is ſaid in the Pſalme, I will ſet his *hand* in the ſea, and his *right hand* in the floods, Pſal. 89. 26. To ſtretch out the hand then ſignifies power to rule and gouerne; and contrariwiſe he alſo adds the *obediēce* which the enemies ſhall yeeld vnto her.

The Iewes who dreame of an earthlie kingdome and Meſſiah, interpret all theſe things carnallie, and draw them to I ſwor not what outward power, whereas they ſhould rather be eſteemed according to the ſtate and condition of Chriſtes kingdome. True it is that the effect of this prophete was ſcene to be fulfilled in ſome part, when the Lord brought back the Iewes from captiuitie, at which time he raiſed them vp into a good eſtate in deſpite of all their neighbour enemies: but the faithfull were to expect a more excellent victorie, which in the end they obtained by the preaching of the Goſpel. For albeit we muſt fight continually vnder the croſſe, yet we overcome our enemies notwithstanding:
 1. firſt, when being deliuered from vnder the tyrannie of the diuell & vnbeleeuers, we are called and maintained in freedom by Ieſus Chriſt, that the fleſh with all his luſts may be brought vnder: ſecondly, when by meanes
 2. hereof we liue to him, and poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience, quietly with a mecke ſpirit bearing whatſoever befall vs. We alſo heape
 Rom. 12. 20. coles of fire vpon the heads of our enemies, and by this meanes likewiſe we obtaine victorie ouer them and ouer all their iniuries and reproches, vnder which it ſeemes we are ſubiect.

Verſ. 15. *The Lord alſo ſhall vntertie deſtroy the tongue of the Egyptian ſea, and With his mightie Wind ſhall liſt vp his hand ouer the riuier, and ſhall ſmite him in his ſeauen ſtreames, and cauſe men to walke therein With ſhoes.*

HE means nothing elſe in this verſe but to ſhew that the Lord by his admirable power will open a way vnto his people which ſeemed to be ſhut vp before. Now he ſpeakes by a figure, for one ſide of the ſea is called a *tongue*, becauſe when the ſea enters vpō both lauds, and occupies one part, it ſeemes like a tongue thruſt out. He ſpeakes of the *Egyptian ſea* then, yea of *Egypt* it ſelfe, which he yet more plainly declares hereafter. But he principallie names the *ſea* and the *riuiers*, becauſe theſe be fortrefſes of the regions and the cloſings in of all paſſages.

[*Vpon the riuier.*] No doubt but he means the riuier *Nilus*, which watereth and compaſſeth all Egypt in many places, by meanes whereof they might haue ſhut vp the paſſage before the people returning into Iudea. I doubt not but the word *Ruach* is here taken for wind, although theſe words of the Lord be ioyned therewith: for all the *winds* are the *Lords*, ſeeing he gouernes and guides them as it pleaſeth him, and eſpeciallie a *vehement*

whirlewind raiſed vp miraculoſlie is ſo taken when this word is vſed.

Now he alludes to the firſt deliuerance of the Church whē it was brought out of Egypt. For whē it pleaſed God to giue them paſſage, he dried vp the ſea by the violence and force of the winds, Exod. 14. 21. I grant that God needed not the help of winds, becauſe he was able to haue done it of himſelfe: but when he vſeth ordinarie meanes, firſt from thence we learne that all creatures are readie to yeeld obediēce vnto him. And howſoever they haue their naturall courſe, yet are they all in his hands, ſo as he will turne their force and violence which way ſoever it ſhall pleaſe him. For example, when the wind riſeth, it takes his beginning of a naturall cauſe: all the winds alſo haue their ſeueral proprietie: the ſouth wind is moyſt, the north wind cold, and the effects which proceed from them are altogether alike: for the ſouth wind makes the bodies moiſt, and the north wind dries them. The Lord ſhewes by admirable miracles that he hath a ſuperior power, and an ouerruling hand farre aboue theſe naturall cauſes, ſo as nature (that is to ſay, the diſpoſition of things, as prophane men haue imagined) ouerrules not, but he only. Secondly he ſhewes, that when he thinks good he changeth the nature and order of things, to the end he may be acknowledged the author of them, becauſe ſuch a change doth the better ſet forth his power and domination. This is the cauſe why *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not of the wind alone, but of the *wind of the Lord*, to the end we might know that the wind is not raiſed vp by chance, but is directed by the hand of the Lord.

[*And he ſhall ſmite him in his ſeuen ſtreames.*]

Others tranſlate floods, and expound it thus, He will diuide Nilus into ſeuen parts. Now although this expoſition be received of all, yet I approue not of it; and as I take it, they haue failed here by forgetfulneſſe rather then by ignorance, for I hold them learned men notwithstanding, and ſuch as are well exerciſed in reading the ancient writers. It is well enough knowne by hiſtories, that Nilus hath ſeuen principall mouthes; others were called falſe mouthes, becauſe they had no name. Look then how many armes or mouthes it had, ſo many ſtreames and riuers it made as it ſeemes; and his riuers would haue been ſo many lets and impediments to ſlacken the voyage. Now *Iſaiah* did purpoſely name the, becauſe of the great fame of this flood. Moreover, although this flood was deepe, yet notwithstanding he ſaith, it ſhall be ſo dried vp, that one ſhall not neede *ſo pull off his ſhoes* to paſſe ouer it: which yet they muſt needs haue done if there had been neuer ſo little water remaining.

The Prophet then vnder theſe borrowed ſpeeches means nothing elſe but to certifie them, that no power whatſoever ſhall be able to let God, when it pleaſeth him to deliuer his people out of captiuitie. He touched the hiſtorie of the firſt deliuerance, to the end they might know that the ſame ſhould now befall them which had hapned to their fathers.

What we haue to learne from Gods working by ordinarie meanes.

2

thers in times paſt. This is the cauſe why he doth thus paint it forth before their eyes, becauſe the meanes of this deliuerance ſhould not appeare. For this promiſe ſo barely publiſhed, would not haue entred into their hearts ſo effectually as this notable example did, which was thus propounded and ſet before them.

Verſ. 16. *And there ſhall be a path to the remnant of his people, which are left of Aſhur; like as it was vnto Iſrael in the day that hee came vp out of the land of Egypt.*

This verſe containes no new matter, but opens that further which went before; to wit, that the people ſhall feele the verie ſame powerfull hand of God in their deliue-

rance out of Babylon, as they had formerly proued in their deliuerance out of Egypt. He opened a way thorow the ſeas, alſo thorow a waſte deſert: and laſtly, thorow the miſt of Iordan: euen thus will hee make way againe, Iſaiah ſaith, for his people by the ſame admirable meanes. Now what the Lord hath once done, let vs expect the ſame againe for the tyme to come; and let vs to this end conſider the ancient hiſtories. This alſo ought to be referred to the laſt deliuerance of the Church, when wee altogether ſhall be fully deliuered out of all miſeries and calamities: ſo as howſoeuer the things which are taught vs concerning the reſurrection and eternall life, ſeemes incredible vnto vs, and that the meanes thereof appeares not vnto vs as yet; let vs know notwithstanding, that it ſhall be eaſie with God to finde both the way and meanes.

Exod. 14. 19.
Iſb. 3. 16.
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3

THE XII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *And thou ſhalt ſay in that day; O Lord, I will praiſe thee: though thou waſt angry with me, thy wrath is turned away, and thou'ſt comforted me.*

*Or, thou wilt comfort.



Iſaiah now exhorts all the faithfull to render thanks to God: although the exhortation hath alſo this diſt; to wit, that they ſhould giue the greater credit vnto Gods promiſe. For hee hath

ſealed it vp as it were vnto them by this exhortation; to the end they ſhould aſſure themſelues that it is vnmoueable. As alſo that they ſhould not imagine that the Prophet meant to feede them vp with a vaine hope, when hee put this forme of thankſgiuing as it were into their mouthes: which thanks, they could not haue giuen, vnleſſe the occaſion thereof had been both ſure and ſtedfaſt. In this ſong alſo hee ſhewes why it is that God doth good to his Church; to wit, that the memorie of his bleſſed name might be magnified; not that hee needs any of our praiſes, but becauſe this is profitable vnto our ſelues. For we ought diligently to conſider, what honour he doth vs when he vouchſafes to ſerue himſelfe of our induouours, in the magnifying and publiſhing his glorious name; wee notwithstanding being ſuch vnprofitable, yea altogether vnprofitable ſeruants. The Prophet in this ſong addreſſeth himſelfe in generall to all the people, euen as if hee ſpake to one man: for it was requiſite they ſhould be ioyned together, as if they had been but one. According to this example, our coniunction ought to be ſo ſtrait, that there ſhould be but one ſoule and one mouth: Rom. 15. 6. eſpecially if wee meane that our prayers and

thankſgiuings ſhould be acceptable before God.

Though'ſt thou waſt angry.] The ſumme of this ſong is, that howſoeuer God was iuſtly provoked to anger againſt this people, yet notwithstanding ſatiſfying himſelfe with one little ſtroke of the rod, he will eaſilie be appeaſed. Now becauſe the particle *Gi*, is often put for ſhewing of the cauſe, ſome tranſlate; O Lord I will praiſe thee: for being angry againſt me, thou wert by and by appeaſed. But becauſe it is ſometime taken otherwiſe, I haue followed that which I thought to agree beſt to this place. The faithfull then doe firſt acknowledge their fault: ſecondly, they attribute their deliuerance out of their miſeries, vnto the mercy of God. Now becauſe the verbs are put in the future tense, one may alſo expound, The chaſtiſement wherewith thou ſmiteſt me for a time, ſhall be no impediment that thou ſhouldeſt not pitie mee at the laſt, and giue mee matter of ioy and conſolation. Whether of the expoſitions ſoeuer we receiue, this ſentence ought to be diligently obſerued: for as ſoone as our hearts are touched with the feeling of Gods wrath, wee are ſollicited vnto deſpaire; ſo as if the danger be not ſpeedily preuented, wee ſhall be ouerwhelmed before we are aware. Satan alſo tempts vs euery kind of way, and aſſaileth all meanes whereby hee may put vs out of heart. So much the more neede haue wee then to be well armed with this doctrine; that howſoeuer we feele the wrath of God, yet we may reſolue with our ſelues, that it ſhall not indure long: but that hee will ſend vs ſome conſolation after he hath chaſtened vs.

The ſumme of this ſong.

1
2

But if we haue deliuerance, then let vs remember that the afflictions are ended; not becauſe we haue ſatiſfied the iuſtice of God, as if we had merited it at his hands; but becauſe he beares with our weakeneſſe, euen of his fatherly louing kindeſſe. This confeſſion

Afflictions no ſuſtinations of Gods iuſtice.

This is noted from the word Thou, in the text.

Great difference between the afflictions of the godly and the wicked, though they seeme alike in outward appearance.

therefore appertaines properly vnto the faithfull and elect: for although the afflictions of the faithfull & the wicked are alike in appearance, yet is there great difference betweene them. For the wrath of God against the reprobate is perpetuall: and the plagues which they receiue are the tastes and beginnings of their eternall destruction: neither haue they any promise of refreshing or comfort: But the faithfull feele by experience, that the *wrath of God* endures not long, and doe therefore cheere vp their hearts with good hope and assurance; because they know that *God will be mercifull vnto them in the end*: which hope certifies them, that hee chastiseth them not so much for their finnes, as rather to bring them to repentance, that they should not perill with the world.

1. Cor. 11. 31.

Verf. 2. *Behold God is my saluation; I will trust and will not feare: for the Lord God is my strength and song, hee * is also become my saluation.*

*Or, shall be.

Although wee ought to apprehend the helpe of God in the midd of afflictions by faith, yet *Isaiah* speaks heere of that knowledge which is grounded vpon experience: for he endites a song of reioycing, when God by outward testimonies gaue them to vnderstand, that he was pacified towards his Church. Heereunto appertaines the particle *Behold*, because the bright and shining light of Gods countenance, which had for a time bin hidden from them, did now shine againe vpon them; and that so apparently, that it might almost be pointed out with the finger. Now inasmuch as wee are terrified in afflictions, so as it cannot be auoided, but y^e conscience of finnes will ouershadow our vnderstandings; no otherwise then as if the helpe of God were farre from vs, or did nothing at all appertaine vnto vs; the Prophet doth heere describe what a change there is in the afflictions, when God hath once reconciled vs vnto himselfe. But this prophecie extends it selfe principally vnto the comming of Christ, in which time God caused his *saluation* to appeare after a more speciall manner.

This propheticall song extends it selfe principally to the comming of Christ.

He adles afterwards, that when wee are once well resolu'd that *our saluation dependeth vpon God*, that the same is a stedfast foundation of *firm assurance*, and a singular remedie to appease *fears*. For without this wee must needes tremble, be still in vnquietnesse and perplexities, and miserably tossed to and fro. Hence wee gather, that confidence proceedes from faith, as the effect from the cause. For by faith wee feele that our saluation is in God: from thence followes a quiet and peaceable estate in the conscience: but where faith is not, there the conscience cannot be in quiet. Let vs know then that we haue well profited in faith, when we are furnished with this confidence which the Prophet heere describes.

Confidence proceedes from faith, as the effect from the cause.

We haue well profited in faith, when we are furnished with this confidence.

Morcouer, this confidence ought so to beare rule in our hearts, that it ought to put all *fears* and horrour to flight: not that wee

can be vtterly exempt from all feare and disquietnesse, but because assurance will beare away the victorie at the last. Yet notwithstanding wee must remember what I haue said; namely, that the Prophet heere sets forth the *cheerefulness* which the faithfull *enjoy*, when God is *favourable* vnto them; whereas in former times they were almost overwhelmed vnder the weight of temptation.

Confidence ought so to beare sway in our hearts as to put all feares to flight.

For the *Lord is my strength*.] He more cleerely and in a more especiall manner expresseth, that the faithfull shall haue good occasion to sing, because they shall know by experience, that *their strength was in their God*: for the truth is, that their deliuerance was an excellent proofe of the *power of God*. But seeing *Isaiah* recounts not heere the benefit of one day onely, but extolles the worke which God determined in himselfe, to continue vntill the comming of Christ; it thereupon followes, that the praises of God are not founded forth as is meete, vnlesse it be by them who feeling their *weaknesse*, doe onely seeke vnto God, that hee would furnish them with *strength* and power. For it is not said heere, that hee should be a part, or the stay of our strength, but that hee is our full and perfect *strength*. The reason is, because wee haue no more strength and power, then that wee receiue from him. And in this regard also the faithfull say, that hee is *their song*; because they are thus liberally dealt withall by him, to the end they should exercise themselues in thanksgiuings. Whence we gather, that the beginning of ioy proceedes from the fauour of God, and that the end of that ioy is the sacrifice of praise. Truly the hearts of the faithfull ought to be so disposed to patience, that they should not cease to praise God euen when they see tokens of his frowning countenance: yet in the time of peace and prosperitie, they haue much more cause to open their mouthes, to the end they may sing forth y^e benefits of God with a loud voice.

Who they be that are fit to praise God.

Psal 50. 23.

We ought to praise God euen when we see manifest tokens of his wrath, much more when wee perceiue signes of his fauour.

But because the wicked reioyce euen whilest they despise God, and before themselves like bruit beasts with a false ioy, rocking their consciences asleepe therein, neuer awaking themselves to praise God, justly doth our Saviour Christ curse their ioy; Woe be to you, saith hee, that now *laugh*, for you shall weepe: your ioy shall be turned into heauinesse, and your laughter into gnashing of teeth. In the end of the verse, if any be pleased to retaine the preterperfect tense of the verbe, the sense will be, that the faithfull sing ioyfully, because God *hath saved them*. The sense will also agree very well in the future tense; to wit, that God hath not deliuered his chosen once onely, but that *hee will* also continue the same vnto the very end: for the faithfull ought not to stay themselues in the beholding of the present benefit alone, but to stretch forth their hope to the continuall progresse of Gods fauour.

Luke 6. 25.

Verf. 3. *Therefore With ioy shall yee draw waters out of the wells of * saluation.*

*Or, out of the Saviour.

BY this verse he confirms that which we haue touched before, to wit, that this Chapter

Chapter

This ſong is a ſcale to confirme the promiſe made touching the peoples deliuerance.

Chapter is as it were a ſcale to confirme the promiſe made touching the deliuerance of the people; as if he ſhould ſay, The ſaluation of the Lord is ſet before you as a liuing fountaine, out of which you may draw *waters* in abundance. This ſimilitude is very fit, for as there is nothing more neceſſarie for this preſent life then *water*, ſo nothing troubles and diſquiets vs more nor goes ſo nere vs as the want thereof doth. Thus by a figure called Synecdoche (when a part is taken for the whole) he ſhewes that whatſoever is neceſſarie for the ſuſtentation of life is giuen vs freely out of the meere bountie of God. And becauſe we are barren & emptie of all good things, it is no maruell that he compares the meere of God to a *fountaine* which ſatiſfies them that are thirſtie; reſeſheth thoſe that are parched with heate; and recreates thoſe that are wearie and laden.

Of the ſauour. This word *ſauour* agrees much better here then if he had ſaid, out of the fountains of God. For wee haue farre greater cauſe of conſolation when we know y himſelfe is the author of our ſaluation. The Prophet therefore hath appropriated this epithere according to the circumſtance of the place. Now if this promiſe comprehends vnder it the whole kingdome of Chriſt, wee for our parts ought alwayes to applie the ſame vnto our vſe. Let vs know then that the goodnes of God is heere offered and ſet before vs, to the end we might ſatiſfie our ſelus to the full therewith. For we ought (as *Dauid* faith) to be as the parched ground, gaping for thirſt, *Pſal.* 143. 6. and to aſpire vnto theſe *waters of the ſauour*. Now this goodnes of God is wonderfull and incredible, when he permits not that our deſire ſhould be in vaine, but freely offers and preſents a *fountaine* vnto vs, out of the which we may draw *waters* in abundance. Moreouer, Ieſus Chriſt is this fountaine, and in him we haue the participation of all Gods benefits; for as *S. Iohn* faith, we draw all out of his fulneſſe, *Iohn* 1. 16. It remaineth then that wee goe direſtly vnto him as ſoone as our pouertie and want preſeth vs.

Verſ. 4. And yee ſhall ſay in that day, *praiſe the Lord, call vpon his name, declare his Works among the people, make mention of them, for his name is exalted.*

HE not only exhorts them one by one to praiſe God, and to giue him thanks, but would alſo that they ſhould *ſtirre vp others with them ſo doe the life*: And as he had ſayd before, many people ſhall goe and ſhall ſay, Come, and let vs goe vp to the mountaine of the Lord, prouoking one another by mutuall exhortations to imbrace the pure worſhip of God: ſo after he hath commanded euery one of them to tender thanks to God, he would now alſo that they ſhould incite one another to the ſame dutie. He ſhewes then that this ought not to be ſaid only to one, but to all; and not only in one time, but for their whole life. Now in a brieſe ſumme he ſhewes how

God is righte honored when he commands vs to call vpon him, and to reioyce in none, but in him only. For this cauſe alſo the holy ſcripture by the word *Inuocation*, comprehends often times vnder it the whole ſeruiſe of God, vſing therein a part for the whole: for by prayer wee ſhew the truſt that wee haue in God; and this indeede he requires of vs about all things. I alſo thinke that *prayer* is ioined with *praiſe*, that the Prophet might comprehend the whole ſeruiſe of God.

Make mention &c. His meaning is that this deliuerance ſhall be ſo excellent a work, that it ought not to be hidden from any corner, but publiſhed thorowout the whole world. I grant that he would haue the Iewes to acknowledge this in the firſt place, but after he cauſed all people to haue the knowledge of it. And this exhortation whereby the Iewes ſhewed their good will, was as a preamble to the preaching of the Goſpell which was afterwards publiſhed. For as the Iewes magnified the fauor which God had ſhewed them amongſt the Medes and Perſians and other nations neere about them; ſo alſo after Chriſt once appeared, they ought to haue been heraults to publiſh the name of God thorowout all the quarters of the world. Hereby it appears with what zeale all the faithfull ought to be moued, namely, that they cauſe the goodnes of God to be manifeſted vnto all, to the end the ſeruiſe of God may be imbraced. Now we ought then eſpeciallie to be moued with ſuch an affection when we haue been deliuered from ſome great danger, as out of the iawes of the diuell, and from vnder the tyrannie of eternall death.

Verſ. 5. Sing vnto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things: this is knowne in all the World.

HE goes on ſtil with his exhortation, ſhewing vs from what affection this praſe ought to proceed; for he teacheth that it is our dutie to publiſh the goodnes of God in all places: and yet muſt we not exhort nor prouoke others to go forward, and out ſelus in the meane time to ſtand ſtill with our armes acroſſe, but we ought to leade them the way by our example: for there is nothing more abſurd then to ſee them ſlothfull and negligent, which prouoke others to praſe God. Now in ſaying that God hath done *excellens things*, he thereby ſignifies that there is great cauſe ſo ſing. Neither in deed would the Lord haue them to ſing forth his praſes vpon no ground; but he gaue them ample and very good cauſe thereof when he deliuered his people out of that extreme hard bondage. Now we haue alreadie ſaid that we muſt not reſtraine this ſong to one moment of time, but that it ought to be extended euen vnto the whole kingdome of Chriſt. This worke therefore is *excellens* indeed when God ſent *Ioh.* 3. 16. 17. *Heb.* 2. 14.

Ieſus Chriſt the true fountaine.

Chap. 2. 3.

stant matter giuen vs to praise God. When he saith in the last member, *that this is knowne in all the world*; hee therein toucheth the calling of the Gentiles, and confirms that which hath been already said; to wit, that this worke shall be such as it ought not to be concealed in some one corner; but to be published thorowout the whole world.

* Or, reioyce and sing.

Verf. 6. ** Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion: for great is the holy one of Israel in the midst of thee.*

No felicitie but where God dwels,

HE againe exhorts the faithfull to reioyce in God, and therewithall shewes what is the true reioyceing, and whereupon it is grounded. For we can haue no felicitie, but when *God dwels in the midst of vs*: without this, our life is poore and mistable, although wee had the abundance of all other benefits and riches whatsoeuer. So then if our hearts bee ioyned to this treasure, this felicitie will draw all our senses easily vnto it. He calles God *holy*, to the end we might know that he will make himselfe felt of vs when he dwelles with vs: that is to say, wee shall not onely reuerence his Maiestie, wherewith wee are by and by ouerwhelmed; but that we shall be al-

so fully assured that hee hath a fatherly care ouer vs, albeit wee be separate from the rest of the whole world. For he calles him *the holy one* by the effect; because by gathering vs vnder his wings, and sauing vs by his grace, he *sanctifies* vs as a thing *consecrated* for his owne vs. And therefore if God be with vs, the feeling of his gracious presence will fill our hearts with ioy vnspeakeable. By *reioyceing and singing*, he signifies, that when God displayeth his power in the *midst of vs*, wee haue occasion to reioyce greatly. Also, speaking directly to the *inhabitants of Zion*, he shewes that all are not capable of so great a benefit: and hee therewithall closely exhorts vs to perseuere in the vnitie of faith, that being knit vnto the Church, we may reioyce with this hapie and blessed ioy.

From the first Chapter hitherto, the Prophet hath denounced iudgement against the two Kingdomes of Iudah and Israel: from the beginning of the Chapter following, to the 24. the Prophet foretelles what horrible calamities should befall the enemies of the Church. And thus God iudgeth his owne house first, as Peter speaks, 1st Pet. 4. 17.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *The burden of Babel, which Isaich the sonne of Amoz did see.*

Seven reasons shewing the cause why God caused the ruine of the Churches enemies to be foretold.



From this Chapter vnto the 24. the Prophet foretelles the grievous and horrible calamities which should befall the Nations and Countries then knowne to the Iewes; either because they were neighbours vnto them, or else in regard that they had traffique or leagues with them.

And this he doth vpon good reasons: for when diuers changes happended, some thought that God did sport himselfe as it were, and tooke pleasure to bring base things to confusion: others thought that all things were guided by a blind violence of fortune; of which profane histories giue sufficient testimony: and verie few there were who could be reioiced that these casual mishappes were ordained and governed by the counsell of God. For no one thing is so hardly beaten into mens heads as this; namely, that the world is governed by the providence of God. Many indeed wil confesse this with their mouth, but the number of them is verie small which haue it truly engrauen in their hearts. We neede but one little puffe of wind to trouble vs, and behold we are vndone: then fall wee to searching the causes of it, as if this depen-

ded vpon the will of men. What will we doe then, when all the world is in an uproare, and that all things are so changed in diuers places, that it seemes they must needs thiner into pecces? Well, we see then it is very profitable that *Isaich* and the rest of the Prophets should speake of such calamities, to the end that all might vnderstand, that they come not to passe but by the secret and wonderfull counsell of God.

For if they had prefixed no prophecie touching this matter, things being thus suddenly confused, it might easlie haue troubled and appalled the hearts of the faithfull: But when they knew long time before that this should come to passe, they had therein a mirror wherein to behold Gods providence touching the things that happended.

After that Babylon was taken, vsic and experience taught them, that those things which they had learned in times past from the mouth of the Prophets, had not been foretold at random nor in vaine. Notwithstanding, there was an other cause why the Lord commanded that the *ruine of Babylon* and other places with it was foretold: not that the Babylonians had any profit at all by these prophecies, neither yet the other Nations, as though these writings came to them.

Another cause then was this, God meant by this consolation to assuage the sorrow of the faithfull, lest they should grow out of heart, as if their estate had bin worse then that of *ye heathen*,

then, if they ſhould haue ſcene them eſcape the hand of God altogether without puniſhment. For if ſo be the monarchie of Babylon ſhould haue continued ſafe, the Iewes would not only haue thought they had ſerued the Lord in vaine, and that the covenant which he had contracted with *Abramus* had been to no purpoſe, ſeeing ſtrangers and wicked men were better dealt withall then the elect people of God: but they might alſo haue entered into a worſe ſuſpition, to wit, that God had fauored theſe curſed theues, who trod all iuſtice and equirie vnder their feet by their robberies and ſeditious; truly they might by and by haue thought either y God had had no care of his people, or elſe that he wanted power to ſuccor them in their need; or that all things were turned vſide downe by the conſuled mouing of fortune. To the end then they ſhould not be too much appalled, nor become vtterlie deſperate, the Prophet preuentis this by the conſolation of this propheſie, ſhewing therein that *Babylon* alſo ſhall be puniſhed.

Moreouer this compariſon did admoniſh them how grieuous the chaſtiſement ſhould be, which they oſter purpoſe had pulled down vpon their owne heads: for if God threaten the vnbeleuers and prophane nations ſo ſharplie, who yet haue erred in darknes, how much more ſeuere ought his anger to be againſt his people, who had wittinglie rebelled againſt him? Juſt it is that the ſeruant which knew his maſters will and did it not, ſhould be beaten with more heauie ſtripes. When God then denounceeth ſuch rough puniſhments againſt poore blind wretches, he therein did ſet a looking-glaſſe before the Iewes (who had been trained vp in the law) what chaſtiſement they had deſerued.

And yet the chiefe marke that *Iſaiah* aimes at in theſe propheſies, is to ſhew the Iewes how deare and pretious their ſalutation was in Gods eyes, when they ſaw that he tooke their cauſe into his owne hand, and executed vengeance vpon the wrongs which had been done them.

Now in the beginning the Prophet ſpake of the deſtruction and waſting of the kingdomes of Iuda and Iſrael (as we haue ſeene) which was to come, becauſe iudgement muſt firſt begin at the houſe of God, 1. Pet. 4. 17. for the Lord hath a ſpeciall care of his owne, and chiefly regards them. Wherefore euen as often as we reade theſe propheſies, let vs learne to applie them to our ſelues. True it is that the Lord doth not by piecemeale foretell all things which come to paſſe at this day in kingdomes and amongſt nations, and yet notwithstanding hath he not reſigned vp the adminiſtration of the world, which himſelfe keepeth in his owne hand, to another. When we then ſee the ruin of cities, the calamities which befall nations, and the change of kingdomes, let the things aforeſaid come vnto our minds, to the end we may humble our ſelues vnder Gods ſcourges, and learne to be wiſe by other mens coſts, and erie vnto the Lord for comfort in our afflictions.

Verſ. 1. *The burden.*] As touching this word

burden, which we ſhall meeete ſo often withall, I will brieflie ſhew how we are to vnderſtand it. When the Prophets meane to denounce any aduerſitie, they vſualle vſe this word *burden*, that the people might know how no aduerſitie ſhould happen which the Lord himſelfe ſhould not lay vpon them, euen as a burden or ſaide is laid vpon mens ſhoulders. Now in regard that the wickednes and inflexiblenes of the people conſtrained the Prophets to ſpeake inceſſantlie of Gods ſcourges, thence it came to paſſe by a common flour or deriding maner of ſpeech, that the Iewes gaue this name of *burden* to all the propheſies, as it appeareth in the 23. of Ier. verſ. 36. where the Lord ſharplie rebukes them, becauſe by this flouting kind of ſpeech they not only diſſamed his word, but alſo made it odious and contemptible.

Moreouer this word ſhewes, that God ſends all calamities and afflictions to the end euery one may beare the puniſhment of his owne ſinne. He expreſly ſhewes, that that which he was to threaten was reuealed vnto him by a *heauenly viſion*, to the end this authoritie might put all diſcourſes of beſhlie wiſdome to ſilence. It was a thing no doubt hard to be beleued, that a Monarchie ſo beautifull, and abounding with ſo great riches, could be ouerthrowne by any meanes. In regard therefore that ſo great a power might not dazell their eyes, the Prophet brings them to the truth of the heauenly oracle, to the end they might by faith vnderſtand that iudgement of God which they were not able to comprehend by ſenſe.

Verſ. 2. *Lift up a ſtandard vpon the ſie mountains: lift up the voice vnto them that wag the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.*

Here is a ſimilitude in the word *mountaine*, becauſe it is ſpoken to Babylon, which (as we know) was ſeated vpon a plaine: but he ſets it as it were vpon an *hie* place like a forteſſe mounted vp aboue all peoples, and that in regard of the Monarchie. Vnleſſe any had rather take this word indefinitely: as if he ſhould ſay, that whē the *ſtandard* ſhall be lifted up, they ſhall runne thither from farre countries, becauſe it will draw people vnto it from all parts by the fight of it. I take this latter ſenſe to be the moſt probable; but I thought it not amiſſe to ſet downe that firſt which was commonly receiued.

Notwithſtanding, this might ſeeme ridiculous, that the Prophet ſhould heere lay a commandement vpon the *creatures*, as vpon his ſubiect; were it not that he was taught to doe ſo of God, and was furniſhed as it were with his authoritie. For a priuate man heere commands the *Medes and Perſians*; hee calles *armies*; he bids them *display the banner*, ſound the trumpet to prepare vnto battel. In this place then wee haue to conſider the Maieſtie of God, in whoſe name he ſpeakes; and alſo the vertue and efficacy which is alwaies ioyned to his word. Wee often meeete with theſe kindes

What is vnderſtood by this word burden.

1

2

3

4

Doctine.

1
2
3

6

Luk. 22. 47.

7

When God corrects, he alway begins with his owne.

kinds of speech in the Prophets, to the end we might know that God threatens nothing by his seruants, the execution whereof is not at hand. *Isaiab* might haue spoken more simply, and in plainer termes might haue told them, that the Medes and Persians shall come, and breake open the gates of *Babylon*, how strong and inuincible soeuer they seemed to be. But these exclamations haue much greater vehemencie in them, when hee not onely threatens war, as taking to himselfe the person of an Herald; but with soueraigne authoritie, commands the Medes and Persians to come, as if they were soldiery vnder his pay. Besides, he not onely teacheth that they shall bee readie when God shall onely make a signe vnto them, because they shall be pricked forward by his secret instinct: but being sent of God to denounce the ruine of *Babylon*, he attributes the effect of so incredible a thing to his *owne voice*. The summe is, that when God hath once spoken, we neede make no doubt but that his word shall be accomplished.

This is also worthy our obseruation, that he speakes to the Medes and Persians, and yet names the not: and this hath much greater vehemency in pointing them forth with the finger: as when we say, This man, and that man.

This manner of speech serues to confirme the prophetic, when he shewes things which were far off, as being present. When he saith; *Shake the hand, and they shall enter*: his meaning is, that the Medes and Persians shall no sooner set forward at Gods commandement, but they shall haue an open and easie way to march, without any impediment. Now although the Hebrewes call *Princes*, gracious Lords, and bountifull, (as our Lord Iesus Christ also giues them this title in the Gospel) notwithstanding it rather seemes that the Prophet speaks of the excellent power whereof the Babylonians boasted. For they were furnished with multitudes of people, and all preparations for war, aboue any others: so as it was a thing incredible vnto them, that they should euer be ouercome. But the Prophet declares that nothing shall be able to let, that God should not prepare the way, and giue passage to the enemies,

Verf. 3. *I haue commanded them that I haue sanctified: and I haue called the mightie to my wrath, and them that reioyce in my glory.*

HERE the Prophet brings in the Lord speaking and declaring his *Commandements*. He calles the Medes and Persians *his sanctified*: that is to say, those which hce had prepared. For the verbe *To sanctifie*, is diuersly taken: sometimes it is referred to the spirit of regeneration, which is peculiarly giuen to the elect of God. Sometimes also it signifies to set apart, or prepare: which signification is the most fitting to this place. Now all those whom the Lord creates, hee also appoints to some certaine vse; and scatters not men here and there vpon the earth at randome, to

range whither soeuer they think good: but he gouernes them by his secret counsell, orders and moderates the violences of the reprobates, so as hee moues them at his pleasure, this way or that way; and then represseth and pulles them in short when hee listeth. And therefore he calles them *sanctified*, whom hee hath set apart, and prepared for his seruice, howsoeuer they bee no whit aware of it.

Whence wee are taught, to attribute and referre all the changes in this world, to the secret counsell of God. In this place also wee haue a meruailous consolation; to wit, that the wicked shall be able to doe nothing but that which is decreed of God, let them enterprize what they will. Where hee immediately addes, that *he hath called them*; it is much more then to *command*: which hee puts in the first place. For his meaning is, that the enemies shall not onely rouse vp themselves at the signe which God shall giue them, but at his expresse commandement: euen as if I should call one to come vnto mee, and hee should forthwith follow mee. He shewes then that *Babylon* shall be destroyed by the Medes and Persians, no otherwise then if they should yeelde obedience to the call of God. For although their ambition, pride, and crueltie, was the motiue (touching themselves) which prouoked them to the warre; yet God fitted them thereunto without their priuitie, that they might bee the executioners of his iudgement.

Verf. 4. *The noise of a multitude in the mountaines like a great people: a tumultuous voice of the Kingdomes of the Nations gathered together: the Lord of hostes numbred the host of the battel.*

HE now addes a more liuely description, by which he sets the things themselves as it were before their sight, because y^e Prophets contented not to speake only, vnclesse therewithall they did euen plainly represent the things wherof they spake; for words barely and coldly pronounced after a common maner, moue not so much; neither doe they touch mens hearts so to the quick as figuratiue speeches doe, which represent the liuely image of things. It is then as if the Prophet should say, You now heare a man speake, but know ye that this voice shall haue such great efficacie that by the very sound thereof *nations* shall be moued, *peoples shall make a noise*, and a great sound, for the great multitudes of them; yea, they shall cast forth fearefull cries, and all to bring *Babylon* to ruine. This cry then shall haue such force, and that after my death, as if that which I now threaten were presentie before your eyes.

By this therefore we see of how great efficacie the word of God is, when all creatures both in heauen & in earth yeeld obedience vnto it. So much the more then ought we to be confirmed in this doctrine, seeing nothing

come to passe which was not foretold long time before. This is the reason why he affirms in the latter end of the verse, *that God will assemble divers nations together vnder his conduct: and howsoever they shall haue no meaning at all to execute those correctiōs which he hath ordained, yet shall they do nothing but by his appointmēt, euen as if some Captaine amongst vs should muster or set his souldiers in array.*

Verf. 5. *They come from a farre country, from the end of heauen: euen the Lord with the * Weapons of his Wrath to destroy the Whole Land.*

* Or, vessels, or instrumēt.

HE yet more fullie confirms that which I said erewhile, to wit, that the preparatiōs of warre come not out of the earth nor by hap hazard: for albeit men by their lusts raise vp those troubles which are in y world, yet God hath an ouerruling hand about them. *Jsaiah* therefore rightly attributes the preheminecie vnto him, seeing men are nothing but the weapons of his wrath. Now he saith, that the destroyers of the Monarchie of Babylon shall come from a farre countrie, the reason is, because we seldome feare any dangers, vnlesse those which be very neere vnto vs. Babylon was in such wise fortified and well compassed about with so many kingdomes and prouinces which were subiect vnto it, that it seemed no enemies could euer so much as approach vnto it. In a word, the feared no dangers at all, euen as if the had been compact together, and built in the cloudes.

In as much then as there was no danger which threatened this citie any way round about it, he therefore shewes that the *destruction thereof shall come from farre*. For although all things may seeme quiet and peaceable in our conceit, hauing no controuersies at all with our neighbours, yet notwithstanding God is able to cause enemies to come from the *uiermost part vnder heauen*. Wherefore we haue no occasion to promise a secure and prosperous estate vnto our selues, although we should discern no danger neere at hand to threaten vs. If this prophesie should haue been caried to Babylon, no doubt but they would haue despised it as a meere fable. For let it bee granted that they would haue had some respect of the Prophets person, yet would they (in this their proud confidence wherewithall they were possessed) haue contemned these threatnings as vaine and friuolous. An example wherof wee haue readie at hand: for wee at this day speake of the Turke in our Sermons, yet euerie one thinks they be idle tales, because we thinke they are very farre off: notwithstanding wee see how much ground he hath gotten in a small time, in ouerrunning those which were farre remote from him, and were more mightie then he. The sottihnes of men is so great, that they can not be awakened vnlesse they be beaten vpon till they may feele the blowes. Let vs therefore set the Babylonians before vs as an example to teach

vs wisdom, that so we may feare the threatnings which the Prophets denounce in their Sermons betimes, lest we be ouertaken with the reprobates, who trusting to their tranquillitie are so assomished when the hand of God appeares and sautes them, that they are vterly vnable to stand, but rather fall downe senselesse and amazed.

Whereas he puts the *whole Land* for Babylon, he hath respect to the largeness of the kingdome, that they might not thinke to preuent the assaults of the enemies by means of the prouinces wherewith they were inuironed on euerie side: yea, notwithstanding that he shewes the calamitie shall be such, that it shall not only come in one way vpon them, but shall be as a deluge, ouerspreading a great part of y world. Moreover, the Medes and Persians are here called *instrumēt*, or vessels of the wrath of the Lord in a contrarie sense to that which the reprobates are so called by S. Paul Rom 9. 22. For there the Apostle opposeth the *vessels of wrath* to the *vessels of mercie*; and teacheth, that the free grace of God shines in the elect, and his iust and severe iudgement in the reprobate. But the Prophets meaning is, that the Medes and Persians are as darts in Gods hand, of whom he serues his turne to execute his wrath and vengeance.

Verf. 6. *Howe you for the day of the Lord is at hand: it shall come as a destroyer from the * Almighty.*

* Or, of the strong, or, destruction of the destroyer.

HE follows the matter still, and commands the Babylonians to *howle*; not that he directs his speech to them, as if he were in hope that it should profit them, but in shewing what effect it should haue, hee intermingles this maner of speech with great vehemencie. He speaks of the *day of the Lord* after the vsual phrase of the scripture, because that when the Lord defers his iudgements, it seemes he ceaseth from performing of his office, euen as Iudges do when they go not vp into their iudgement seates. Let vs then obserue this language well; the reason is, we would willingly subiect the Lord to our fancies, that so he might by and by pronounce sentence against the vnbeleeuers. But hee hath prefixed his owne time, and knowes the opportunities right well in which wicked men are to be punished, and when to giue succor to the good. In the next place he shewes that the rigour of Gods iudgement shall be so great, that it shall not only giue iust occasion to the Babylonians to weepe, but also to *howle*, because he will openlic display his strength for their *destruction*. For the verbe *Shadedai* signifies to scatter and to destroy, whence *Shadei* one of the names of God, which some haue translated Almighty, is deriued. Here is then an elegant allusion to this etymologie, as if he should say, The Babylonians in their destruction shall feele it is not vaine that God is called *Shadei*, that is to say strong, and Almighty to destroy.

Doctrin.

O

Verf. 7.

Verf. 7. *Therefore shall all hands be weakened, and all mens hearts shall*

*Or, run out. *melt.

HE shewes that the Lord shal haue so great power to destroy the Babylonians, that they shall be vtterly destitute of any thing whatsoeuer, that might hinder or turne backe his wrath. For albeit they were very rich and mightie, yet should they haue such *deiected hearts*, and such *weake hands*, that they should neither haue will nor power to resist. And thus by the way hee glanceth at the crueltye wherewith the Babylonians were puffed yp: seeing it is in the power of God to *dissolue mens hearts*, to breake, loosen, or *weaken their hands*, or armes, in such wise that all valour shall fall to the ground, and strength shall be turned into smoke. Now when the heart quailes, what auailes castles, great troopes of men, riches, forts, and fortresses? what auailes a shop well fraught with tooles without a workman? we haue experience of this daily, euen in those to whom God notwithstanding giues great meanes. And thence we may perceiue how vaine that confidence is, which wee put in the helps of flesh, seeing they are so vnprofitable, if God doe smite our hearts but with the least astonishment.

Verf. 8. *And they shall be afraid, anguish and sorrow shall take them, and they shall haue paine as a woman that travelleth: every one shall be amazed at his neighbour; and their faces shall be like flames of fire.*

BECAUSE the signification of the word *Tsim*, is doubtfull, the Greeke translatours haue turned it, *Ambassadors*. But here it signifies *anguish*, as may sufficiently be perceiued by the similitude of the *woman in trauaile with child*: which is afterwards added. For he here sets before them as it were in one word, that which he had told them before; to wit, that their hearts should melt, and their hands should be weakened, because, saith he, *anguish and sorrow shall surprize them*. But whence comes this astonishment? From God. The ancients called this astonishment, a distracted feare. Thus called they the hobgoblins visions, and such like things which frightened men, albeit they had no inward occasion at all so to doe. This was not altogether from the purpose; but yet notwithstanding they erred too grossly, because they vnderstood not that such a thing proceeded from God.

As a woman in trauell with child.] Surely the Babylonians had iust occasion of feare, seeing themselves assailed by valiant and warlike men; but yet the Prophet threatens them that they shall quaike and be in a *swound*, although they were strong enough to resist them; because they should bee dulled by a

secret iudgement of God. To this appertaines that which he addes; namely, that *euery one shall be amazed at his neighbour*, euen as when men affrighted, looke gassly here and there: and not onely that, but also when there shall be any hope of succour, yet they shall stand still like blockes, as men deprived of all feeling. But the vehemencie of the feare is yet much more cleerly expressed in the member following, when he attributes vnto them *faces like fire*. For they are too sparing, who thinke (as some doe) that this word signifies shame; as if it were said in one word, they shall blush with shame. *Isaiab* meant a greater and a more fearfull thing then so. When torments presse vs indeed, the *face* will be inflamed, and wee shall glow as being closed in with dolours: truly it were too light then to referre it to a blushing onely, in such an horrible desolation. For he describes so strange a calamitie, that for the bitteresse of it, *flames* shall sparkle as it were out of the face: which indeed comes to passe, when men are vexed with extreme dolour. The similitude of a *woman in trauaile*, not onely expresseth the greatnesse of the grieft, but also a sudden hurtliburly. Euen as the calamitie then should be bitrer and violer, so also *Isaiab* saith, it shall be *sudden*: and good reason, for the Babylonians, who were furnished with so many forces, could neuer haue dreamed that they should euer be molested by any means whatsoeuer.

Verf. 9. *Behold, the day of the Lord commeth; cruell, with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land waste: and hee shall destroy the sinners out of it.*

HEREPEATS that which he touched heerebefore; to wit, that although the Babylonians rested securely in their abundance; that the *day of the Lord* notwithstanding is at hand, which will astonish these secure fellows. But yet it may be demanded, for what cause the day of the Lord is called *cruell*, seeing there is nothing more desirable, then to inioy the presence of God: neither is there any thing indeed but this onely, which makes vs happy. I answer, we must alwaies obserue to whom the Prophet speaks. For the Prophets were accustomed to dieferie God in diuers sorts, according to the diuersity of the auditors: as *Dauid* also testifies where hee saith; that hee is mercifull and fauourable to the good, secure and rigorous to the wicked: *Pfal. 18. 16. 27*. For what can the wicked conceiue in God, but an extreme seueritie? and therefore they tremble as soone as they heare him spoken of. But the faithfull on the contrarie, conceiue and receiue great ioy and sweetnesse in such words; so as nothing can be propounded vnto them more delectable. And therefore when the Prophets turne themselves to the faithfull, they mingle ioy and gladnes therewithall in mentioning of God; because they onely feele him gracious and mercifull vnto them: but if they speake to the vnfaithfull, the iudgement of

God

Verf. 7.

Quest.

Ans.

God is no sooner propounded, but they adde teares and sorrowes. For euen as the faithfull reioyce at the presence of God, because they apprehend his goodnesse by faith: so also the wicked on the contrary are afraid, because their consciences reproues them, and findes them guiltie in regard their seuerer Iudge is at hand. And because hypocrits also seeme to wait for the day of the Lord with great desire, boasting that he will assist them; the Prophets are wont to vnmask them, testifying also, that this day shall be *cruell* and terrible.

Jsaiah also applies a description to this propheticke, much vied; the better to shew how greatly the wrath of God is to be feared. For inasmuch as we are slow by nature, or rather blockith, we moue not much if the Lord should speake of his iudgements simply. Because therefore a bare and naked speech should haue little vehemencie, hee findes out new kindes of speaking to awaken our drouinesse. By *sinners*, hee means not all men in generall; but those wicked and desperate wretches which dwelt in Babylon.

Verf. 10. *For the starres of heauen, and the planets thereof shall not giue their light: the Sunne shall bee darkened in his going forth; and the Moone shall not cause her light to shine.*

TO the end men might be the more liuely and effectually touched with the feare of Gods iudgements, the Prophets are wont to adde exceffiue manners of speeche to their threatnings, which should euen set the wrath of God as it were before their eyes; that so it might pierce into all their senses: euen as if there were not one of the *elements* which should not rise vp on Gods behalfe to execute his vengeance. And yet these exceffiue speeches exceede not the heinousnesse of the offence, for it is impossible to set forth so horrible a representation of Gods iudgement; but the feeling thereof shall be far more terrible. Well, he speaks of the *Sunne*, *Moone*, and *starre*; and the reason is, because these are excellent testimonies of the fatherly kindnesse of God towards men. Christ therefore shewes, that Gods goodnesse doth in speciall manner appeare, because he makes his *Sunne* to shine vpon the good and bad: *Matth. 5. 45.* When the *Sunne*, *Moone*, and *starres* then shine in the heauen, God giues vs cause of reioicing, euen as it were by a sweete and amiable countenance. In as much then as in the brightness of the heauens, he shewes a ioyfull and cheerefull face, euen as if he laughed: the darknesse which the Prophet here describes, signifies as much, as if God hauing hid his face, would cast men headlong into sorrowes and into darknesse, because he is angry with them.

There is the like description in the second Chapter of *Isai*: and wee haue already said, that this manner of speeche is familiar in the Prophets; to let vs know, that all things shall turne to our ruine, if God be once against vs.

True it is hee sometimes shewes signes of his indignation in the *Starres*; but that is extraordinary: and the darknesse which the Prophet here describes, shall not come before the last coming of Christ Iesus. But this ought to suffice vs, namely, that all creatures which employ themselves for our seruice, as testimonies and instruments of the louing kindnesse of God, shall not onely cease from the seruice which now they doe vs; but shall euen arme themselves for our destruction, as soone as God shall ascend to iudgement.

Verf. 11. *And I Will visit the wickednesse vpon the world, and their iniquities vpon the wicked: and I Will cause the arrogancie of the proud to cease, and will cast downe the pride of tyrants.*

THE Prophet speaks not heere of all the world: but Babylon being then the seate of the mightiest Monarchie in all the earth, therefore it is that hee attributes this name world vnto it by a phrase of speeche, hauing great weight in it for Babylon then was as a world, and seemed to occupie almost all the earth. But in the meane while, he declares that nothing is so highly exalted in this same world, which God shall not easilie bring downe euen with his least finger. On the other side, hee aduertiseth that God will then take vengeance vpon the crueltie which the Chaldeans exercised. Let vs also there withall obserue, that hee sets the malice and wickednesse of Babylon in the first place, to the end wee might know that God is not to be esteemed cruell, in regard he chastised it so seuerely, seeing hee smites not this people, but according as the measure of their *offences* and *iniquities* had deserued. He takes away all occasion of false accusations then, to the end we ought vnderstand that God is not delighted with the calamities of men: for when hee deals with them according to their deserts, all must haue their mouthes stopped, in regard hee neuer sends bitter and sharpe afflictions, but he findes the cause thereof in men themselves. And yet we must keepe in minde that which I touched; to wit, that the Prophet greatly comforts the faithfull when he shewes them that he will punish the crueltie of the Babylonians at the last, how soeuer hee spared them for a time.

Hee expresseth this immediately, in touching one particular vice; to wit, *pride*: for thence it was that Babel tooke libertie to oppresse the poore to the vttermost, euen as she listed. But from thence ought we also to gather a very profitable doctrine; namely, that God must needs visit vs sharply, if wee be *proud*, and please our selues in our selues. For vnder this word, the Prophet comprehends all manner of arrogancie and high imaginations. Be it then that men thinke themselves something; or that they admire their riches, and care for none in respect of themselves; the Lord cannot beare anie

God can not
indure the
Proud. P. o. 8.
13. Lam. 4. 6.
1. Pet. 5. 5.

arrogancie, neither will he leaue it vn-
punished. Seeing then that this is noted heere as
the principall and most notorious wickednes
amongst a great many other wherewith Ba-
bylon was stuffed, so also the wrath of God we
see is most set on fire by this sinne. Now this
arrogancie was not without tyrannie and crueltie
as it ordinarilie falls out: and therefore
he addes immediatlie the glorie of tyrants.
For violences, outrages, and oppressions do
follow, when men despise others: neither can
it be chosen that a man should abstaine from
offring violence vnto another, vnlesse he put
off all perswasion and opinion of himselfe.
Let vs pull down our peacocks feathers then,
and learne we also to bring vnder our losti-
nesse to a true and voluntarie humilitie; vn-
lesse peraduenture we had rather be smitten
downe and humbled to our confusion and
destruction.

Verf. 12. *I will make a man more pre-
tious then fine gold, euen a man aboue the
redge of Ophir.*

Heere describes in particular the cruell
and horrible warre which shall be made
vpon the Babylonians: as also the faithfull
being instructed by these prophesies, wished
(by the spirit of prophesie) for that which was
the extreamest and most cruell stratageme of
warre, to wit, that the Medes and Persians
might pluck the little children from their
mothers breasts to dash them against the
stones: the summe is, that Babylon shall not
only be destroyed, but also whollie rooted
out. For when he saith the life of man shall be
more precious then gold, he meanes, that the
enemies shall be so fleshed in shedding of
blood, that men shall not escape their hands
for any ranfome whatsoever. Why so? Be-
cause they shall loue rather to massacre then
to take any ranfome.

Quest.

Dan. 6. 1.

Ans.

Some may demand whether this discom-
figure were so cruell as *Isaiab* heere describes
it, for histories witness otherwise: and *Daniel*
himselfe (who was there present) saith, that
the citie was taken only, Dan. 5. 30. This is
the cause why some expositors haue bene
driuen to referre every thing which is said
here of Babylon to all reprobates: but there-
in they haue wrested the text, for the Pro-
phet by and by after speaks of the Medes
and Persians. Moreover, the threatnings
which wil orderlie follow hereafter touching
the Moabites, Tyrians, Egyptians, and other
nations, doe sufficientlie shew that this pro-
phesie is properlie against the Chaldeans,
whom the Prophet placeth in the first rank:
not that their destruction was so neere at
hand as was the destruction of the rest; but
because *ſ* Chutch had no greater nor more
dangerous enemies then they. And wee must
obserue that *Isaiab* spake not this whilst
the Monarchie of Nineue flourished, but what-
soeuer he foretold against the profane nations
in the whole course of his ministrie, is put all
vpon one heape as it were. Thus then the
order of time was not kept, but the likenes
of things was the cause why they haue put all

these prophesies in one. For whence is it that
Isaiab makes no mention of Nineue, seeing
hee afterward sheweth that the Assyrians
only were they which molested the Iewes
(with whom the Babylonians were in league)
but in regard that he speaks not of the his-
tories of his time till he comes to the three
and twentie Chapter, but only prophesieth
of the iudgements of God which came to
passe after his death?

Now when he declares that Babylon shall
be destroyed vtterlie; it is certaine he speaks
not of one destruction barely, but vnder it
comprehends the full ruin thereof, which fol-
lowed long time after the first. For Babylon
flourished, yea after the Persians had subdued
it, and kept the name and dignitie of a thrice
renowned citie. And howsoeuer it be true
that another citie was built, called Ctesiphon,
that part of the glorie and riches of
Babylon might be taken away; yet notwith-
standing the commoditie of the place, the
sumptuous buildings and fortresses of the
citie, caused that (the dignitie royall excepted)
she was in nothing inferior to the head citie
of Persia. Yea, after the death of *Alexander*
the Great, when Seleucia was built neere vn-
to it, yet could it not staine the name and re-
putation of this so ancient citie. From
hence then we gather, that the things which
are heere spoken, can not be restrained to
one time. And yet is it not without cause that
the Prophet threatens them so sharplie, see-
ing the change of their empire was the be-
ginning of diuers calamities which followed
thereupon afterwards. So that howsoeuer all
the people were not slaine, yet notwithstanding
in regard the citie was forcible assailed
and taken by a sodaine assault, and that by
night when all the kings court were drowned
in drunkennes; it could not be but the Medes
and Persians hewed all those in pieces which
they met withall: and therefore we need not
doubt but the most valiant of the enemies
made many slaughters before they receiued
all the people to their mercie. For will any
man doubt but that this proud nation was
dishonorable handled by these barbarous
conquerors, seeing it was vnpossible to sub-
due them by any other meanes?

Now after that Babylon was by little and
little brought vnder, shee by and by after
changed her king, and after she had been a
while vnder the gouernment of *Alexander* the
Macedonian, the iudainly fell into the hands
of *Seleucus*, who indeuored by all meanes to
abate the greatnes of it, till at the last it was
brought vtterlie to ruine. And thus whilst
God suffered her to stand, she serued as a de-
formed and shamefull spectacle, that the ac-
complishment of this prophesie might be the
more excellent and certaine: and therefore
our Prophet rightlie affirms, that the wrath
of God shall not be appeased, vntill this den
of theeues shall be wholly brought to nought.
As touching the words, some of the expo-
sitors take *Enoſſ* (which we haue translated
man) for a warlike and noble man; and *Adams*
(which wee haue expounded person) for all
handicrafts men. But in as much as the Ety-
mologic

The change
of Babels
Empire, the
beginning
of future
calamities.

Alexander
the Mace-
donian.
Seleucus,
Babel
brought to
ruin at last.

mologie agrees not well herewith; I doe not thinke the Prophet meant ſo: I am rather of opinion, that it is a repetition of words, which is common with the Hebrewes. Others take the word *Ophir*, (which) according to diuers expositours, haue translated, *pure gold*, for a precious ſtone: but we gather from many places of the Scripture, that it ſignifies very pure and tried *gold*.

Verſ. 13. Therefore I will ſhake the heauens, and the earth ſhall remoue out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hoſtes, and in the day of his ſierce anger.

THis is another figure which ſerues for an amplification. For God cannot repeat this doctrine too often. The reaſon is, not onely to aſtoniſh the infidels, but alſo to bring conſolation to the good, who are often times diſquieted, when the wicked are at their caſe, and haue all things at their deſire: which *Dauid* confeſſeth when he ſaith; I haue cleaſed mine heart in vaine, and waſhed mine hands in innocencie: *Pſal. 73. 13.* Theſe liuely images then are for good cauſe thus painted out before our eyes, to ſhew vs plainly the deſtruction of the wicked. And therefore it is as if *Iſaiab* ſhould ſay; Were it ſo that the verie *heauens* had neede to be ſhaken for the bringing downe, and the rooting out of infidels; euen that ſhould be done. For they thinke themſelues out of all danger, and ſo deeply rooted in the earth, as if it were impoſſible to plucke them vp; but the Prophet ſhewes that they greatly deceiue themſelues, becauſe the Lord will rather ſhake the heauen and the earth alſo, then that they ſhould not come tumbling downe from their greatneſſe, whereunto they are mounted vp aloft. Whence it followes, that although the world preſents a thouſand leauiug ſtockes vnto vs, as well *high as lowe*, yet notwithſtanding there ſhall be no ſtedfaſtneſſe in any of them, vnleſſe God therewithall be mercifull vnto vs. And if this appears in particular iudgements, how much more will it appear in that generall iudgement, when Chriſt ſhall aſcend into the iudiciall throne of his maieltie to pronounce ſentence of condemnation againſt all the wicked?

Verſ. 14. And it ſhall be as a chaſed Doe, and as a ſheepe that no man taketh vp: euery man ſhall turne to his owne people, and flee each one to his owne land.

HEe declares that outward ſuccours ſhall profit the Babylonians nothing at all: and by theſe ſimilitudes, ſhewes with what feare the ſouldiers ſhall be ſeazed. Now *Babel* did not onely ſtrengthen her ſelfe with the men of warre of her owne Countrie, but ſhe had ſtrangers alſo vnder her pay. He ſaith, they ſhall all reſemble little *Fawnes* or *Does*, which are very timorous beaſts: and to ſcattered ſheepe; ſo as they ſhall retire neither to their Enſignes nor Garriſons, nor yet keepe a

ny order. And when he addes, *euery one ſhall flee to his land*; it ſufficiently appears from thence, that the Prophet ſpeakes not of the inhabitants of *Babel*, nor of other people; but of ſtrangers which had been called to her ſuccour. For it hath been ſaid heretofore, that the hearts of men are ſo in the hands of God, that when it pleaſeth him they ſuddenly recouer new ſtrength, who were before fearefull and amazed: and contrariwiſe, thoſe who haue ſhewed great valour and boldneſſe, loſe it all in an inſtant, and become weake and ſceminat.

Verſ. 15. Euery one that is found, ſhall be ſtricken thorow: and whoſoeuer ioyneth himſelfe, ſhall fall by the ſword.

HE here confirms that which he ſaid heretofore; to wit, that none ſhall eſcape out of *Babylon*, and that all thoſe which ſhall be therein ſhall periſh. *Xenophon* telles, how by the commandement of *Cyrus*, all thoſe which were met withall the firſt night, were put to death: and the next day; all thoſe which had not brought in, or laid downe their weapons. But we haue already ſaid, that this prophecie hath a further extent; becauſe this firſt taking was onely the beginning of all other calamities, whereunto *Babylon* was expreſly referred by the Lord, to the end it might be puniſhed the more often. Others expound the ſecond member otherwiſe then I haue tranſlated it: for in as much as *Saphan* ſignifieth, *To loſe*; or, *To conſume*; they reade, Whoſoeuer ſhall be loſt, and expound this of old men, who by reaſon of their age, can liue no longer: as if he ſhould ſay; they would not pardon, no not euen thoſe who are already worne with age, and vpon the brim of their graues, yea when they ſhould haue one foote within as it were, and ſhould be ready to yeeld vp the ghoſt. But becauſe this is a conſtrained expoſition, and that the very ſame verbe ſignifies, *To be ioyned*, I had rather follow *Ionathan*, and others, who thinke the Prophet ſpeakes of the bands and ſquadrons: as for example, when a *Cirie* is to be taken, the ſouldiers ioyne together to beate backe the aſſaults of the enemies. Vnleſſe any had rather vnderſtand by theſe words, the confederates and companions which were ioyned together with the Babylonians, the more to amplify the greatneſſe of this diſcomfiture.

Verſ. 16. Their children alſo ſhall be broken in pieces before their eyes: their houſes ſhall be ſpoiled, and their wines raiſhed.

HEe paintes out an image of more then barbarous cruelty. For behold the vttermoſt extremite of the enemies rage; when no age whatſoeuer ſhall be ſpared; when *liſſe children* are ſlaine, who ſhould rather bee defended in regard of their young yeares.

And yet he further amplifies the crueltie, when he saith that this shall be done in the presence of their fathers and mothers. That which followes of the houses which shall be spoiled, and of the women which shall be ravished, tends also to the same end: and this fallies out when the enemies having forgotten all humanitie, and being inflamed with crueltie, would y^e those whom they haue subdued were vterlic rootted out, with their name also.

Vers. 17. Behold, I will stirre vp the Medes against them, which shall not regard siluer, nor be desirous of gold.

The Prophet hauing prophesied the destruction of y^e Babylonians, shewes therewithall also the authors; or, he rather expresseth, that God shall be the mouer of them: and therein also specifies how or by whom this worke shall be done: for he saith, that he will stirre vp the Medes. Certainlie he could not coniecture this by any humane reason; for there was then no enemie nor diffensions betweene the Medes and the Babylonians. And although there had been discord; what was the power of the Medes then, to doe the Babylonians any harme? Seeing things were not so fitted then that the Medes could make warre with the Babylonians, it is very certaine that the Prophet was inspired of God in this matter, especiallie if we consider that he foretold these things more then an hundred yeres before they came to passe. When he addes that they shall not couet gold, nor siluer, he excuseth not the Medes of their rauening and avarice, as if they should be so liberal as to despise gold and siluer: but he rather meant to say, that this warre shall be so cruell & terrible, that nothing shall be seene but a final destruction; for example, because the speciall drift which the Spaniards aime at now adaias when they make warre, is only to spoile and rob, they doe more easily spare mens liues, and are not so addicted to shed blood as the Almans or Englishmen be, who thinke of nothing but killing their enemies.

Now let it not seeme strange to any man that the Lord who is louing & gracious doth yet notwithstanding serue his turne of so cruel executioners: for he works iustlie euen by the wicked; and yet is not spotted himselfe with their malice. Wherefore we must not iudge of the worke of God by the executioners thereof, who are caried away with ambition, couetousnes, or crueltie: but wee ought to consider therein the iust vengeance of God, which the Babylonians had well deserved, because of their wickednesse.

Vers. 18. With bowes also shall they destroy the children, and shall haue no compassion vpon the fruite of the womb, and their eyes shall not spare the children.

Some translate, *They shall kill*, and thinke that this is spoken by an excessiue manner of speech, as if they should vse the children of the Babylonians in stead of arrowes, in re-

gard they dashed them against the stones, that they might breake them with the greater violence. But I had rather take it more simplic, namely, that the crueltie of y^e Medes shall be so great, that they shall not spare so much as the *litle children*, which notwithstanding are neuer touched except it be there where they commit exceeding outrages. In a word, that neither old nor yong should be spared, as we haue said erewhile. But we reade not that the Medes vsed any such crueltie: and Babylon was in good estate, and flourished long time after this difcomfiture: and although the seate of the kingdome was caried thence, yet she kept her renowme still, for the very day and night before that it was taken, there was no hurt done, except it were to those which bare armes. In the meane while howsoeuer it was the Prophets meaning to comprehend other iudgments of God also which threatened the Babylonians, and came to passe long time after this first calamitie: yet is it not without reason, neither from the purpose that he describes the maners of barbarous nations, that so the Iewes might the better vnderstand that God had a iust recompence readie in his hand to execute vpon the Babilonith tyranny. No doubt but y^e faithfull also vpon the ground of this promise made the imprecation cōteined in the 137. Psalmē, Blessed shal be he that takes th^e children and dasheth them against the stones.

Vers. 19. And Babel the glorie of kingdomes, and the beautie and pride of the Chaldeans, shall be as the destruction of God in Sodome and Gomorah.

Isaiah meant to cōclude his prophesie touching the ruin of y^e Babylonians in a briefe maner in this place, although he addes some amplifications to confirme his speech touching the full rooting of them out. For the Prophets speake in such sort of the punishments of the wicked, that they leaue them no hope of mercie wherewith they might comfort themselves. But as touching the faithfull, although it seemes now and then that they should be chastened too seuerely; yet are they susteined with this assurance, that the Lord will haue pitie vpon them, and will not vterlic destroy them. Whence we ought to gather, that we must not alwaies iudge according to the outward appearance. For we shall many times thinke that the children of God are vterlic yndone, whose saluation notwithstanding is neere, yea euen in the midst of death it selfe.

In Sodome and Gomorah. } This example is oft alledged by the Prophets, to the end wee might know that howsoeuer all chastisements be not equall, yet notwithstanding in as much as God is vnpartiall in his iudgements, the memorable example which he shewed thereof in the destruction of *Sodom* appertaines to all reprobates: so as those who harden themselves in their sinnes with the like obstinacie, shall be no lesse punished then they were. And they distinguish betweene the punishments

The Spaniard.

Almans.
Englishmen.

Sodome and Gomorah.

Gen. 19. 24.

ments of the elect, and reprobates, in ſuch wiſe, that ſtill God left ſome ſeed to the Iſraelites; but to the wicked none: as we have ſcene in the firſt Chapter; If the Lord, ſaith he, had not left vs a ſeed, we had bin as Sodom and as Gomorah. But he purſues the reprobate with all ſeveritie; and therefore the Prophets threaten them with the very ſame ruine which happened to the Sodomites; that is to ſay, an utter deſtruction without all hope of recovery.

He ſaith it is *the ones throw of God*; to the end wee ſhould not thinke it came to paſſe by chance, or by the will of men. For euen as the fire fell not vpon Sodom & Gomorah from heauen at random; ſo Babylon alſo was not deſtroyed by haphazard; but by the juſt vengeance of God. Which being alwaies like vnto himſelfe, did execute his juſt iudgement againſt them, and will ſtill doe the ſame againſt all reprobates euen vnto the end. Whereas Babylon is called the *glorie* and bright beauty of Kingdoms; this is added for amplifications ſake, to teach vs, that God cannot bee hindered from performing his worke by any *glorie* or excellencie whatſoeuer, that hee ſhould not utterly roote out the wicked. For in regard that this deſtruction was incredible, therefore ſo much the more did an excellent example of Gods mightie power appear in the confuſion of it.

Chap. I. 9.

No glory can withſtand Gods almighty power.

*Or, ſit vpon.

Verſ. 20. *It ſhall not be inhabited for euer, neither ſhall it be dwelled in from generation to generation: neither ſhall the Arabian pitch his tents there; neither ſhall the ſheepheards make their foldes there.*

BY the word *To ſit*, hee ſignifies a firme eſtate; as if he ſhould ſay, Neuer looke that Babel ſhall be reſtored any more. For all theſe phraſes of ſpeech tend to one and the ſame end; namely, the Babylonians ſhall be ſo deſtroyed, that their ruine ſhall be perpetuall. This alſo he further amplifies when he addes, that the deſtruction ſhall be ſo great, that the verie *Arabians* ſhall diſdaine to pitch their tents there, and the ſheepheards their foldes. Now wee may well ſay that this place was become wonderfull deſert, and inhabitable, ſeeing theſe vagabonds made no reckoning of it: for this nation of the Arabians in verie deed, did nothing elſe but trot vp and downe, and had no ſetled abiding. For hauing left their owne Countrie, becauſe it was barren; and therefore is called the deſert Arabia, (for of that wee ſpeake) and being giuen to nourish cattell and to hunting, they frisked it hither & thither, and abode in the mid of the *fields*; eſpecially in places of beſt paſture. Thence it came that the Greekes called them by a name which ſignifieth dwellers in tents.

The region of Babylon was wonderfull fruitful before this deſtruction, by reaſon whereof this change was ſo much the more terrible, and as it were prodigious, whether

in regard that it loſt the firſt fruitfullneſſe, or that all abhorred the ſight of it, becauſe of the continuall calamities wherewith it was waſted. Certaine it is the Prophet declares it ſhall come to paſſe, that not only the buildings ſhall be broken downe, but that the *land* alſo ſhall be *accuſed*.

Verſ. 21. *But Zim ſhall lodge there, and their houſes ſhall be full of Ohim: Oſtriches ſhall dwell there, and the Satyres ſhall dance there.*

HE goes on in deſcribing a deſert place, and alludes to that he ſaid before; to wit, that Babylon ſhould be vnhabited. I cannot well tell how this word *Zim* ſhould be tranſlated, in regard the opinions of the expoſitors are ſo diuers; who agree no more in this, then they doe about ſundry names of beaſts and hearbs. The vſe of theſe things continued not alwaies, and the Iewes being ignorant themſelues, haue not the knowledge of them; although ſome amongſt them are not aſhamed to brag of their ſkill in phyſicke: and yet notwithstanding are ignorant not onely of the nature of plants, but of beaſts alſo. Whereas ſome are of opinion that *Zim*, was a wild beaſt: others, that it ſhould be a bird: and ſome others a fourefooted beaſt: herein there is no great difference. For mine owne part, I make no queſtion but the Prophet meant in this place to ſpeake either of wild beaſts which cannot be tamed, or of birds which make their neſts in foreſts farre remote from men. And there will be no inconueniencie in it, if we expound that which followes of Satyres, or Fairies, which the Frenchmen, according to the diuerſities of regions, in one place call Hobgoblins, Robinhoodfellows; and Bugbeares in another. For as Satan abuſeth men by diuers impoſtures, ſo alſo he allots diuers names to eury one of theſe.

It is certaine that the word *Zim*, is ſometimes taken in the Scripture for wicked ſpirits: for it comes of *Ziiah*, which ſignifies drieſſe or deſert; as *lim* comes of *Alian*, which ſignifies feare. For in as much as the diuell workes ſtrange illuſions by Fairies and Satyres, therefore the names thereof are attributed vnto him. The Prophets drift is, to ſhew that there ſhould be ſuch deſolation, that the place ſhould not onely be forſaken of men, but the euill ſpirits alſo ſhould worke their illuſions there: for by the ſolitarieſſe of the place they take occaſion to terrifie thoſe which paſſe thereby. And looke how theeues and enemies ſhew themſelues more cruell when they come out of ſome obſcure place or caues: ſo alſo the diuels ſeek for the night, darkeneſſe, and places far remote from mens ſight, to the end they may the more affright them which are fearefull and timorous of nature.

Verſ. 22. *And Iim ſhall cry in their palaces, and dragons in their pleaſant palaces:*

laces: and the time thereof is readie to come, and the daies thereof shall not bee prolonged.

He sets forth that which hath been touched before, and shewes how horrible this change shall be; that it might appeare that this shall come to passe from the iudgement of God, and not by fortune. He also amplifies it whē he saith, that this shall happen not to houses, but to *pleasant palaces*. The shortnesse of *time* whereof he speaks here, may be referred to the first destruction; yet so, as it was requisite that the expectation of the faithfull should bee held the longer in suspense: I haue told you that Babylon was not so quickly ouerturned; and that the discomfiture made by the Medes, was not so great that the Citie might therefore be compared to a desert. He saith then, that the destruction thereof shall *shortly come*; the beginnings whereof were scene soone after, for the Lewes were to content themselues, in regard that this vengeance vpon Babylon was not promised them in vaine.

The holy Ghost in like manner is wont to prevent our heate and hastinesse, because we would haue God execute his iudgements out of hand, and should chastise the wicked as soone as we thinke good. But he only knowes the fit season, which yet wee are impatient in waiting for, by reason of the boiling of our passions. But if wee could meditate of his euerlastingnesse, we should easilie bridle this ouer great hastinesse by patience: but because we haue much adoe to hold in our importunitie, God doth somewhat incline vnto vs, shewing that *he will come by and by*. And yet let vs not iudge of the shortnesse of the time, according to our reason; but let vs lift vp our hearts to heauen, and despise the daies of this life. Aboue all, let vs learne to stoope as soone as we begin to see the iudgements of God comming towards vs, yea though it be in the least measure: although he deterre the execution of them for a long time. The second member is immediately adoe for a confirmation; to wit, that *the daies of Babylon shall not be prolonged*: as if he should say; The Lord hath appointed a *day*, so as none shall be able to make truce any longer.

A iust re-
proofe of
our impa-
tience.

The medi-
tation of
Gods eterni-
tie, the best
bridle to
curbe our
impatience.

We must not
iudge of this
shortnesse of
time accord-
ing to our
carnall rea-
son.

THE XIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *For the Lord will haue compassion of Iacob, and will yet chuse Israel, and cause them to rest in their own land: and the stranger shall ioyne himselfe vnto them; and they shall cleane so the house of Iacob.*



Because the particle *ci*, hath diuers significations, wee may conioyne this verse with the former, thus; *But yet the Lord will haue pittie vpon Zion*: and so it should shew how much the condi-

tion of the Church differeth from that which he described before. But I had rather take it for a particle rendring the cause; and that indeed agrees best to this place, as in many other texts: so as the sense shall be this; God shall destroy Babylon, *because he shall haue compassion of Iacob*; whom hee can neither despise nor reiect. Whence wee perceiue, that the Prophet hath indeuoured hitherto, to aswage the sorrow of this poore people; to the end they might learne to be of good comfort in those their afflictions, which God would at length auenge. Thus Babylon & the Church of God are here set before vs as in a glasse: Babylon (I say) exalted in her soueraigne power, who had so oppressed the poore and desolate Church, that shee was vtterly past hope (in a manner) that euer shee should be restored againe. But the Lord tumbling Babylon downe from her high seate, therein witnesseth, that he hath care ouer his people, how abiect or contemptible soeuer they seem

to be. From hence we may gather a sweet consolation, when wee see that God thus gouernes all the world for our saluation. For all things aime to this end, that the elect may be saued; and not ouerwhelmed by any changes how many soeuer befall the. But some will aske, whether *mercie and compassion* ceased to be in God for a time? Doubtlesse it continued in him alwaies: but the people which were so greuously afflicted felt it not. For being forepossest with the sence of his wrath, they iudged of themselues according to the outward appearance, and were not able to apprehend his mercie. And yet was the Lord euer like himselfe notwithstanding, & neuer lost his mercifull nature. Thus then we must distinguish betweene the vnderstanding or knowledge of faith, and experience: for whilst the signes of Gods indignation appeare on all sides, in regard that (according to the iudgement of the flesh) we thinke hee is angry; so his grace is hidden from vs: yet faith notwithstanding lifts vp our hearts aboue all darkenesse, to the end wee may behold God in heauen, who is fauourable towards vs.

Note this
consolation

Quest.

Ans.

We must dis-
tinguish be-
tween faith,
apprehensi-
on, and ex-
perience.

He will yet chuse Israel (saith he.) The election of God is eternall: for hee chuseth vs not, as if he thought not on it before: and euen as we were chosen before the foundations of the world, so doth he neuer repent himselfe of the same his election, Ephes. 1. 4. Rom. 11. 29. But when the Lord corrects his children, this hath in it some appearance of reiection, as we may gather from the ordinarie complaints of the faithfull: Lord why hast thou put vs away for euer? Why is thy wrath kindled against the sheepe of thy pasture? Psal. 74. 1. For we apprehend the election or reiection

Gods electi-
on eternall.

Psal. 74. 1.

tion

We often meaſure Gods affection towards vs by his outward works. Our vocation a confirmation of our election How God is ſaid to elect, and reiect vs.

tion of God according to our infirmities, and meaſure his affection towards vs by the outward works, (I ſpeake of that knowledge which proceeds from experience, which is corrected by the light of faith.) And therefore when the Lord calles vs, that is to ſay, when he confirms his election, it is ſaid he chuſeth vs; and contrariwiſe that hee reiects vs, when he thewes vs any euident ſigne of his indignation. See then how we are to vnderſtand this verſe, to wit, that although the Lord ſhould ſo ſtraight correct his people as if he meant to caſt them off, yet notwithstanding he will ſhew in the end by the effects, and will giue them to know that he hath elected them, when he ſhall giue ſufficient teſtimonie thereof, and ſhall take compaſſion vpon them.

Now we may eaſily collect that which I ſaid erewhile, to wit, that there is great difference betweene the chaſtiſements which the faithfull indure, and thoſe wherewith the reprobates are viſited. For the faithfull be thinke theſelues forthwith of their election, whereby they take heart of grace: but the vnbelieuers ſee nothing but thick darknes, bottomles gulfes, and fearefull conuulſion on all ſides. As ſoone then as the Lord corrects vs, let vs by and by call to mind this difference, to the end we may confirme our hearts in the hope of an happy iſſue.

When he ſpeakes of their returne into their owne land, he therein ſets before them a ſigne of grace and reconciliation: for the land of Canaan was a pledge of adoption to the children of Abraham.

And the ſtranger ſhall ioyne himſelf with them. He prophetieth of the calling of ſeuerall Gentiles, as if he ſhould haue ſaid, The Lord will not only put them into the poſſeſſion of the land of Canaan, but will alſo enrich them with a great increaſe: for he will ioyne the Gentiles with them, that of two peoples there may be made but one only bodie. This benefit then is not to be referred to a few daies, but appertains to the whole Church, which God promiſeth to ſet at reſt in a ſure place. For the Prophet ſpeakes not only of the Church of that time, but of that alſo which ſhould be before, and vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, otherwiſe this addition ſhould be improper.

Verſ. 2. *And the people ſhall receiue them and bring them to their owne place, and the houſe of Iſrael ſhall poſſeſſe them in the land of the Lord for ſeruants and handmaidens, and they ſhall take them priſoners whoſe captiues they were, and haue rule ouer their oppreſſors.*

HE ſhewes that the ſtrangers ſhall willingly accompany the Iewes, and that in ſuch ſort, that they ſhall not reſuſe to become their ſeruants. We haue ſeene the prooſe of this when the people came out of Babylon, Ezra 1. 6. but this was onely a ſmall taſte of thoſe things which were done by Ieſus Chriſt, to whom all this muſt be referred. For the Lord in deed inclined the hearts of

nations which hated his people deadly, to be louing to them whom he meant to reſtore to their countrey and libertie by their meanes: but ſo farre was it off that many nations helped the Iewes after their returne from Babylon, that contrariwiſe the neighbours through enuie conſpired one with another to moleſt them. Ezra 4. 4. For they were not only bent againſt them to driue them out of the land of Canaan, but alſo to ſlaine them from off the earth. Theſe things then were accompliſhed vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, to whom all power is giue not only in earth, but in heauen alſo, Math. 28. 18. who by his Goſpell hath vniited the Gentiles with the Iewes, which before were ſtrangers, Eph. 2. 14. to the end they might not only help the Iewes to take poſſeſſion of their inheritance, but alſo to bring them vnder ſo, as to beare the yoke quietlie and willinglie.

And herunto appertaines that which he addes of *ſeruants and handmaidens*: for ſeeing the Iewes are the firſt borne in the houſe of God, we which are ioined vnto them ſeeme to haue bin aſſembled as it were vnder their hand, becauſe they were before vs, and obtained the firſt place before all other nations: which honor they might hold euen at this day, if by their owne frowardnes and ingratitude they deſpiſed theſelues of ſuch a dignitie; and yet their vnthankfulnes did not let the Lord to effect that which he here promiſeth. For the Apoſtles who were Iewes, ſubdued ſtrange nations by the word of God; yea euen thoſe which in times paſt held them priſoners, and to whom they paid tribute, to wit, the *Aſſyrians, Chalzeans, Perſians*, and at laſt the *Romane Empire*, ſo as all the Gentiles might iuſtly be called *their heritage*, although they would not reigne ouer them, but winne them to God, that ſo together they might acknowledge one Lord and Prince. This then ought to be referred to the yoke & gouernment of Chriſt whereunto the Iewes ſubdued the Gentiles, and not to a worldly kingdome and rule, as the Iewes falſie imagine.

Verſ. 3. *And in that day ſhall the Lord giue thee reſt from thy ſorrow, and from thy feare, and ſit in the ſore bondage wherein thou didſt ſerue.*

4. *Then ſhalt thou take vp this proverb againſt the king of Babel, and ſay, How hath the oppreſſor ceaſed? and the gold-thirſtie Babel reſted?*

HE addes a confirmation to the former promiſes: and thus God vſeth to prouide for our weakenesse, becauſe it is very hard for vs to giue credit to his word; but eſpecially then when things are troubled. And yet the Lord will this way proue the ſtedfaſtneſſe of our faith, when he ceaſeth not to promiſe of our ſaluation, and yet all hope thereof ſhall be quite and cleane cut off from vs. He confirms this with many words, that ſo caſting off all doubt, we ſhould not ceaſe to reſt our ſelues

Great difference betweene the chaſtiſements of the elect, and thoſe wherewith the reprobate are viſited. Note.

The land of Canaan a pledge of adoption to Abrahams poſteritie.

A propheticke touching the calling of the Gentiles.

The Iewes might hold the honor of the firſt born in the houſe of God if their owne ingratitude deſpiued them not of it.

The Apoſtles meant not to reigne by their conqueſt, but to win men to God.

God will proue the ſtedfaſtneſſe of our faith in promiſing vs ſaluation, and in the meane while with- holding from vs all hope of obtaining the ſame.

felues vpon his gracious free promises, how desperate so euer things seeme to be. And herewithall also he exhorts the Lewes to acknowledgement, and neuer to forget so excellent and memorabile a worke of God. Now of set purpose hee makes expresse mention of the *yoke and bondage*; thereby to teach the Lewes, that the Lord would take away all these impediments when it pleased him; and that nothing should let him to deliuer his people, as soone as he saw occasion. Let vs apply this doctrine to our vse now, euen in this miserable seruitude and vile bondage of Antichrist, vnder whom poore Christians are holden. For albeit they be inuironed and inclosed on all sides in his nets and snares, yet haue they God for their deliuerer, who will easilie ouercome all manner of difficulties and impediments. And this may also bee referred to all vexatious, miseries, and troubles.

Moreover, by the word *prouerbe*, or, *parable*, (for amongst the Hebrewes it signifies graue sentences, high & worthy of note) he shewes that this destruction of Babylon shall be so great, that men shall make a *prouerbe* of it: which they are wont to do in great and wonderful things. This word *how* is an interrogation proceeding from a taunting manner of astonishment; for it was incredible that Babylon (furnished with such abundance of riches and strength) could be ouerthrowne, and fall into the hands of her enemies. Hee iustly mockes then at their vaine and foolish confidence, in regard that being puffed vp with their intollerable pride, they thought themselves inuincible and out of all danger. But it seemes contrarie to the modestie of the faithfull, to *mocke* at the miserie of others: a man would thinke they should rather haue compassion on them. But this is not against modestie, when our zeale is ordered according to the equite of Gods iudgement: for by humane affection, we may bewaile the miserie of those who perish through their owne folly; and yet therewithall despise their pride and furie. And euen as the Lord exalts himself against them, scorning their beastlinesse; so also hee doth in this place command vs (which loue and desire his glory) to conremne them; not after a proud and insulting maner, but as magnifying and extolling his goodnesse and power. By this example then it is lawfull for vs to scoffe at Gods enemies, when they are ouerthrowne and abased: as at Antichrist, whose power wee daily see to decay by litle and litle.

The word *Madhuah*, which is put in the end of the verse, may be translated *gilt*, or of gold: but because this word is conioyned with tyrant, or exactor, it is very like the Prophet speaks of the countousnesse and insatiable desire of gold, which the Babylonians thirsted after. For it often comes to passe, that how much the more, great Empires, Commonwealths, and nations haue of riches, so much the more doe they burne with lust of increasing and hauing.

Verf. 5. *The Lord hath broken the*

rod of the wicked, and the scepter of the rulers,

6. *Which smote the people in anger with a continuall plague, and ruled the Nations in wrath: if any were persecuted, he did not let.*

HE now answers to the former interrogation, and would not that the faithfull should any way doubt of the euent thereof, but rather that they should stand astonished at such admirable workes of God. For the interrogation serued to awaken vp their mindes to the greater attention. It is as much then as if he should haue said; It came not to passe by chance, or by any blinde passion of fortune, that you were not still oppressed vnder a continuall bondage, but you are wholly to attribute it to the *providence of God, who brake so fore a yoke of seruitude from off your neckes*. Now the wicked are at their wits end when they see such workes, and stand amazed because they see not the reason of them: but the faithfull know that this ought to bee attributed vnto God. Let vs learne then to admire the workes of the Lord, and let vs bee stricken with such an astonishment, that we may acknowledge him to bee the author of them: and let vs not in any wise passe lightly ouer the least of them; but especially then when he manifestis his power in the redemption of his Church; when by his admirable strength, he redemes any one of vs from vnder the seruitude of the diuell, the tyranny of Antichrist, and from eternall death. For these are no common workes; and therefore wee may not in any sort attribute the same to the power of man, or to any other causes whatsoever. Hee ioynes the *scepter of the rulers*, to the *staffe of the wicked*; shewing by this repetition, that an vniust tyranny cannot be established by a power imperial in any sort whatsoever: Then by and by after, he more clearly shewes, that the Monarchy of the Babylonians shall be abolished, because it was vniust and tyrannical; and saith, that the people were smitten with an *incurable wound*, and extremely afflicted, because they ouerflowed in all excessiue dissolutions. By this we are admonished, that howsoever God may seeme to winke at the tyranny of the wicked for a time, yet that he will spare them neuer the more for all that in the latter end, for they shall be destroyed euen as we know Babylon was, because the Lord is iust, and continues alwayes like himselfe.

Verf. 7. *The whole world is at rest and is quiet: they sing for ioy.*

8. *Also the sirre trees reioyced of thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, since thou art laid downe, no hewer came vp against vs.*

HEere he shewes how Tyrants are hatefull to all the world, for they are no sooner dead or destroyed, but all leape for ioy, shewing what affection they caried towards them, which

Gods workes ought diligently to be obserued, but especially in the redemption of his Church.

Tyrants hatefull to all the world.

We are in these times to apply this doctrine to our vses.

To scorne the wicked is not against modestie, when our zeale is ordered there in according to the equity of Gods iudgements. Psa. 2. 4.

which for feare before they diſſembled. Then ſhall you ſee men utter forth their diſcontentments and hatreds: and not men only diſcouer their joy, but euen the dumb creatures alſo, as the Prophet addes afterwards, ſpeaking of the *ſirre trees*, and *cedars*, by way of amplification; for as all things are ouerturned and peruerſed by tyranny, ſo alſo it being aboliſhed, it ſeemes all things are put into their perfect eſtate againe.

Now to the end the ſpeech might haue the greater vehemencie, he addes a figure called *Proſopopeia*, by which he brings in *trees* ſpeaking and reioycing, that they ſhall ſtand quietlie now this tyrant is dead. So then y^e Prophets drift is to ſhew that the heauenly Iudge can not indure tyrants alwayes to uſurp, whom all the world deteſts & hates. Whence we may gather, that albeit men be ſilent, and dare not open their lips whiſt tyrants beare ſway, yet the Lord notwithstanding heates their ſecret grones and complaints. Let vs not wonder then if tyrants be cut off by ſuch admirable meanes; for it is neceſſarie that God who is priuie to all the outrages which they commit, ſhould fauour and aſſiſt the innocent.

Verſ. 9. Hell beneath is moued for thee to meeete thee at thy comming, raiſing vp the dead for thee, euen all the princes of the earth, and hath raiſed from their thrones all the kings of the nations.

EVEN as before he attributed gladnes to *Trees*, ſo now alſo by the ſame manner of ſpeaking hee attributes ſpeech to the *dead*. For he brings them as it were out of their *graves*, to the end they ſhould deride the pride of this tyrant; and all the words following are nothing elſe in a manner but moſt pleaſant taunts and flouts. For when great kings approach nere a place, people tremble; they go before and receiue them with great pomp and preparations: ſo *Iſaiah* ſancies that the dead ſhall goe before this tyrant, who after his death ſhall deſcend into his ſepulchre, that they may do him homage, but yet ſuch as to him appertaineth. Which is as much as if he ſhould ſay, His death ſhall not only be acceptable to the liuing, but to the dead alſo, ſo as they ſhall receiue him honorable according to his deſerue.

Verſ. 10. All they ſhall cry and ſay vnto thee, Art thou become Weake alſo as we? Art thou become like vs?

BEhold what taunts the dead ſhall utter againſt this tyrant, whē he ſhall be in their companie; as if they asked a reaſon of him, why he alſo is dead as well as others. And therefore the Prophet being aſtoniſhed with the noueltie of ſuch a thing, brings in the dead enquiring thereof with admiration, as of a thing vtterlie incredible. For tyrants are ſo blinded with their greatnes, that they thinke themſelues no mortall creatures, but make themſelues halfe gods, and worſhip

themſelues. For this cauſe it is well enough perceiued after their death, that their condition differed in nothing from other men; howſoeuer they thought themſelues exempted out of their ranke.

According to this ſenſe, the dead reproch him with a wonderfull riſping deriſion, in ſaying, that he is *made like vnto them*: becauſe death onely giues vs to know (as the ſatyrlike Poet ſpeakes) how weak a thing the bodie of man is. *Dauid* alſo ſpeaking of Princes, and of their dignitie, ſaith thus; I haue ſaid you are Gods: yet muſt you die like men, and fall like one of the people: *Pſal. 82. 6, 7.* For the bodies of Princes muſt needes bee eaten and conſumed with wormes at the laſt; although ſumptuous and glorious ſepulchres be prepared for ſuch kind of perſons.

See Chap. 5. verſ. 9. ſect. 2.

Verſ. 11. Thy pompe is brought downe to the graue, and the ſound of thy viols: the worme is ſpread vnder thee, and the wormes coner thee.

HE mentions the royall pompe, to the end one might more diligently note this mutation, when they ſhould compare the former things with the latter: and thus ſhewes that nothing could let this tyrant from being brought into a like eſtate with others. Under the *inſtruments of muſicke*, hee comprehends all pleaſures and voluptuouſneſſe, wherein Kings are wont to take delight: becauſe by the ſweete harmonie thereof, they not onely forget death, but alſo by theſe mixed ſounds, all cares are driuen away; ſo as their mindes are ſomewhat intoxicate therewith.

In the ſecond part of the verſe, the dead doe pleaſantly ſay vnto him; *Thou haſt a bed fit for thee*. For in ſtead of tapeſtrie, or a ſoft pillow, thou haſt mothes; and for a ſumptuous couerlet, thou haſt *wormes*. To be ſhort, we haue heere a liuely image of mens fooliſh confidence, who being beſotted with the preſent proſperitie and peaceable eſtate of their affaires, reioyce and cheere vp themſelues. This doctrine ought to be diligently obſerued: for howſoeuer men know well enough what their condition is, and haue death ſtill before their eyes; yet are they ſo dulle with ambition, and tickled with pleaſures, yea bewitched with vaine glory, that they vtterly forget themſelues.

Verſ. 12. How art thou fallen from heauen, O Lucifer ſonne of the morning, and cut downe to the ground, which didſt caſt lots vpon the nations?

* Or, which weaknedd men.

I*ſaiah* continues the matter which hee began before in the perſon of the dead; and concludes, that this tyrant differs in nothing from others, although by all his flatteries he induoured to perſwade himſelfe that he was ſome god. He vſeth an elegant ſimilitude in comparing him to the *ſtarre of the morning*; calling him the ſonne of the twilight, and that becauſe

God will not alwayes ſuffer Tyrants to uſurp.

because of his excellencie and glorie, which made him shine far above all others. Whereas some haue expounded this place of Satan, they haue done it ignorantly: for the scope of the text doth sufficiently shew, that it should be vnderstood of the King of Babylon. But when men snatch vp places of Scripture at randome, and consider not the coherence of the text, we neede not merruile if wee often meete with so many errors. And yet was it a more absurd blockishnesse, when they made *Lucifer* the prince of duels, making folkes beleue, that the Prophet gaue him this name. But for as much as such inuentions haue no colour at all; let vs leaue them for fables as we found them.

The expositours haue been deceiued in the second member of the verse, in translating the Hebrew particule in the passive signification, saying, Thou art weakened; seeing it is in the active signification. Notwithstanding, because the verbe whence it is deriued, signifies to cast the lot; and that the particule *Sar*, is ioyned therewith, this sense agrees well, that this tyrant *divided all regions by lot*, as the Lord and Master of them, and drew them to himselfe, as if they had appertained to his succession. And yet I reiect not the other exposition; namely, that he weakened the people.

*Vers. 13. Yet thou saidst in thine heart, I will ascend into heauen, and exalt my throne above besides the starres of God: I will sit also vpon the mount of the *Congregation of God*.*

*Or, couen-
nant.

*Or, in the
sides of the
north.
This phrase
To say, ex-
pounded.

THIS must be ioyned to that which went before. *To say*, in this place is taken to resolve in himselfe; according to the Hebrew phrase. For he derides the pride of the Babylonian, who resting vpon his greatnesse, durst be so bold as to promise himselfe continuall happinesse; euen as if it had been in his power to bring the euent of things to passe at his pleasure. Wherem wee haue a faire looking glasse to behold the foolish pride wherewithall the wicked are puffed vp; which also sometimes they are not ashamed to vomit forth. Neither must we heere consider the person of one tyrant onely, but the damnable furie of all the wicked, which make their conclusions in secret, no otherwise then if they were able to dispose of all things according to their owne fantasie. Whole plots *S. James* describes in liuely colours; We will goe into such a Citie, say they, wee will buy, and sell, and get gaine: and yet in the meane while, they know not what shall come to passe to morrow: *Iam. 4. 13.* They neuer thinke they are vnder Gods hand; but haue this sottish conceit, that they will doe all things by their own strength. I grant that this brag, *I will ascend into heauen*, and that which folloves also, is so absurd, as it seemes impossible how it could come out of the mouth of a mortall man: but in regard it was not the Prophets meaning to set downe the speeches of *Nebuchadnezzar*, word for word, let it suf-

fice vs to consider the thing it selfe. For to speake the truth, whosoeuer he be that attributes more vnto himselfe then the condition of men can beare, hee exalts himselfe against God, as the Giants did, of whom the proverbe speakes: whence it followes, that all their deuises shall come to confusion. But especially hee, who passing beyond the bounds of his calling, prouokes the Lord against him by his boldnesse. And therefore let euery one of vs content himselfe with his estate, and not desire to be mounting vp aloft; but let vs rather continue in that degree wherein God hath placed vs. Indeed if God reach out his hand vnto any, and lift him higher, he may go further: but he ought to vsurpe nothing to himselfe, nor to clime vp therinto of his owne head. And concerning those who are exalted vnto high degree and dignitie, they ought to carry themselves humbly and modestlie; not feinedly, but with such meekenesse of spirit, as if they were not exalted at all.

Besides, we may sufficientlie see wherfore the Prophet accuseth this tyrant of Babylon particularly of such outrage, and also what the scope is to which these figuratiue speeches do aime, the rather by those that follow, to wit, that he desired to mount into the mountaine of the testimony, and by such pride to make himselfe equall with God. For howsoeuer he made these discourses after the ordinarie maner of men, that he was able to conquer the Iewes, yet because he despised the helpe of God, vnder which they shrowded themselves, as he had often heard tell, it was as much as if he had conspired to overthrow the heauens. Now in stead of the mount of Zion, he puts *the sides of the north*, which description is also conteined in the 48. Psalm. The mountaine of Zion in the sides of the north, is the citie of the great King. He called it before the mountaine of the testimony, which title is drawne from the verbe *Iand*, which signifies, to vnite, to agree, and make peace. And therefore *Moed* signifies peace, couenant, and day prefixed. Lastly, it may be referred to time, place, and persons. But I had rather take it heere for couenant, or agreement. For the Lord speaking of the Tabernacle of the couenant in Exodus, saith, I will there make appointment with you. *Exod. 25. 21. 22. 29. 42.* We must not thinke then that he speaks heere of an assemblie of men, as when the profane meete in fayres or in their feast dayes: but that the Lord meant there to shew a signe of his presence, and to ratifie his couenant; which we ought diligentlie to obserue, because this condemnes the sacrifice of this wicked king, who rather fought against $\ddot{\gamma}$ very beaheens, then against an earthly place.

Vers. 14. I will ascend above the height of the cloudes, and will be like the most high.

A Man would maruell that the Prophet doth thus accuse the king of Babylon, as if he would be check-mate with God, seeing that (as wee haue said) such a thought could

could not once enter into any mans heart, but that he must needs quake and tremble for feare. For euen as their is in vs some feed of religion by nature, so also are we contriined in despite of our teeth to beare some reuerence to this diuinitie, which we thinke to be the most excellent about all things. And there is no man so senselesse that would imagin to call God out of his throne, because we are all taught by nature rather to honor and worship God. And therefore howsoeuer the heathens knew him not, yet notwithstanding they worshipped their Idols. Thus we may imagin, it was not likelie that the king of Babylon meant to driue God out of heauen, and to reigne there himselfe. Yet doth nor the Prophet accuse him without cause: for although the vngodlie resolue not to reigne in Gods stead, yet notwithstanding they fight against him whē they exalt themselues more then they ought; hereby attributing that to themselues which is proper vnto him: which is as much in effect, as if they meant to pluck him out of his seate. And what did satan else when he deceiued the first man? You (saith he) shall be as gods, Gen. 3.5. Therefore all such as dare attribute more to themselues then God permits, do lift vp themselues no otherwise then if they meant to proclaime open warre against him; for where pride gets the masterie, there of necessitie must be the contempt of God.

And thus also we may note that which we haue touched before, to wit, that this tyrant bent himselfe off set purpose against God as it were in rushing himselfe against the Church which is his holy heritage. Seeing then that he violated the heauenlie Sanctuarie, this ought not to seeme any excessiue manner of speech vnto vs. Now from hence we obserue a doctrine full of consolation: for wee are taught that the wicked doe arme themselues euen against God, as oft as they set themselues against his Church. This king here is not accused for lifting himselfe about the Angels, but for indeouoring to ouerwhelme the Church of God. Now the seruice of God at this day is not shut vp in any certain place, but is spread thoroughout the whole world. In what part soeuer then the name of God is called vpon, if there any tyrant do purpose or practise the destruction of the faithfull, let vs know that such a one sets not himselfe so much against men, as against God, who will not long indure the proud so to make warre vpon him. We shall finde the like example hereafter in *Senacherib*, of whom the Prophet saith, that in threatening and offering violence to Zion, he did it to God himselfe. Let vs therefore be assured that we are so vnder the protection of God, that whosoever doth vs wrong, shall haue God for his enimie. He that hurts you (saith the Lord) hurts the apple of mine eye. Zach. 2.8. He also testifieth that he dwels in the midst of the Church, Psal. 46.5. so as none can assaile it but he must beare the first brunt. He will then surely take vengeance of all the wrongs which the Church indures, although he suffer it to be afflicted for a time.

Verf. 15. *But thou shalt be brought downe to the graue, to the sides of the pit.*

HE hath heretofore shewed, how it was the King of Babel that entered into to set his seate about the cloudes. And now he opposeth an euent quite contrarie; to wit, the *sides of the pit*, or caue, that is to say, some corner of the sepulchre into which he should be cast. For he said before, that this tyrant would ascend about the mountaine of Zion in the *sides of the north*, because the place on this side was high about the rest. Now he takes this word *sides* in a contrarie sense, as if he should say, that he shall be put in the most contemptible place of the pit or sepulchre, euen as when a man thrusts one into some darke or by-corner. For if so be a sepulchre be large and spacious, they desire to lay the honorablest personage in the midst of it: but he saith, that this fellow shall be cast into some hole, or into the *sides* that shall be left empty. See how the Lord scornes the pride of the wicked from an high, so as when they shall haue deuoured all by their couetousnes, and pierced the cloudes & the heauens with their pride, yet will he experte them to derision at the length, hauing ouerturned all their enterprises eue in lesse then the twinkling of an eye.

Verf. 16. *They that see thee shall looke vpon thee and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, and that did shake the kingdomes?*

THE Prophet scornes this wicked king againe in the person of the dead, and yet this may also be vnderstood of the liuing; but it is better to referre this whole spech to the dead; ynesse we had rather vnderstand it of the sepulchre, which is almost all one in effect. Now we are wont to stretch forth our neck, and to stand vpon the tippe when any admittable or rare thing is presented to our view. So in regard it was a thing almost incredible that this king furnished with so great power should be dead, the Prophet saith, that all haue cast *their eyes* vpon him to behold him diligently, as if they could hardly beleue that to be true which they saw euidentlie before them. They aske in the first place whether it be possible that he which made the world to tremble with his looke only, could be so suddenie & easilie brought low. Next, the Prophet shewes how all his wicked desires and enterprises are ouerthrowne; as also that tyrants with their trucitie are like to cloudes, which poure downe water or haile on a sudden as though they meant to destroy the whole world, but they are scattered and gone in an instant. And this similitude that same good old father *Athanasius* vsed, when some threatned him with the furie of *Julian*. Lu: her vpon Now the Prophet shewes that this change came from the hand of God, who by his only will can ouerthrow the whole world.

Where pride gets the masterie, there the contempt of God must needs follow.

The wicked arme themselves against God, is often as they set themselves against his Church.

Chap. 36. 18, 19. 20. & 37. 4. 6. 17.

He that wrongs any member of Christ, may assure himselfe to haue God for his enimie.

See Martin Lu: her vpon Psalm of degrees, fol. 33.

Verf. 17. *Hee made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the Cities thereof, and opened not the house of his prisoners.*

IN this verse he expresseth the crueltie and inhumanitie of this Tyrant; namely, that he brought the world to a wilderness, raised the Cities, *deliuered not his prisoners.* Those who haue obtained victorie, haue been accustomed sometimes to release their prisoners, that they might win their hearts by gentleness: but Tyrants had rather bee feared then loud: because they perswade themselves, that the onely safe way to raigne, is to make themselves feared of all, through a brutish cruelty. We need not wonder then at their miserable and wofull end: for it cannot bee but God must render them like for like; after hee hath corrected his Church by their crueltie, shewing no more mercy to them, then they did to others. Thus then he shewes how miserable Tyrants are, in regard they haue both God and men their enemies.

Tyrants had rather be feared then loud.

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Verf. 18. *All the Kings of the Nations, euen they all sleepe in glorie, euerie one in his owne house.*

19. *But thou art cast out of the grave like an abominable branch: like the rayment of those that are slaine, and thrust thorow with a sword, which goe downe to the stones of the pit, as a carcase troden under feete.*

HEe opposeth the King of Babylon against other Kings; to shew that hee shall be more wretched after his death, then they all. And thus he amplifies the iudgement of God (who should execute vengeance vpon the cruelties done to his Church) by comparison. This place is the cause why I dare not restraints that which *Isaiab* speaks heere of the King of Babylon, to the onely person of *Nebuchadnezzar*: because we finde not by histories, that hee was deprived of buriall. Although the Iewes tell, how *Euil-merodach* commanded hee should be taken out of his sepulchre, because the great Lords of his kingdom durst not doe him homage, till they were certaine of the death of his father. But *S. Ierome*, howsoeuer hee be credulous enough in other things, yet holds this as a fable. He speaks not then of one man particularly, but of the whole Kingdome: euen as when the Scripture speaks of Antichrist, it comprehends the estate of all the Popes. And therefore he scornes the pride of all Tyrants, vnder the person of one, testifying what their issue shall be; to wit, that they shall fall into such miserie, that not so much as a small handfull of dust shall be giuen them for their buriall: howsoeuer in times past they were like insatiable gulfs, whom all the wealth in the world was not able to satisfie. Those which haue scarce one foot of land, haue not

e. Ihes. 2.

withstanding the honour of buriall; and this was esteemed sacred and inuioleable about all things among the Patriarks: for it was a great dishonour to be deprived of this priuiledge. Yet he shewes that the Kings of Babylon should receiue such an opprobrie, that being cast out of the sepulchre of their fathers, they should be a spectacle of disdain vnto all. But some may aske, whether it were so great a matter in Gods sight, to bee buried with a mans predecessors, that it should be esteemed as a punishment and curse to be deprived of it: I answer, he speaks not of the sepulchre here, as of a thing necessarie to saluation: and yet that it was reputed a great shame for this Tyrant to want buriall.

First of all then let vs consider why buriall was so esteemed among all Nations. Doubtlesse this came from the Patriarks, whose bodies the Lord commanded to bee buried, in hope of the last resurrection. The carcases of beasts are cast out, because they are ordained to none other end but to turne to rottenness: but our bodies are couered with earth, that being laid vp therein, they may wait for the last day; at which time they shall be raised vp to ioyne the soule in an eternall and blessed life.

The reason why we are buried, and beasts are not.

Whereas diuers superstitions are crept in touching the buriall of the dead, it is certaine that Satan hath brought this to passe by his subtletie; who is wont to corrupt and peruert all things, which yet in their owne nature are good and profitable: for he hath forged infinite waies whereby to bewitch men. But concerning the Iewes, we are not to meruaile if they had many ceremonies in this behalfe, neither ought wee to condemne them for it: for they had not so cleere and manifest a reuelation of the resurrection, because Christ was not yet reuealed. But the matter is farre otherwise now, seeing we behold our resurrection in Iesus Christ apparently, and the vaile being taken away, wee now see the promises as in the sunshine, which were obscure to the Iewes. If at this day then any would bring in and reuiue the ancient ceremonies; such a one should suppress the light, and doe great wrong vnto Iesus Christ: for, they endeavour to put a vaile before him, who hath discovered himselfe vnto vs with open face. Notwithstanding it is not vnprofitable to regard the interrings of the corps, because it is a witness of the last resurrection, which wee yet wait for. But we ought vtterly to reiect all such superstitions, and pompe of funerals; which indeed euery faithfull man should abhorre.

Buriall of the dead ought to be retained, but superstitious customes therein to be reiecte.

But if any bee left vnburied, wee must consider the cause. For many Prophets, Martyres, and holy personages haue been deprived of buriall. Wee heare how the Church complains, that the bodies of Gods seruants were cast out to the beasts and birds, and that there was none to bury them: *Psal. 79. 2.* And wee daily behold how they burne, drowne, and hang the seruants of Iesus Christ, whose death notwithstanding is precious and blessed in Gods sight. For euen as the Crosse of our Lord was blessed; so also the gibbets, bands,

The cause why some are left vnburied.

Psal. 116. 15

bands, chaines and death which his members endure do partake of this bleſſing, yea, and that in ſuch wiſe, that they far ſurmount the felicitie, decking-maieſtie, and pomp of all the kings of the earth: ſo as according to *S. Pauls* example, they may boldly glory in theſe afflictions. Rom. 5. 3. 2. Cor. 12. 9. Gal. 6. 14. Moreover, albeit we can ſee nothing but a ſigne of Gods wrath vpon thoſe whom he deprives of buriall, yet muſt we haue our reſourſe to the former, and ſuch like ſentences.

Iere. 12. 19.

Now as *Ieremiah* threatened *toachim* that he ſhould be buried as an aſſe, becauſe he deſerued rather to be laid with the brute beaſts then with men, who after death are ſeparated from the condition of death by meanes of buriall: euen ſo, in as much as this *Babylonian* had exalted himſelfe above all, it was good reaſon he ſhould be deſcended beneath all, ſo as his bodie might remaine without buriall. *Iſaiah* then foretels that this tyrant ſhall not be buried in his houſe, that is to ſay, in the Sepulchre of his anceſters and predeceſſors: for we muſt not thinke that the Sepulchres were within the houſes. The ſimilitudes which are conioined do further expreſſe the iuſt ignominie of this tyrant: for, as *hurlfull and unprofitable trees* are pluckt vp by the rootes, ſo he ſhewes that the king of *Babylon* was not worthe to remaine among men. Afterward, he compares him to the *garments of the ſlaine*, becauſe thoſe which die in battaile are not buried according to the accuſtomed maner, but as bloodie and ſinking carriages troden vnder feete are tumbled into the pit clothes and all, leſt they ſhould infect the aire with their ſmell. Neither will any man offer to touch clothes defiled with blood and mire, for feare of drawing ſome infection fro them. Now we can not affirme that this hapned to the kings of *Babylon*, yet no queſtion but it was fulfilled, neither ought we to doubt any thing at all of it.

Verſ. 20. Thou ſhalt not be ioyned with them in the graue, becauſe thou haſt deſtroyed thine owne land, and ſwaine thine owne people: the ſeed of the wicked ſhall not be renowned for euer.

Now he ſhewes the reaſon why the king of *Babylon* is vnworthe of buriall, to wit, becauſe he which had deſtroyed his owne land, was neither worthe to be receiued into it, nor couered therewith. For euen as the earth ſuffaines vs whilſt we liue, ſo alſo doth it couer vs being dead, and keeps vs in her bowels vnto the coming of *Ieſus Chriſt*. It is then iuſt puniſhment of cruelty when ſhe reuſeth to receiue thoſe into her boſome that haue offered her violence, and defiled her. He yet adds a more fearefull threat, to wit, that God will poure out the remainder of his plagues vpon the ſucceſſors. Yet when he ſaith, *The ſeed of the wicked ſhall not be renowned for euer*, we may expound this member two waies, either that the race of the wicked ſhall not long endure, or that it ſhall be vtterlie put out. The diuerſitie of the interpre-

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tation conſiſts in the word *sluicies*, for it is either referred to the time paſt, or to come. To the time paſt thus, Although the ſeed of the wicked haue borne ſway for a while, yet the memorie thereof is vaniſhed and gone in the end. In the time to come, thus, God will ſo blot out the race of the wicked, that there ſhall be no more mention of them. Now it is vſuall with the Lord to curſe the ſeed of the wicked; as on the contrarie he bleſſeth the of-ſpring of the faithfull. And euen as the memorie of the iuſt endures for euer, ſo alſo doth it follow of neceſſitie that the remembrance of the wicked ſhould be vtterlie extinct and aboliſhed. Now howſoeuer we ſee not theſe things fulfilled with our bodily eyes, yet haue we ample and pregnant teſtimonies for it, whereby the truth of the doctrine is ſufficientlie confirmed vnto vs.

Pſal. 112. 6.
Prom. 10. 7.
Pſal. 34. 16.

But we are now to obſerue the reaſon of this vengeance, to wit, the Lord will hereby puniſh the pride of reprobrates who will needs aduance their names, and leaue a perpetuall renoume thereof behind them: and hereunto tend all the counſels, enterpriſes, and endeours of prophane men. Contrariwiſe, the Lord blots out their name and memorie, which yet ſeemed to be ingrauen in eueraſting monuments. Thus it comes to paſſe that they are not only expoſed to contempt, but euerie one deteſts and abhors them. Which in conſeſion befallles all tyrants, for howſoeuer they be flattered and applauded of all whilſt they liue, yet are they and all their poſteritie held in vile eſtimation when they are dead and gone. And thus it appears they are deteſtable to God, Angels, and men.

Tyrants deteſted of all whilſt they liue, but being dead, they are deteſted of all.

*Verſ. 21. Prepare a ſlaughter for his children, for the iniquitie of their fathers: let them not riſe vp nor poſſeſſe the land, nor fill the face of the world with *citicies.*

* Citicis.

Here *Iſaiah* prophetieth againſt the king of *Babylon* in plainer termes then heretofore. Now we muſt remember what I haue ſaid already, to wit, that hitherto he hath not ſpoken of one particular man only, but of the whole kingdome: and now he alſo takes away the ambiguity of this maner of ſpeech. Whereas the old tranſlation hath it, Prepare his ſonnes to the ſlaughter, it comes not neere enough to the right ſenſe, for the letter *Lamed* being put before *y* word *ſonnes*, ſhews it ſhould be tranſlated, Prepare a ſlaughter for his ſonnes. Now let vs ſee to whom this ſpeech is directed, for we muſt of neceſſitie vnderſtand that he here couertlie ſpeakes to certaine officers, ſergeants, or executioners, whom God commands to prepare themſelues for the execution of his iudgement. And who are they? partly the *Medes* and *Persians*, as alſo others, by whom *Babylon* was rased to the foundation. It was not vtterlie deſtroyed when the *Persians* tooke it (as we haue ſaid before.) Thus then he ſpeakes to thoſe whom God had ordeined in his ſecret counſell to deſtroy *Babylon*. This phraſe of ſpeech

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hath greater vehemencie in it then if he had barely said, The slaughter is prepared: for he shewes that God nor onely disposeth of that which the wicked are to doe, but that hee also hath executioners at his commandement, to avenge himselfe vpon their iniquities.

Obiect.

Whereas he by and by addes, that *the iniquitie of the fathers* shall be punished by meanes hereof; it may at the first seeme ouer seuer, to couple the children with the fathers, as touching the punishment which the fathers haue deserued, and ought to beare. And yet seemes it to be more hard, that the punishment due to the fathers should be extended to the children, and their childrens children. But this absurditie may easily be auoided, if we interpret the Hebrew word *Avin*, Misericie: because it signifies as well the punishment of the sinne, as the sinne it selfe. But because such sentences are found in many places of the Scripture; to wit, that God will visit the iniquitie of the fathers vpon the children: we need seeke no such euasion. Neither doth the place in *Ezechiel*; The sonne shall not beare the iniquitie of his father: *Ezech. 18. 20.* crosse this. For God punisheth not the innocent: neither must we so vnderstand this place, as if the punishment due to the ancestors, were conuicied ouer by God vnto the children, altogether guiltlesse: for the fault of the children is forth-with coupled therewithall.

Ans.
Exod. 20. 5.
Deut. 5. 9.
Ier. 3. 2. 18.
Ezek. 18. 20.

But leauing now to speake of that vniuersall curse of all mankind, wherunto all of vs are subiect from our mothers wombes; let vs take an example from some wicked one; whom when God reiects with his whole race, truly we haue no cause at all to complain of it. For his blessing is free: and it is not lawfull for vs to compell him to bestow it equally vpon all: because he may dispose of his grace according to his owne good pleasure; and it is the duty of euery of vs apart, to acknowledge, that whatsoever good thing wee haue receiued, it is none of our own properly nor naturally, but comes vnto vs from elsewhere; namely, fro Gods free liberality. If so be then that he reiect any; must it not also needes follow, that his seede should be accursed? For what can remaine in those which are destitute of his grace, but a masse of impiety? And if they deserue eternal death, much more are they worthy of temporall punishments: for hee who expects the cutting off of his head, ought much more to iudge himselfe worthy of the prison and stripes. Wee must obserue this point diligently. For I hold the solution of those but childish, who thinke the Lord punisheth the children of the wicked with temporall punishments, because of the iniquities of their fathers: thinking it not vnbeseeming for the Lord to correct those that are innocent. Now we know he neuer punisheth such as haue not deserued it: besides, he is naturally inclined to mercy. But how should he spare the wicked, if he should exercise his wrath against the guiltlesse? This then must be held as a thing resolu'd; to wit, that all such as are destitute of Gods grace, are

subiect to the iudgement of eternal death. Whence it followes, that the children of reprobates, whom the curse of God pursues, are subiect to the same condemnation with their fathers. And therefore *Isaiah* speaks not of innocent children, but of the lost and desperate, which, it may be, haue surpris'd their fathers in wickednesse: and therefore are iustly coupled with them, and adiudged to the same punishments with them; because they haue walked in their steps. But some may say, that then they beare their owne punishment; and not that which their fathers haue deserued. I grant this to be true in part: but the reiectiō began before in their fathers; for which cause they are also forsaken and cast away of God. And yet their fault is not so particular as if they were not guiltie at all, but being inwrapped in the same sinnes in regard of reprobation, they are also liable to the same miseries and punishment. I know wel enough that this solution will not satisfie those who neuer cease to dispute & braule against God: but if so be I satisfie the faithfull, and those that are not contentious, I passe not much what the rest say. As for the faithfull, I doubt not but they will content themselves with this solution, which I dare affirme to be most true.

In the end of the verse, som translate, That they fill the world no more with enemies: as if the Prophet meant to say, that all the wicked are the enemies of mankind; yea, euen of the whole earth: and therefore that the Lord prouides for the safety of all, when he sweeps them from the earth: otherwise it should be choked by them, as with thornes and briars. It seemes that this signification expresseth somewhat more; because the earth receiues vs into her lap, if we discharge our dutie: but if wee be contempters of God, it nourisheth and sustaines vs vnwillingly, as her very enemies. Yet had I rather follow the other signification, which is more generally receiued: for I thinke the Prophet meant to say, that the wicked grow vp into a stocke and linage, and bring forth children in great abundance; so as they exceed their progenitors in number, and are more glorious in shew: and thence came the proverbe, that an ill weede growes apace. Now whereas wee behold an infinit multitude of wicked ones, which haue couered the face of the whole earth as it were, we may euen thanke our selues for it: and yet the Lord neuer deales so secretly with vs, but hee referes alwaies some good seede, although it be very thin sowne: yea he alwaies hath an eye vnto some corner of the world, where he may giue his seruants some litle breathing. And if he should diminish the multitude of the wicked nothing at all, it is certaine they would forthwith ouerspread the whole earth. By this is confirmed that which wee haue said before; to wit, that the children of the Babylonians were not *slaine* causelesse; because it is here said, it was to the end they should not fill the world with *Citites*. It follows then, that they were wicked, and therefore cut off by the iust iudgement of God; that by this meanes hee might prouide

We may thanke our selues that the wicked are so multiplied.

for the ſaſetic of men; and that the Lord cannot be accused of cruelty or hard dealing.

Verſ. 22. *For I Will riſe up againſt them: (ſaith the Lord of hoſtes) and will cut off from Babel the name and the remnant, and the ſonne, and the nephew, ſaith the Lord.*

Now the Lord teſtifieth, that he will doe that himſelfe which he before had commanded others to do by the miniſtrie of the Prophet: ſo that we muſt obſerue both the one and the other, namely, that it is a worke of God when the wicked come to nought, although he vie men as instruments to execute his iudgements. For he ſpake thus to them heretofore: *Prepare a ſtinger,* verſ. 21. Whence we haue to note not only the power of God, but alſo the efficacy of prophetic. When the Prophets (ordained of God) giue commandment to all nations to do this or that, it is then ſo farre off that men can hinder the eueht thereof, that they are euen conſtrained to performe the will of God. Now becauſe we ordinarily ſlay our ſelues vpon men, and in forſaking God attribute the power of doing all things vnto them, we muſt hold this principle, that ſeeing God worketh by them, himſelf is properlie the author of the worke, whereof they are only but the executioners and instruments. This is clearly inough laid open vnto vs by the dependance of the places following

I haue thought it beſt to reſolue the letter *Vau* into a particule of ſhewing the cauſe: for he yeelds the reaſon wherefore he commands the Medes and Perſians to prepare a deſtruction and slaughter for the Babylonians: *for I will riſe up againſt them,* ſaith he: and this phraſe where God ſaith he will *ariſe*, is very frequent. Thus alſo the Prophet applies himſelfe to our capacitie, becauſe the maieltie of God is ſo high that we can not comprehend it. We thinke he takes his caſe, and is idle, whiſt he winks at the wicked: and therefore when he will cauſe men to feele his power, and giue ſome teſtimonie thereof by ſome viſible worke, he ſaith he *will ariſe*.

The epithite which he afterward addes, calling him *The Lord of hoſtes*, ſerues for a confirmation of this ſentence: as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, I haue not giuen theſe Commandments to the nations of mine owne head, for it is God that gouernes and leads all the battailes vnder his owne hand. Seeing y^e Prophet is ordained then to pronounce the ſentence on Gods behalfe, he may alſo command me, to y^e end they may yeeld obedience vnto him. He yet repeats the ſame thing in the latter end of the verſe, ſhewing that he ſpakes nothing but that which the Lord gaue him in charge, that ſo the prophetic might be the moſt autenticall. Now it hath been often told vs before, that Babylon was not thus ruined till after the death of Alexander the Great. By the *ſonnes and nephewes*, he meanes not only the Poſteritie, but the Memorie which the wicked would obtaine, ſo as they

might be long renowned after their death. God tooke euen this alſo away from Babylon, that ſo no remembrance ſhould remaine thereof at all, but only reproch and ignominie.

Verſ. 23. *And I Will make it a poſſeſſion to the hedgehog, and pooles of water, and I Will ſweepe it with the beaſome of deſtruction, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes.*

HE yet againe confirms the ſame things which he ſpake heretofore touching the future deſtruction of Babylon, to wit, that men ſhall hereafter inhabit it no more, but it ſhall be made an hidious Caue, into which wilde beaſts ſhall retire. Some ſay that the word *Kipod* (which we haue tranſlated *Biewe*) ſignifies a Beuer, others an Hedgehog, other a Tortois. But it is very likely by the circumſtance of the place that our Prophet ſpakes of a beaſt which frequents the waters; becauſe afterwards he mentions a *poole*, or *marſh*, which in deed properlie belongs to the ſituation of the place: for howſoeuer Babylon was not compaſſed in with pooles, yet is it ſituated in a moiſt ſoile. Euphrates waters the region on the one ſide, and Tigris on the other: thence it is that the Lord threatens to drowne it.

Verſ. 24. *The Lord of hoſtes hath ſworne, ſaying, Surely like as I haue purpoſed, ſo ſhall it come to paſſe, and as I haue conſulted it ſhall ſtand.*

IT was needfull to adde an *othe* for the more full confirmation of the threatening. For nothing is more hardly beaten into our heads then to heare tell of a preſent deſtruction of the wicked, becauſe we ſee them flouriſhing, furniſhed with all kind of helps, ſeeming to be out of all dangers, & vtterlie ſecure. Therefore we are at our wits end in beholding them, being ſo dazzled with their glorie, that we can ſcarſly beleue God when he threatens their ruin and perdition; and therefore he adde an *othe*, that they might haue no occaſion to hang in any ſuſpence. Whence we may ſee how gracious & louing he is towards vs in ſuecoring our weaknes by applying this remedie vnto it, for otherwiſe his bare word ought to ſuffice. This ſerues then for the great conſolation of the faithfull, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. But this ſhort forme of an *othe* which he vſeth ought to be well knowne vnto vs, becauſe we meeete often with it in the ſcriptures: and thereby the Lord bridles vs leſt we ſhould take too great libertie in oths which ſlip out of our mouths at random with too much boldnes: for he ſuppreſſeth the greater part of the *othe*, *If I perjurme not this which I haue decreed, let men ſake me for a lier, and hold me no more for God:* this I ſay, or ſome thing elſe like vnto it (fearefull to vtter) ſhould be heere ſupplied. Men ought then to reſtraine their tongues, leſt they ouerflow too lightlie in execrations, making horrible

The reaſon why God is ſaine to adde an *othe* to his threatenings.

See the like in Chap. 22. 14.

Oths ſlip out of our mouths at random with too much boldnes, but Gods ſparingnes in ſuppreſſing the greater part of his *othe* ought to bidle our inſeperauncie

Though God vie men as his instruments in bringing the wicked to nought, yet the worke is properly ſaid to be his owne.

This phraſe I will ariſe, expounded.

Sayth the Lord.

God cuts off not only the poſteritie of the wicked, but their memorie alſo. Pto. 10. 7.

imprecations against themselves: yea let them rather learne by the Lords example here, to hold in their rebellion.

Verf. 25. *That I will breake Ashur to pieces in my land, and upon my mountaines Will I tread him vnder foote: so that his yoke shall depart from them, and his burden shall be taken from off their shoulder.*

2. King. 19. 35. Chap. 37. 36

Some thinke this is spoken of the host of *Senacherib*, which was destroyed by the Angell, whilst the siege was before Ierusalem. If wee shall receiue this interpretation, the sense will be thus; to wit, The Lord will shortly shew some euident prooue of this ruine, wherewith hee threatened the Babylonians. For those which heard the prophecies, might aske, What shall the ruine of Babel profit vs, when the hath destroyed vs first? were it not better for vs to remain in our own lãd, & that she might continue safe? What consolation can we take in her destruction, seeing with her our selues must also perish? And truly I make no question but *Isaiah* sets before them a prooue of Gods fauour in the destruction of their enemies; which was either come to passe already, or should shortly happen. I dare not affirme in what time the Prophet foretold this, vnlesse there bee some probable coniecture, that the discomfiture of the host of *Senacherib*, made by the Angell, was already accomplished. According to this sense the Prophet should take this famous example, to giue them good hope of the deliuerance to come: as if hee had said; You haue heerebefore felt how miraculously God assisteth his people in time of neede. And this is the reason which makes me thinke the armie of *Senacherib* was already destroyed. It was needfull then that there should be some vse of this doctrine.

There may be some probable coniecture that *Senacherib* was discomfited before the time of this particular prophecie.

Obiect.

But Babylon beganne not to molest the Iewes, till she had subdued the Assyrians, and transported the Monarchy. To what end then should the Prophet speake of the iudgement which God would bring to auége the wrong done to his people, when as the Iewes had as yet nothing to doe with the Babylonians? There is no absurditie to say, that a thing already come to passe, should be mingled with a prophecie: neither were it amisse to say, that the Assyrians should here be put for the Caldeans. For although they had no Monarchy, yet is it very likely they were alwaies first prepared, as oft as war was to be made with the Iewes: and so fought vnder the leading of others, that in the meane while they made the greatest part of the armie. First, they were neerer hand then the Caldeans, and those which then ruled, knew well that such people would be loyall and obedient, because of the ancient hatred which they bare to the Iewes. Adde hereunto, that it was the benefit of the Conquerours to subiect the conquered by continuall warres, vnill they were inured to beare the yoke. All which considered, it is not

Ans.

No absurditie would follow, if the Prophet should put the Assyrian here, for the Caldean.

amisse that *Isaiah* speaking of Babylon, comprehends all the forces thereof vnder the name of *Ashur*; so taking a part for the whole.

Thus there is no reason that constraines vs to expound this place of the discomfiture performed by the Angell in the host of *Senacherib*. For as I take it, the Prophet meant onely to affirme, that God would put an end to the tyrannie of the Assyrians; so as they should not be alwaies so mightie: as if hee should say, Although God permit the wicked to beare rule ouer you for a time, yet this domination or superiority shall not last euer; for hee will one day deliuer his people from the seruitude which oppresth them, by breaking the yoke from off their necks. And as hath bin said already; although the Assyrians were subdued by the Caldeans, yet did they not cease for all that to be enemies to the church still. But Babylon, which succeeded *Nin-uie*, hauing the preheminance by transporting thereof, began to make warre with the Iewes.

Where it is said, that *Ashur shall be broken in Iudah*: wee must not take it as if they should be slaine there, or destroyed by some discomfiture; but that the elect people should be deliuered from their tyranny: by means whereof their dominion should be abolished. The breaking therefore is not referred so much to the perions, as to the Empire. That which he addes touching the yoke and the burden, canot be properly vnderstood of the Assyrians onely, who yet neuer had taken Ierusalem. And therefore we must note that succession, whereof I spake heretofore: because the Caldeans had no occasion to make war, vnlesse it were because they boasted to haue the preheminance ouer the Assyrians. Now yee see the cause why I thought good to extend this prophecie to that deliuerance whereby the Lord shewed himselfe the protector of his people against the Caldeans and Assyrians; because the yoke was then shaken off, vnder which the Iewes were miserably hampered: yea, thus it comprehends the deliuerance purchased by Christ, whereof this was but a beginning.

Some thinke touching that which followeth concerning the *Mountains*, that they haue put the plurall number in stead of the singular, as if hee spake of mount Zion: but I had rather translate it otherwise. For in as much as Ierusalem was situated among the mountaines, the whole countrie was contemned for that regard. Wherefore the Prophet speakes by way of derision, granting to the enemies that the mountainous region was indeed the lesse esteemed because of them. But this contempt serued to amplifie the power of God, who deliuers his *Mountains* from vnder the dominion of a mightie Monarchie. Hercunto appertaines that which is contained in the twentieth Chapter of the first book of Kings, verses 23. 28.

Verf. 26. *This is the counsell that is consulted upon the whole world, and this*

is the hand ſtretched out over all nations.

THe Lord contents not himſelfe with a confirmation or two: no, he hath much adoe to refrain from alluring vs more and more of one and the ſame thing; and all becauſe he knowes how greatly our vnderſtanding is naturallie inclined to diſtruſt: for no repetitions ſuffice vs, although hee makes neuer ſo large promiſes in many words, and adds his othe therunto. The Lord then we ſee is deſirous to remedie this euil, and therefore tends the repetition, that we ſhould not eſteeme it as ſuperſtitious. For thoſe who think the Prophet (or rather the ſpirit of God) ſhould heape vp too many words, haue not yet attained vnto any knowledge of their owne weakenes. Well, in the firſt place he propounds the *will* and *counſell* of God: ſecondly his *power*. Whence comes it that we doubt of his word, but becauſe wee attribut not that ſtrength vnto God which to him belongeth, neither are we perſwaded of his power? Theſe two things are whollie the cauſe of our incredulitie, againſt which wee ought to oppoſe two other things, which *Iſaiah* heere recommends vnto vs, to wit, the *counſell*, and the *power* of God. For we muſt in the firſt place hold it without controuerſie that the Lord is true, becauſe he pronounceth nothing but that which is ſtable and *immuable*: ſecondly, that he is ſo *mightie*, that euery knee muſt bowe vnder his hand. Now it is not for vs to ſearch into the ſecret counſell of God, becauſe the Prophet commands vs heere to reſt our ſelues contented in the decree which the Lord hath manifeſted vnto vs by his word. We muſt not then ſie any higher to prie into the ſecrets of God, but muſt reſt ſatiſfied with the infallible teſtimonies which hee propounds vnto vs by the mouth of his Prophets. Let vs therefore with all our affections inbrace the promiſes of God, and ioine his power therunto, becauſe his *mightie hand* ought neuer to be ſeparated from his *mouth*.

But we muſt take heed we imagin not an idle power after the maner of Philoſophers, but ſuch a one as the ſcriptures do informe vs of, that is, a power full of efficacy, and ſpedie in execution. But ſome may here demand why mention is made of *all the world*, and of *all nations*, ſeeing he ſpeakes only of *Babylon*? We muſt remember what I haue ſaid heretofore, to wit, that the Empire of *Babylon* hauing conquered *Nineue*, did ſpread it ſelfe ouer all the Eaſt, and that diuers nations were ſubiect vnto it; for which cauſe the ruin thereof was alſo the ruin of the whole world: for ſuch Monarchies can not fall, but they muſt needs pull great deſtruction vpon others with them. Wherefore ſeeing the huge maſſe of ſo great an Empire might peraduenture haue called the certentie of this propheſie into queſtion, *Iſaiah* ſhewes, that albeit it ſhould ouerſpread far and wide, and comprehend infinite multitudes of people, yet none of all theſe ſhould let God to put his decree in execution.

Verſ. 27. *Becauſe the Lord of hoſtes hath determined it, and who ſhall diſannull it? and his hand is ſtretched out, and who ſhall turne it?*

Here the Prophet vseth an exclamation as it were the better to confirme the former ſentence. For hauing told them that this was the counſell of the Lord, to the end he might ſhew them it is ſo inuolable that it can not be broken, *Pſal. 33. 11.* he asks the queſtion as of a thing vtterlie impoſſible: Who (ſaith he) can diſannull his counſell, or turne his hand back? and thus by this exclamation he ſets himſelfe boldlie againſt all creatures. For the Lord no ſooner decrees a thing, but he ſtretcheth forth his hand: Is it once liſted vp? the worke then muſt of neceſſitie be put in execution. Now he not onely excludes men by this his exclamation ſrō being able to hinder the decree of God, but all things elſe whatſoever; yea, be it that any other creature beſides the diuell or man would ſet it ſelfe againſt his will. To conclude, he ſhewes that God is not ſubiect to repentance or change, but whatſoever fallies our, were it in the greateſt confuſion in the world; yet is he alwaies like himſelfe: neither can his enterpriſe be foreſlowed by any occaſion.

If any replie, that God hath changed his counſell ſometime, as when he pardoned the *Niniuits*, *Abimelech*, or *Pharaoh*: the anſwere is eaſie. For when the Lord ſent *Ionah* to the *Niniuits*, he manifeſts not that which he had decreed in his ſecret counſell, but meant to touch their hearts, and to bring them to repentance by the preaching of the Prophet, that he might ſhew them mercie, *Ionah 1. 2. & 3. 10.* The like he did when he threatned *Abimelech* and *Pharaoh*, becauſe they had taken *Abrahams* wife vnto them, *Gen. 12. 17. and 29. 3.* for the Lord by fearing them cauſed them to change their courſe, leſt they ſhould be puniſhed for their obſtinacie.

Verſ. 28. *In the yeere that king Abaz died was this burden.*

This ſhould be the beginning of the fifteenth Chapter, becauſe the Prophet enters now into a new argument: whence it euidently appears how ill the Chapters haue been diuided, or rather torne in ſunder. For hauing ſpoken of the *Babylonians*, he comes to intreate of the *Phiſtins*, of whom he was to ſpeake before he came to mention other nations. Now theſe were the Iewes neere neighbours, and hated them deadly: theſe were the remainder of the nations which the *Iſraelites* had ſpared, although the Lord had expreſly commanded the to be whollie rooted out. The peoples infidelitie was the cauſe why the Lord ſuffred this remnant to remain euen as thornes to prick their eies; which puniſhment God had threatned them with before, as the Scripture teacheth, *Numb. 33. 55. Deut. 7. 16.* Wherefore in regard there was

Num. 13. 19.

Obiect.

God ſent a meſſage to the *Niniuits* by *Ionah*, but he manifeſted not that which he had decreed in his ſecret counſell, which was to theyr mercie.

The fifteenth Chapter ſhould begin heere.

The Lord is deſirous to cure our infideliue.

Thoſe who think the ſpirit of God is wont to vſe too many repetitions, haue not yet thoroughlie felt their owne weaknes.

We muſt oppoſe the counſell and power of God againſt our infideliue.

Let vs with all the powers of our affections inbrace the promiſes of God, and ioine his power thereto.

Queſt.

Anſ.

deadlie feode betwene these two nations, there came no sooner any damage vnto the Iewes, but the Philistims counted it their gaine. For they desired to see the Iews rooted out, neither could any newes be better welcome vnto them, then to heare that the people of God were ouerwhelmed with all manner of miseries and calamities. This is the cause why the Prophet prophecieth against them, as against the perpetuall enemies of the Church.

The cause why the Prophet prophecieth against the Philistims.

Now the *time* is to be noted wherein this vision was represented vnto the Prophet: because the Philistims were very strong during the life of *Ahaz*: and this wretched hypocrite was punished for his disloyaltie, because by forsaking God, he fled vnto outward helpe; as namely, vnto men. And therefore in his time the Philistims recouered the Cities that *Uzziah* had taken: yea they gathered more strength after his death, because they hoped to attaine their enterprises, by reason that the heire of the Kingdome was but a childe. For *Ezechias*, who was the new King, had as yet neither wisdom, counsell, nor authoritie. It is needfull then to obserue these circumstances diligently, because *Isaiah* respects not the Philistims so much (although hee speaks of them) as the faithfull whom hee would comfort by this prophetic, and fortifie those with good hope, who might otherwise haue thought Iudah to haue been laid waste, in regard it was assailed with enemies on all sides, no succour appearing from any place whatsoeuer. *Isaiah* then seekes to establish the faith of these poore afflicted ones, destitute of all succour; and bids them be of good courage, because God will vndoubtedly help them. He calles this prophetic a *burden*, because it would be vnwelcome and troublesome to the Philistims, who thought themselves safe in regard that the Iewes were miserably oppressed; neither was there any hope left them of a better estate. He shewes then that the destruction of the Philistims also draws neere.

Why the Prophet calles this prophetic a burden.

Verf. 29. Reioyce not (thou whole Palestina) because the rod of him that did beate thee is broken: for out of the Serpents roote shall come forth a Cockatrice, and the roote thereof shall be a fierie flying Serpent.

IN the very entrance, hee beates backe that vaine confidence wherewith the Philistims were rashly puffed vp: and in adding, *thou whole*, he signifies that all, how many soeuer, shall haue their part in this calamitie. As if he should say; That region shall not be spoiled in one place onely, but there is not the least corner which shall not feele it: and as farre as the land doth reach, so farre shall the destruction and ruine thereof be perceiued on all sides. As touching that which he addeth of the *rod broken*; some referte to *Ahaz*, but besides the purpose; for he was overcome in all the warres which hee had against the

Philistims. And therefore it should rather be referred to *Uzziah*; and yet am I loth so to restraine it vnto him, that it should not therewithall be vnderstood of the whole body of the Iewish Nation. It is as much then as if he had said to *Palestina*, or *Palestin*; Thinkest thou to take thy rest, whilest the Iewes which afflicted thee in times past, are destroyed? No, thou greatly deceiuest thy selfe: for ere long thou shalt be vexed much more. This is the cause, as I haue said, why I restraine not this to one particular person; but rather as I take it, vnder the person of one, hee points out the whole body of the Iewes. He forthwith addes the reason why *Palestin* should not reioyce; to wit, because the Iewes shall be better able to annoy them then they were in former time. For if the Philistims receiued any detrimment by the Iewes before, they should feele it ten times more heauy hereafter. The which he sets forth by a very fit similitude: for the *Cockatrice* is more dangerous then the *Adder*, and the *ferie Serpent* more hurtfull then the *Cockatrice*. But God be thanked wee are not annoyed with these hurtfull beasts in this Country. The Prophets meaning is nothing else then, but to shew that the Philistims greatly beguiled themselves, in thinking that the Iewes should not ouermatch them. And therefore I consent not vnto them, who refer the name of the *Cockatrice*, and *flying Serpent*, vnto *Ezechias*. For how soeuer they haue great shew of reason for it, because *Ezechias* conquered all that the Philistims held, euen vnto *Gaza*; yet the Prophet

2. Kin. 18. 8

meant to stretch this promise further. Let vs know then, that albeit we begin at *Ezechias*, yet notwithstanding this fauour appertaines to all the Iewes, as to the whole body. Now from hence wee may gather a generall doctrine; namely, that when wee are oppressed with aduersities, and the wicked reioyce thereat, as if wee were vtterly confounded, and they were the only happy men; the Lord testifies, that all this their ioy is but in vaine. God will euermore vphold his Church, and set her in her first estate, though all men should iudge her cast away. The children of God shall get new strength, which will breake the hearts of the wicked for very despite: not that the faithfull with or purpose any such thing; but because it must so come to passe: for God hath so ordained it. Neither are these names of *Cockatrice*, and *ferie Serpent*, any names of disgrace vnto them; for they are not such by nature, but are so called, in regard they are deadly to the wicked, though harmelesse in themselves. For it comes to passe by the iust iudgement of God, and the malice of the wicked, that that which is in it owne nature profitable and healthfull vnto them, is turned into losse and poison. Such is the nature also euen of God himselfe, and of his Gospell: 2. Cor. 2. 16.

The reioycing of the wicked lasts but a while.

In that Gods children are but fall to the wicked, it is not from their owne disposition, but from the wickedes malice. Psa. 18. 27.

Verf. 30. For the first borne of the poore shall bee fed, and the needie shall lie downe in safetie: and I will kill thy roote

* Or, be. *rooted with famine, & * it ſhall ſlay thy remnant.*

The prophets in their denunciations againſt the wicked, ſpeak in this ſo much, as the conſoling and encouraging of the Faithfull who are oppreſſed by them.

THIS Prophet, as hath bene already ſaid, had not reſpect ſo much to the Philiftims (whom his threatenings feared nothing at all) as to the Iewes, whom he meant to comfort in their afflictions: for they were ſo oppreſſed that they were now neere vnto deſpaire; and therefore he calles them the *fiſt borne of the poore* by a note of excellencie, in regard of their miſeries: for being now brought into vtter extremitie, they held as it were the *fiſt rank of all wretched people*. Now he promiſeth that the Lord will deliuer them from ſuch calamities, and will then ſeede & nourish them as at the firſt: whereby we may ſee that the Philiftims were deſtroyed and cut off for the ſaluation of Gods people: who alſo had made this promiſe vnto *Abraham* and his poſteritie, ſaying, I will bleſſe thoſe which bleſſe thee, and curſe thoſe which curſe thee: for they muſt needs haue God for their enemy, who offer violence to his children. Then the Prophet compares them to ſheepe, whom we ought to reſemble, if we meane to haue God hold vs vnder his protection. We meete with no one thing other in the ſcripture then this ſimilitude. Doth the Lord correct vs then?

Gen. 12. 3.

They muſt needs haue God their foe, that offer violence to his children.

Pſal. 95. 7.
Pſal. 100. 3.
Iohn 10. 16.
27.

Two duties required in a good ſhepherd.

Surely we may well be compared to *ſturd ſheep*, laid open to the violence of wolues and theecus: but if contrariwiſe he ſmite our enemies, he will gather vs againe together, that wee may reſt in a quiet and ſafe place. This is it which the Prophet ſignifies by ſaying they ſhall *reſt in ſafe ſie*. The Lord then promiſeth two things here, firſt good paſture, that is to ſay, all things needfull for food and rayment: ſecondly ſafety and defence, to the end we may reſt incloſed & ſhrouded againſt all dangers. Theſe are the two duties belonging to a good ſhepherd: & in theſe two are included all things neceſſarie for ſaluation.

In the ſecond member he directes his ſpeech againe to the Philiftims, whom he compares to a *tree*, that hath his roots ſo deeple fixed in the earth, that it ſeemes a thing impoſſible to pull it vp; but yet if the *roote wither*, it muſt alſo of neceſſitie loſe his vigor, though it be neuer ſo profoundlie ſeſed. Whence we are to gather, that the eſtate of the wicked is neuer ſo firme, but that God will eaſily ouerturne it: for he will not only prune off the bowes, but will *parch*, and bring to nothing the *very roote* that lies hidden in the earth.

That which follows, *he ſhall ſlay thy remnant*, is commonlie referred to *Hezekias*; but as I haue already ſhewed, I had rather extend it generallie to the whole bodie (of which he ſpeakes as of one man) of the King as head, who repreſented Ieſus Chriſt. We may alſo referre it to the Aſſyrian, and to all others whom God vſed for the rooting out of the Philiftims. For the Iewes are accuſtomed to ſpeake thus indefinitely, when they minde to point out the officers by whom God executes his iudgements.

Verſ. 31. *Howle o gate, crie o Citie,*

thou whole land of Paleſtina art diſſolued, for there ſhall come from the North a ſmoke, and none ſhall be alone, at his time appointed.

HERE the Prophet vſeth amplifications to ſcale vp the truth of his prophesies in the hearts of the faithfull, and the more effectually to imprint thoſe things therein which without theſe would hardlie haue bene beleued. It hath been ſaid elſewhere, that the *gates* ſignifies the places moſt frequented, in which they kept their meetings. He threatens then that all the Cities ſhall lament, yea and that extraordinarily, becauſe the moſt honorable aſſemblies ſhould make it. That which is added touching the *ſmoke*, may be taken for the fire, ſo as the thing it ſelfe ſhould be ſhewed by the ſigne, becauſe the ſmoke appears before the fire burnes forth. By *North* we may vnderſtand as well the Aſſyrians as the Iewes, ſeeing both of them were ſituated on this ſide of the Philiftims: yet had I rather referre it to the Iewes: I meane not now to ſtand refuting of the contrarie opinion. As we haue ſaid heretofore then, the Philiftims thought themſelues great gainers by that which the Iewes loſt, when the Aſſyrians had done them any ſeaſe. Which alſo happened not long ſince to many nauons, who tooke pleaſure to ſee their enemies deſtroyed by the Turks: for they knew well inough that ſuch victories brought heauienes and damage vnto them. So as when they whoſe ruin they thruſted after were vanquiſhed, the way by that meanes was laid open for ſuch as in the end ſubdued them.

Whereas he addes in conſequence that *none ſhall be alone*, it appertaines to the enemies, who ſhall be ſo furniſhed with power and authoritie in the *day prefixed*, that is to ſay, when God ſhall haue decreed the deſtruction of Paleſtina, that none ſhall remaine idle in the houſe, but all ſhall be readie and prepared to march forward. As if any in praying the authoritie and power of ſome Prince ſhould ſay, that all his ſubiects aſſemble themſelues and are in a readineſſe as ſoone as he holds vp but his leaſt finger.

Verſ. 32. *What ſhall then one anſwere the meſſengers of the Gentiles? that the Lord hath eſtabliſhed Zion, and the poore of his people ſhall truſt in it.*

IHAD rather interpret this of all Nauons ſimply, then of any one in particular: for as ſoone as ſtrangers are entred into a Citie, they are wont to inquire what is done there, to the end they may get ſome newes. It is as much then as if he had ſaid; *It has anſwer ſhall they giue to ſtrangers, when they ſhall inquire after newes? What ſhall be the common talke after the Philiftims be vanquiſhed? This, The Lord hath eſtabliſhed Zion.* His meaning is then, that the ouerthrow of the Philiftims, ſhall be ſuch an excellent pledge of Gods mercy towards his people, that all ſhall thereby vnderſtand, that

The ſtate of the wicked is neuer ſo ſaſt rooted, but God can eaſily diſplace them.

that the Lord is the keeper and protector of them whom he had chosen to himselfe. For this *establishing* is nothing else but Gods free adoption, wherein hee promised to be the God of *Abraham*, and of his seede : Gen.17.7. Secondly, he established it when hee willed that his Temple should be built in Zion, to the end his name might there be called vpon. And yet did not this foundation consist of mortar or stones, but in the promises concerning eternall life: which grace was alwaies knowne to all the faithfull. For this cause the Prophet shewes that the destruction of the Philistines shall be a memorable example by which all nations, yea those that are furthest off, shall vnderstand that God conserues and keepes his chosen people.

Shall trust in it.] Hee meanes not that the faithfull shall put their trust in Zion; as wee say that we must hope in God: but that the inhabitants of Zion shall dwell in a quiet and secure place; as the Prophets often affirme, that saluation is in Zion: iocel 2.32. He would

not that the faithfull then should put their trust in the Church, but shewes that they are conserued and kept in it, because the Lord vpholds and defends it. And yet will hee try our faith, lest we should wholly make our heauen here: and therefore hee calles them *poore*, that none should thinke to be exempt from common calamities, although God hold vs vnder his protection. But could there be any greater consolation brought vs, then to heare that the inhabitants of the Church are dut of all dangers, notwithstanding they be subiect to infinite miseries? Let vs then apply this consolation to our selues in the midst of all our troubles, and let not impatience cause vs to giue ouer, seeing we perceiue that God hath care of vs, and that we are assured of safetie vnder his wings.

Though God hath taken vs vnder his protection: yet we must not thinke we shall therefore be freed from correction.

Reade the Comment vpon the 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. verses of this Chapter, for the better vnderstanding of this Chapter ensuing.

THE XV. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *The burden of Moab. Surely Ar of Moab was destroyed and brought to silence in a night: surely Kir of Moab was destroyed and brought to silence in a night.*



Here *Isaiah* prophecieth against the Moabites, who were neighbours to the Iewes, and knit vnto them by consanguinitie. For we know that the Moabites descended from *Loi*, nephew to *Abraham*. Gen. 19.37. Seeing then there was so neere affinitie betwene them; humanitie required at the least that these two peoples should haue entertained one another lovingly. But the Moabites would not be moued by any coniunction whatsoever, to bee friends with the Iewes; but were their deadly enemies, and as soone as occasion was offered, molested them; shewing thereby their stubborne and churlish nature. The Prophet then *threatens their ruine also*; because they exercised so great crueltie against that people, whom they should haue loued with a brotherly affection.

Now we are still to keepe in mind the end whereunto these prophesies rend: for it is hard to say whether the Moabites profited by them; no though they had heard that which we here reade from the Prophets own mouth: but he neither spake in their hearing, nor yet sent this prophesy vnto them in writing. He had respect therefore rather to the faithfull then to them; and that for two reasons: first, that in seeing so many changes happen; namely, the ouerthrow of Cities, the

destruction of Kingdomes, one of them succeeding another: they should be far off from thinking that the world was guided by a blinde rage of fortune, but in all these things might acknowledge the prouidence of God. For if none of all this had bin foretold, men (having their mindes snarled in vanitie, and not perceiuing the least of Gods workes) might easilie haue concluded, that all things had been guided by chance. But being admonished thereof afore hand by the Prophets, they might behold the iudgements of God as from an high Tower. As wee at this day behold in the prophesies of *Isaiah* (no otherwise then if he had pointed that out vnto vs with his finger, which was then hidden) the Lord sitting in his throne, and ordaining all things to fall out according to his good pleasure: for howsoeuer the wicked offered violence, first to one, and then to another, according as their malice carried them; yet God vsed them as his instruments to execute his iudgements. The second end which the Prophets aimed at was, that among all the garboiles which fell out in the world, the Iewes might know that God had a care of their saluation; and that he might shew how deare his Church was vnto him, when hee should take vengeance vpon her enemies, that had vsed her so vnkindly.

Ar of Moab.] *Ar*, according to the Hebrewes, signifies a Citie; and so *Kir*, is as much as to say, as a wall. But in regard that *Ar of Moab* was one of the chiefe Cities of the Moabites, some take it here for a proper name. And yet wee may so expound both names, as if the Prophet threatened the ruine of those Cities wherein the Moabites gloried most. But I willingly receiue the common interpretation. And so *Isaiah* hath here set before vs such a description, as wherein we may behold the destruction of the Moabites; to wit, when

Note whereunto the prophesies tend.

when their principall Cities are made euen with the ground.

By *night*, hee ſignifies a ſudden and vnexpected downefall which the Moabites did not ſo much as dreame of. For in regard that the night is appointed for reſt, if any accident fall out therein, all men are affrighted greatly, as at a thing vnlooked for. And beſides, he meant to taxe the careleſſneſſe of the Moabites, becauſe they thought themſelues exceedingly well fenced on all ſides, as men out of all dangers. *Brought ſo ſilence*: That is, to be deſtroyed; and therefore *ſilence* is taken for death. But others leauing the ſimilitude, haue rather tranſlated, *She is cut off*: which I leaue in ſuſpenſe. But this which *Iſaiah* denounceth againſt the Moabites, the ſcripture affirms to befall the reprobates: to wit, that their deſtruction drawes neere, ſo as they ſhall bee ſuddenly ouerwhelmed when they thinke on no ſuch matter: 1, Theſſ. 5. 3.

Verſ. 2. Hee ſhall goe vp to the Temple, and to Dibon to the high places to weepe: for Nebo, and for Medeba ſhall Moab howle: vpon all their heads ſhall be baldneſſe, and euery beard ſhauen.

AS touching the wordes, ſome leaue out the Hebrew word *Baiith*: but ſeeing it ſignifies Houſe, and Temple, it is very likely they haue vſually taken it to ſignifie a Temple; as in many places we know the Temple is called the houſe of God: Exod. 23. 19. & 24. 26. Deut. 23. 18. Ioh. 9. 23. Now, in that he brings in the Moabites proſtrate before their idols, he therein taxeth their ſuperſtition, becauſe they worſhipped their falſe god Chamos; as it is eaſily gathered out of 1. King. 11. 7. Iere. 48. 8. 13. The Moabites, ſaith *Iſaiah*, ſhall *minne to their god*, when things are in this deſperate caſe, but in vaine, for they ſhall finde no help in him. And forthwith mentioning the *high places*, we may eaſily diſcerne thereby, that he ſpeakes of the Temple. Neither is it to be doubted but the Moabites had a renowned forreſſe far about the reſt, where they had built the places of their deuotion, in honour of their idoll. For in aſmuch as they knew not the true God, neither had their recourſe vnto him in their aduerſities; it was no wonder if they trotted to their idoll, according to their cuſtome. But hereby they increaſed the miſchiefe, and heaped a full meafure of all euils vpon their own heads; becauſe ſo much the more they prouoked the wrath of God againſt them, as they imagined that ſeruiſe would pleaſe him beſt. The Prophet meant then to ſet out the comfortleſſe condition of the wicked in their aduerſities, as in a glaſſe; becauſe there is no greater bane vnto them, then thoſe remedies whereby they thinke to heale their diſeaſes. For they kinde the wrath of God againſt them to the vtmoſt.

Nebo was alſo a Citie of the Moabites. The Prophet hath mentioned two of them alrea-

die; he now addes the third, and afterwards the fourth: as if he ſhould ſay; This deſtruction ſhall not fall onely vpon the borders of the Country, but ſhall approach euen vnto the midſt; ſo as there ſhall be no place exempt. *Vpon euery head*. There is no Nation which hath not his ceremonies to manifeſt either their ioy or ſorrow. The Italians and Weſterne people, ſuffer their haire & beards to grow when they mourne; and thus they call, The growing of the beard. Contrariwiſe thoſe of the Eaſt haue their heads & beards, which before they held for an ornament: ſo that when they change their ordinary guiſe, it is among them a ſigne of great ſorrow. He meanes nothing elſe then, but to ſhew that there ſhall be ſuch cauſe to bewaile the eſtate of the Kingdome, that euery one laying aſide all ſignes of ioy, ſhall put vpon him as it were the ſignes of ſorrow and lamentation.

Euery Nation hath ſeueral ceremonies to expreſſe either their ioy or ſorrow.

Verſ. 3. In their ſtreets ſhall they be girded with ſackcloth: on the tops of their houſes, and in their ſtreets euery one ſhall howle, and come downe with weeping.

HE goes on ſtill with his former ſpeech, deſcribing yet more fully the ſignes of mourning. Now thoſe of the Eaſt are wonderful exceſſiue in theſe kinde of ceremonies; for as they are more vehement and quicke witted, ſo alſo doe they manifeſt their inward affections by outward ſignes, more then thoſe who are of dull capacities, and conſequently, ſo much the more vnwiſe in their mouings and behauiours. Yet was it a vice in them to exceede thus in ſo many ceremonies and geſtures: but the Prophet ſpeakes thereof as of a thing common, and ſufficiently knowne, onely to ſet forth the ſorrow which ſhould happen vpon the laying waſte of that Country. Neither is it in vaine that he addes this deſcription; becauſe the prophecies neuer touch vs to the quicke, vnleſſe God caue them to be ſet before our eyes, as a thing aſted and done indeed. To the end the Iewes ſhould not thinke then, that all theſe things were but words, in deſcribing this deſtruction: hee alſo ſets forth the manner of their griefe, as *weeping and howling*; to the end they might behold and ſee that accompliſhed (as you would ſay) which to them was ſo incredible. For the Moabites were then in a quiet eſtate; in regard whereof, the faithfull had the more neede of confirmation, that they might not call the truth of this prophecie into queſtion. And herewithall he notes the deſpaire whereinto the vnbeleeuers fall in their aduerſities; becauſe the rocke whereon they build, is of no force to vphold them.

Verſ. 4. And Heſſon and Elealeh ſhall cry; their voice ſhall be heard vnto Iaba: therefore the warriors of Moab ſhall ſhout; the ſoule of euery one ſhall lament in himſelfe.

*Or, harneſſed.
*Or, houſe.

5 Mine heart ſhall cry for Moab: his fugitiues

fugitives shall flee vnto Zoar, an heifer of three yeeres old: for they shall goe vp with weeping by the mounting vp of Lubbith: and by the way of Horonaim they shall raise vp a crye of destruction.

HE here names other Cities; for his meaning is to bundle vp all the Cities of this Countrey (as it were) in one fardle, that they may be throwne into the same destruction with the rest; as if he should say, Nor one shall escape. Whereas he adds a little after, *Therefore the harnessed of Moab*: although the Hebrew participle be a shewing of the cause, yet others expound it otherwise; but it is a matter of no great moment. The Prophets meaning is to shew that none shall be exempted frō *howling*, seeing the strongest and most valiant amongst them shall do it. Afterwards he shewes that euery one shall be so affected with his owne grieffe, that he shall not minde his neighbour. In the 5. verse he takes to himselfe the person of a mourner, or a sorrowfull person: but it may seeme strange, yea very vnfitting, that the Prophet should bewaile the destruction of the Moabites, for he should rather haue sorrowed at the calamitie of the Church, and reioiced at the ouerthrow of the enemies. But the Prophets are wont to take vpon them the person of those against whom they prophesie afflictions, to the end they may represent their estate as it were vpon a stage or scaffold. And thus they moued afflictions more, then if they had propounded the doctrine simple without this art. And yet no doubt the Prophets trembled themselves at the iudgements of God, yea euen at those which they threatened the wicked withall: but that which I haue said is lesse cōfined, and agrees best, as we may easilie discretely by common experience. He calles them *fugitives* which fled thence: for his meaning is that those which shall escape frō Moab shall come vnto Zoar, whom he compares to a *heifer of three yeeres old*, which is in her full force and strength, and hath not yet brought forth, nor felt labor, nor the yoke; but fetches her frisks, and plays the wanton.

Now when the forces of the enemy presseth nere vpon a place, then they flee to other Cities which haue not yet been assailed, and which seeme to be furthest out of danger. Zoar was such a one, because the enemies had not yet ouerrun it: but if any had rather expound this of the whole region, I gainsay him not, because it seemes *teremiah* speaks in generally, who notwithstanding borrowes many sentences from our Prophet: vnlesse some had rather affirme that he there expresseth as well Zoar, as *Horonaim*, or rather the whole region which lieth between them. If it be referred to the whole nation, the sense will be, that the Moabites who were nourished vp in pleasures and abundance of all good things, felt no euill till it came vpon them, from whence they grew proude. And therefore to tame them, it was requisite they should be driuen to Zoar, which was farre remote from the

Moabites, thereby shewing that they could not saue themselves but by flying very farre off.

Those whom the Lord thus tenderlie fosters, are here admonished to be humble, and not to prouoke the wrath of God against them by their pride and dissolutions: but to be sober; yea euen the when all things prosper with them in the best manner that can be wished: as also to prepare for all changes when God shall be pleased to visit them.

By the mount of *Lubbith* he describes other places of the countrey of Moab, and sets forth the flight of this people, and the sorrow that shall be thoroughout the whole kingdome. Whereas we haue turned, *They shall raise vp the crye*; others haue translated, *They shall breake*, or cleaue asunder with loud cries, affirming that there is a transposition of letters, and that the letter *Gnain* is doubled. In this sense this verb should be deriued from *Raab*, which signifies to breake or bruse: but because this serues not much touching the principall, I haue let that stand which is most approued, so as the verb descends from an other, which signifies to waken or raise vp. If any had rather retain the word, *To breake*, the sense is, that there shall be a breaking, and (as it were) a brusing of the members with sorrow and crying when one smites one arme against an other.

Verse 6. For the Waters of Nimrim shall be dried vp: therefore the grasse is withered, the herbs consumed, and there was no greene herb.

THE Prophet amplifies this desolation by a kind of excessiue speech. He saith, *The grasse shall wither*, which falls out when God deprives a land of all helps. Also that the *waters shall be dried vp*: for it is very likely they were exceeding necessarie for this quarter which was drie: for such countries as those bring forth nothing vnlesse they be watered. But howfocuer this be an excessiue speech, yet it contains nothing but that which is most true: for he passed not his bounds, but was faine to lay forth these things in the more words, because of the peoples dulnesse, to the end they might know that this land being deprived of Gods blessing, should become a desert deformed, and void of all beautie.

Verse 7. Therefore what euery man hath left, and their substance shall they beare to the brooke of the Willows.

THAT which *euery one hath reserved*, signifies the same which we vsually say, that which is left, or spared. For his meaning is to speake of riches reserved; thereby shewing what happens ordinarily in those countries which the enemies inuade, to wit, euery one labors to transport his goods to an other place, and to lay them vp safe there, that so they may fetch them home afterwards. Now he saith that

How sick ought to be haue themselves vpon whom God bestowes most of his benefits.

that theſe ſhall haue no ſortreſſe nor refuge to put their goods in ſafety: ſo as they ſhall bee conſtrained to hide them amongſt the *willowes*. See here an extreme miſerie, when wee can finde no place of refuge, to ſafeguard and keepe that which wee haue gotten with great labour, from being a ſpoile to the enemies. It is very likely that theſe *willowes* ſtood in ſome ſecret and cloſe place remote from others. Some expound this of the enemies, which bring the riches which they haue pill'd, to the riuer, to part the pray among themſelues.

Verſ. 8. *For the cry went round about the borders of Moab, and the howling thereof vnto Eglam, and the ſkriking thereof vnto Beer-Elim.*

THe Hebrew particule *Gi*, was added for ornament. His meaning is, that all the quarters of this Country ſhall be filled with cries and lamentations in euery corner; becauſe this deſtruction ſhall reach from one end to another. To the *cry*, he addes a *ſkriking* or double howling, to expreſſe the exceſſe of dolour; it being the manner of deſperate perſons to become vtterly deſolate, and to bee reſolued into cares.

*Original ſings.

Verſ. 9. *Becauſe the waters of Dimon ſhall be full of blood: and I will bring more vpon Dimon, euen lions vpon him that eſcapeth Moab, and to the remnant of the land.*

He not onely deſcribes here the dolour, howling, flight, and trembling, or the couetouſneſſe of the enemies in raking together of riches; but the ſlaughter of men, which

muſt needes be fearefull, when the great and renowned rauer (as *Duron* was) were *ſlild with blood*. By *increaſing* hee meanes that the Lord, in whoſe perſon hee ſpeakes, will augment the murders; ſo as the dead bodies ſhall be piled one vpon another, and there ſhall be no end thereof, till they be all put to the ſword. Now howſoeuer the aduerſities were cruell in this deſtruction, yet the Lord paſſed not meature for all that: becauſe hee juſtly puniſhed the inhumanitie which the Moabites vtterly exerciſed ouer the Iewes; vpon whom they ought to haue had compaſſion. It was juſt then for them to beare the ſame puniſhment which they had laid vpon others.

Which are eſcaped.] Theſe are alſo the increaſings wherof he ſpake; or at leaſt part of them. For behold the highſt pitch of all theſe calamities; that if any induoured to ſaue himſelfe in battel, from out of the hands of his enemies, hee ſhould meete with *lions* and cruell beaſts which ſhould deuoure him. And this is the true meaning of the Prophet, if we narrowly weigh the whole context. He meant to expreſſe this diſcomfiture, and the miſerie thereof in liuely colours, by ſhewing that the ſmall remnant which ſhall eſcape the ſlaughter, ſhall fall into the pawes of the *lion*: becauſe the hand of the Lord doth ſo purſue the wicked, that they can no way eſcape: if they paſſe one danger, they by and by fall into another. But withall let vs remember, that the Prophet ſpeakes theſe things for the conſolation of the faithfull, that they might fortifie themſelues by ſome promiſes againſt the cruelty of the enemies, who in the end ſhould be cut off, and ſhould finde no refuge at all in their gods, fortreſſes, or lurking holes; neither ſhould their flight any thing at all auale them.

THE XVI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Send yee a lamb to the ruler of the world, from the rocke of the wilderneſſe, vnto the mountain of the daughter Zion.*



Here the Prophet inſults ouer the Moabites, for that they knew not God whileſt they had time; but boldly expected his puniſhing hand, till at length they were deſtroyed by it.

In this place then there is a condemning of too late a repentance; when men cannot be brought to amendment by any admonitions whatſoeuer, but harden their faces againſt God. In a word, this kind of exhortation hath place, when the diſeaſe is become incurable. Now wee muſt diligently obſerue the words, becauſe both Hebrewes and Chriſtians inter-

pret this place amiſſe. *Saint Ierome* expounds it of Ieſus Chriſt, becauſe he deſcended from the Moabites, of whom *Ruth* came: *Ruth* 1. 4. *Math.* 1. 5. and the moſt part of Chriſtian expoſitors follow him. As if the Prophet ſhould ſay; Lord, although ſo ſeuere a iudgement be prepared for the Moabites, yet thou wilt not vtterly deſtroy them. Why? Becauſe they muſt ſend vs the *Lambe*, which is the ruler of the world. But as this expoſition hath no ground, ſo needes it not to be reſuted. As touching the Hebrewes, they thinke this was ſpoken in regard that the Moabites, who ſeeing the Iewes to haue ill ſucceſſe, ceaſed to pay them the tribute which they ought: and *Iſaiah* hauing prophecied the reſtauration of the Kingdome of Iudah, they thinke that therewithall hee exhorts the Moabites to acknowledge their King. And ſo would haue this a royall edict to correct their diſobedience: as if hee ſhould ſay; Send the tribute which you owe. But wee reade not in any place that the Moabites were ſubiect or tributaries

St. Ierome.

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butaries to the Iewes: neither is there so much as any probable coniecture of it. Whereas they alleage the history of the Kings, they are mistaken: for it is there spoken to the king of Israel: *Ahab* and *Samarina* are there expressly named: 2. King. 3. 5, 6 and we know that the Samaritans bare a deadly hatred against the Iewes. I content my selfe then in the first exposition which I haue touched, as being the truest and most naturall: because the Prophets meaning is to condemne the Moabites for not repenting in time, and therefore should now seek reconciliation in vaine; which before to their great vtilitie they might easily haue obtained.

Thus the word *send*, must be taken by way of deriding: as if he should say; You may now send, but looke for no pardon, nor to get any benefit by it. For when the wicked are admonished, they proudly despise all exhortation: but when the rod is vpon their backe, then they are like franticke men, running hither and thither, seeking helpe euery where, trying all remedies, but without any fruit; for they profite no whit thereby. *Isaiah* then scornes at their obstinacie and rebellion, and shewes there will be no time of repentance when the destruction shall come vpon them, which they haue iustly deserved.

The Iewes thinke that the Prophet speaks here of *Hezechias*, but contrary to all reason: for there is no mention made here of any certaine land, but rather of the whole world; whereof the Prophet speaks in generall. This ought then to be referred to God himselfe. He calles that a *lambe*, which should be offered in sacrifice: for the Nations professed to worship God when they offered their sacrifices. By the *stone* or *rocks* of the *wildernesse*, hee meanes a Citie; which was esteemed the chiefeest in Moab; although wee may well affirme, that hee meant to comprehend the whole Country: and so a part should be taken for the whole. *To the mountaine*: That is to say, to the true Temple of God, where the sacrifices were offered according as the Law commanded. This place is of excellent vse against the obstinate, who reiect all wholesome doctrine; proudly despising God, till his iudgements take them in the necke.

Verf. 2. For *it shall bee as a bird that flieth, and a nest forsaken: the daughter of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon.

THE Prophet now shewes what he meant to say, by his former derision; to wit, that the Moabites must not thinke of sending sacrifices then, because they cannot otherwise saue themselves, but by fleeing from their Country. By the similitude of *birds*, he expresseth the terror wherewith they being once stricken, shall flee at the noise of a leafe. For hee threatens the fearefull and wearisome flight of the Moabites, who had abused their rest.

Verf. 3. Gather a counsell, execute

iudgement: make thy shadow as the night in the mid-day: bide them that are chased out: bewray not him that is fled.

HE goes on with his speech. But if we will rightly vnderstand this place, we must see the calamitie wherewith the Moabites were extremely afflicted, before our eyes. Now he calles their wickednesses to remembrance; to the end all might know how iustly this calamitie befell them. When they had all things at their desire, they overflowed in dissolutions, and reiected all reprehensions: now being forsaken and left destitute of helpe, they mourne; seeking remedies, but find none. For thus God deals with the reprobates: he supplies their necessities, and puts all they can wish into their hands, to leaue them without excuse. But after they haue abused these blessings of God through their wicked lusts, and haue turned all things to an ill end, he takes from them all meanes and helpes, and then brings them to nothing. Whilest the Moabites were in prosperitie, they made no great reckoning of mercy and vprightnesse, although they might haue ruled, and had a flourishing Kingdome without doing any man wrong: yet did they abuse it to establish their tyranny. Now then when they are deprived of all authoritie, banished, and fugitiues; *Isaiah* in scorne, admonisheth them to gather a counsell, and to execute iustice, which before they had ouerturned by fraud & extortions. For *Isaiah* hath an eye to the time when the Moabites were spoiled of all principality and pwer. And it seemes this reproch is like to that which the Lord vsed to *Adam*, saying, Behold *Adams* is become as one of vs: Gen. 3. 22. For he is there scorned by a biting kinde of speech, that not being content with the excellent graces he had receiued, hee would needes be like God himselfe. So the Moabites being not contented with their ornaments and riches, vexed the poore Iewes and Israelites after a barbarous maner; pilld and polled them, and imagining wicked deuices against them.

Seeing then that they had abused the excellent gifts of God, hee iustly reprocheth their fact. Which also appertaines to all reprobates, who insolently exalt themselves when they prosper; and abusing the same, doe offer hard measure to the faithfull. For in as much as they pollute the things which God hath consecrated to a right end, it is good reason they should be deprived of them, and suffer extreme want. Wee see daily examples hereof before our eyes. Whence is it that those who are advanced to great places of honour, fall so violently, but because God auengeth himselfe of their tyrannous government and wicked practises? The Lord also reprocheth their shame, contempt, teares, and complaints: as when they cry out, Oh that I might returne againe to my goods! Oh that I were set in my first estate! But then alas repentance is too late.

Make thy shadow.] The Moabites (as I haue touched before) might haue refreshed the

Iewes

The true sense of this place.

The wicked despise admonitions till they feele the smart of the rod, and then they seeke to God, but for the most part in vaine

Deut. 12. 5,
6, 7.
2. Chron. 7.
12.

*Or; it shall come to passe that the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon, as a bird taking her flight, flies from her nest.

How God deals with the wicked.

Jewes ſomewhat in their miſerie when the Aſſyrians vexed them. At the leaſt, had there been any ſparke of humanitie in them, they ought to haue received the fugitiues: but in ſtead of doing this, they perſecuted and wickedlie offered violence to thoſe which were oppreſſed too much already by the hands of others. Good reaſon it was then that the Moabites ſhould haue experience in their owne perſons of that cruelty which they had exerciſed towards others, that being chaſed from their dwellings, baniſhed and wandering to and fro, they might finde no ſuccor nor ſhadow to hide and defend themſelves from the heate. For why ſhould they enjoy that comfort which they had unkindlie reſuſed to giue vnto others?

He takes the *mid-day* heere for extreme heate: and this ſimilitude is often found in the ſcriptures, to wit, that the Lord was as a cloud at his noone, and as a pillar of fire by night, Exod. 13. 21. 22. Numb. 14. 14. Deut. 1. 13. becauſe he did it once in the wildernes. The Propheets retained theſe phraſes of ſpeech becauſe they were then in vie, although they recited not the hitorie. Beſides, when he ſaith, *hide them that are chaſed out*, he ſpeakes of the Jewes, who being purſued and vexed by the Aſſyrians, were notwithstanding vncourteouſlie intreated by Moabites, whoſe dutie it was to haue entertained and comforted poore fugitiues, eſpecially thoſe who fled to the for ſuccor. But ſince they chaſed them away, it was requiſit that themſelves ſhould be chaſed and deprived of all help and ſuccor. For iuſt and equall is that ſentence of the Lord, who commands that euery one receiue that meaſure which himſelfe hath meaſured, Deut. 19. 19. 21. Matth. 7. 2. Now the Prophet would haue the Moabites to acknowledge their finnes, to the end they might confeſſe the puniſhment of their cruelties to be iuſtly inflicted vpon them. Although he rather reſpects the Jewes, to teach the that God neglected not their miſeries; but would afterwards let them ſee that he reuenged all their wrongs.

Verſ. 4. Let my baniſhed dwell with thee: Moab be thou their covert from the face of the deſtroyer: for the extortioner ſhall end, the deſtroyer ſhall be conſumed, and the oppreſſor ſhall ceaſe out of the land.

THe Prophet ſpeakes to the Moabites as if he humble ſued vnto them in the name of the common people; as if he ſhould ſay, You are neighbours and of the ſame blood, I pray you receiue and ſuccor the oppreſſed. If you will not help vs, yet at the leaſt harme vs not. He brings in God ſpeaking, who is wont to put himſelfe in the place of his people, as if he tooke vpon him the perſon of a ſuppliant. It is very certaine that the Moabites ſhewed none of this kindnes to the Jewes: nay they rather ioined with their enemies to hurt them by all the means they could. This place is worthis our diligent obſeruation,

for God heere ſhewes the great care he hath ouer his choſen, ſeeing he is as greatly moued with the wrongs done to them, as with thoſe which are directly againſt his owne Maieſtie. As in *Zacharia* hee witneſſeth, that as ot as his children are oppreſſed by any, they euen touch the apple of his eye, *Zacha. 2. 8.* He ſees the teares and heares the groanes of the afflicted which call vpon him, *Pſal. 12. 5. & 38. 9. & 102. 20.* And how often this alwaies comes not to paſſe in our fight; yet will he ſhew in due ſeaſon that he hath heard them.

Let vs then learne from hence to be kinde, and giuen to ſuccor poore exiles: eſpecially the faithful, baniſhed from their country for the confeſſion of the truth. For there is no ſeruice which God accepts, or allows better then this; as on the contrary, nothing is more diſpleaſing or deteſtable in his fight, then cruelty and inhumanitie. Wherefore if we will feele any reſtching in our calamities, let vs ſhew our ſelues louing and mercifull, and not withdraw our helpe from thoſe that haue neede. Bleſſed is he, ſaith *Dauid*, which iudgeth wiſely of the poore and needie, the Lord ſhall deliuer him in the time of trouble, *Pſal. 41. 1.* Whereas on the contrary there ſhall be iudgement mercileſſe to him that ſheweth no mercie, *Iam. 2. 13.* Now in that the Lord calles the Jewes heere *his baniſhed*: although this might well be referred to the chaſtiſement, as if he ſhould ſay, they are indeed driuen out of the land of Canaan according as they were oftentimes threatned before: yet he therewithall meanes, that they remaine vnder his protection and ſafeguard, acknowledging them for *his owne*, although they be chaſed and baniſhed out of their countrie. For this calamitie which the Jewes endured, ſeemed a kind of reſiſtion, but the Lord takes them ſtill for *his children*, although he thus ſharplie corrected them.

Hence we may gather a ſingular conſolation, to wit, that we are ſtill of the number of *Gods children*, howſoever we may be ſmiten with hard and grieuous plagues. *The extortioner ſhall end.* He now directh his ſpeech to the Jewes, and continues to comfort them as before, ſhewing that when their enemies ſhall be cut off, they ſhall thereby be eaſed of all their miſeries and calamities. Now howſoever the Prophet ſpake heretofore expreſly to the Moabites, yet did he therewithall direct his ſpeech to the Jewes alſo. But then he only threatned the Moabites as enemies: here, he more clearly promiſeth comfort to his people; as if he ſhould ſay, O Moab, thou thoughteſt that my people were vtterlie vndone, but I will ſubdue their enemies, and put an end to their afflictions: thou ſhalt periſh, but my people ſhall in the end eſcape from the heauie burthens which oppreſſe them. Vnleſſe any had rather ſay that there is a change of the time here: ſo as the particle *Becauſe*, ſhould ſignifie vntill, and ſo reading the ſentence all with a breath. But becauſe this may ſeeme conſtrained, I had rather retaine the naturall ſenſe.

Verſ. 5. And in mercie ſhall the throne

A Conſolation. God is no leſſe moued with the wrongs done to his choſen, then with thoſe which are done directly againſt his owne Maieſtie.

Be mercifull to poore exiles, baniſhed for the truths ſake.

Deut. 28. 64.

A Conſolation.

be prepared, and he shall sit vpon it in stedfastnesse in the tabernacle of Dauid, indging, and seeking iudgement, and halting iustice.

It is ill done of the Hebrewes to expound this whole verse of *Hezekias*. For the Prophet speaks of a greater restauration of the Church: the Moabites were not as yet chastened, whilest the gouernment of *Hezekias* flourished: and at that time the blessing of God began to shine againe vpon the Iewes. It is as much then as if he had said, the enemies of the elect people doe plot the ruine of this kingdome, which God had promised to stand firme; yea, and that for cuer. To the end then that the faithfull might not be out of heart in this wofull scattering; *the eternitie* of the kingdome which had been set before their eyes by an excellent prophesie, is here brought to their remembrance. This place therefore can be referred to none other but to Iesus Christ, of whom *Hezekias*, as also *Dauid* and his successors were figures. These then doe rather leade and conduct others to Christ, who is the onely safe keeper and protector of his people: who indeede gathereth together the remnant that is scattered. Thus then hee brings the faithfull backe vnto Christ: as if hee should say, You know what God you serue: he hath promised to be the onely keeper of your saluation; to the end you may remaine safe vnder his protection, *Iohn* 10. 28. And if it so fall our that things goe crosse sometimes; yet hath he promised you a redeemer: vnder whom you shall recover a new and *stedfast* felicitie. What then if for a time you be sad and heauie? yet will this Sauour of the Church come in the end: who will set you in a flourishing liberty. And therefore fettle your selues constantly in the expectation of him: yea euen then when you shall see the estate of the Church miserably scattered.

We haue need to obserue this diligently, because all consolations whatsoeuer are but earthly and transitorie, if all be not referred vnto Christ. Let vs then fasten our eyes vpon him if we will enioy any prosperitie or happiness: for he hath promised that felicitie shall accompanie vs, euen in the midst of persecutions; *Math.* 5. 10. 11. and that all our anguishes and vexations shall open a way vnto vs to eternal life: yea, that all the afflictions which we endure, shall turne to a full measure of happiness vnto vs, *Rom.* 8. 28.

Now *Isaias* shewes that this shall not come to passe by means of men; but by the grace of God, which is the onely builder of *this throne*. Wherefore to him onely must we attribute this *mercie*, and acknowledge that it is of his free goodnesse that he hath *established* this sacred *throne* in the midst of vs. Now the Prophet confirms it very well in saying, that the cause must be sought no where else, but in the meere *mercie* of God. This is a grounded truth: for God was not moued thereto by the worthinesse of any merits; as las they were of no value to set vp that

throne againe which was fallen downe by the sinne and iniquitie of the people: but seeing those whom he had adopted, had vndone themselves, he meant to shew a token of his infinite bountie in their restauration.

Shall sit vpon it in stedfastnesse.] There is almost no one word here which hath not his weight, so as this verse is worthy to be continually remembered. I grant indeede there is an allusion heere in the word *Tabernacle*, as *1. Sam.* 16. some doe expound it: to wit, that he was as a common person before he was called to sit in the royall throne. For the Prophet meant to decipher out a luely image of the Church, which is fatte vnlike the thrones of kings and princes; neither shines it with gold, silver, or precious stones as they doe. Now howsoeuer he proposed the spiritual kingdome of Christ vnder a base and abiekt resemblance: yet he therewithall admoniseth, that it shall be prepared, and set vp among men in the earth. For if it had been onely said that the throne of Christ should be set vp; it might haue been demanded whether his seate should be set vp in heauen or in earth.

But when he faith in the *Tabernacle of Dauid*, he shewes that he reignes not onely among Angels, but among men also: lest wee should imagine he were not to be found, vnlesse we ascend vp into heauen. The wicked laugh at this: taking all that we say of the kingdome of Iesus Christ but for a fable; as if it were a fancie forged in our owne braine. For they must behold that wee tell them of with their eyes; also it must agree to their senses: as for vs we ought in no wise to conceiue any thing carnally of him; but to content our selues with his power and vertue.

In stedfastnesse.] The word *Emesh* signifies all stedfastnesse whatsoeuer; and trueth. Here the Prophet means that the kingdome of Christ shall be firme and stable, as *Daniel* also hath witnessed, *Dan.* 2. 44. and 7. 14. Likewise the Euangelist *Luke*: Of his kingdome (saith he) shall be none end, *Luke* 1. 33. Wherein it differs from the common condition of other kingdomes, which often fall and tumble downe by their owne weight: be it that the foundations of them be riches and other great commodities, alas their stedfastnesse differs very little from vanishing shadowes. But howsoeuer the kingdome of Christ seeme to totter now and then, yet *Isaias* tels vs that it shall stand for euer, because God vpholds it with his hand. We must therefore arme our selues with these testimonies against the temptations which shal happen when Christs kingdome is assailed with many and mighty enemies, so as a man would imagine it would fall to ruine fordwich. Let the world deuiſe what it can then, yea, let hell it selfe cast forth flashes of flaming fire: yet must we stick fast to this promise.

Who shall iudge.] I take the word *Shophet* for Gouernour: as if he should say, there shall be one that shall gouerne: we often see a magnificent throne, and yet no man sits on it; and it will ordinarie fall out that kings shall be either idols or beasts, who haue neither iudgement, wisdome, nor any discretion in them.

But

2. Sam. 7. 13

Dan. 7. 27.

Ioh. 10. 16.
& 11. 52.

All consolations whatsoeuer are but earthly and transitorie, vnlesse they be referred vnto Christ.

Vnlesse the wicked see with their eyes which is told them, they will beleue nothing.

Christs Kingdome differs from the common condition of other Kingdomes.

Christs Kingdome may now and then seeme to totter: but it shall euer stand stedfast, because God vp-holds it.

But heere he ſaith, that he which ſhall ſit in this throne wil perſorme the office of a good gouernour: which is added, to the end we may know that Chriſt will be our protector in deed: for the iudgements which is attributed to him is nothing elſe but the ſafe cuſtodie vnder which he hath receiued vs, and which none can wring from him: neither will he let the wicked remaine unpuniſhed when they haue offed vs violence, if ſo be that with a meeke and quiet ſpirit we will put ourſelues vnder his protection.

By the word *haſten*, the Prophet ſheweth that Chriſt will take vengeance quicklie and ſpedilie of our afflictions: which we ought to oppoſe to our impatiencie, becauſe it ſeemes to vs that he is too ſlow in ſuccoring vs. But when we ſhall be ſo ouerſwayed by our paſſions, let vs thinke, ſurely this comes to paſſe becauſe we giue not place to his prouidence. Although then that he tarrie according to the ſenſe of the ſeſh, yet doth he alwaies moderate his iudgements after a moſt excellent order, according as he knows the ſeaſons beſt for vs. For this cauſe then let vs quietlie wait his good pleaſure.

Verſ. 6. *We haue heard of the pride of Moab (he is very proud) euen his pride and his arrogancie, and his indignation, but his lies ſhall not be ſo.*

The Prophet addes this ſentence by way of preuention. For that which he had promiſed touching the reſtauration of the royall throne, ſeemed incredible; neither could they perſwade themſelues that the Moabites could be deſtroyed, ſeeing they flouriſhed at that time with abundance of riches, as alſo in ſtrength and power of men: who for this cauſe (being puffed vp with proſperitie) became exceeding proud. Adde alſo, that their malapertnes wherewith they inſulted ouer the poore Iewes, was vnto them like a ſore and hard engin to breake and bruiſe their hearts. The Prophet that he might preuent this reſempration, tels them that the brags of the Moabites are well enough knowne; but yet their pride ſhall not hinder the Lord from puniſhing of them: becauſe there is neither force, riches, nor multitude that is able to reſiſt him. *Iſaiah* then ſpeakes as of a thing commonlie knowne: to wit, that the Moabites were become ſo extreme proude, that they feared nothing: it being in deed the vſuall faſhion of thoſe that abound in wealth and power, to inſult malapertlie ouer God and men. But how great ſouer their arrogancie is the Lord will eaſily pull it downe.

His inſolencie.] The word *Euab* for the moſt part ſignifies indignation: but the circumſtance of this place ſeemes to require ſome what more. This nounce comes of the verb to Tranſgreſſe, as if we ſhould ſay in Latine, To exceed, and therefore I haue thought good to tranſlate it inſolencie. *Ieremiah* hauing mentioned their pride & arrogancie, ſpeakes of *hamines of the heart*, Iere. 48. 14. & 29. I make no queſtion but *Iſaiah* and *Ieremiah* both

meant that this people were ſo cruell in regard of their ouerweeming, loſines & ſt.elines, that they would wax wroth and angrie vpon the leaſt occaſion; and churliſhlie aduance themſelues againſt others. This vice is alwaies ioined with loſines of mind, becauſe the contempt of others is accompanied with pride: and thoſe who aſcribe vnto theſelues more then is meete, are eaſily prouoked to anger vpō the leaſt occaſion: ſuch can beare nothing, and are not only inclined to wrath, but to outrage alſo. For by their good wills they would ſubiect euery man vnder them, neither will they giue place by any means to any man whatſoeuer. If euery one be not readie at their beck they take it in ſoule ſcorne. Proude men doe eaſily bewray this their high ſtomack: whereas the humble on the contrarie are of a louing diſpoſition, ioyned with modeſtie anſwerable thereunto, and are ſoone intreated to pardon any that haue donē them wrong.

His lies.] The Hebrewes call the members of man; or the branches of a tree *Eddim*: and they alſo take this word for Diuination, which is vſed in this ſignification in ſome o-ther places. Some thinke it is put heere by a figure, for childie: others referre it to words, or thoughts; others expound it of ſtrength or ſinewes. But in mine opinion it is taken rather for a fooliſh boaiſting, becauſe this nounce is often taken for a lie: and we ſhall ſee hereafter how this ſignification agrees beſt to this place. The expoſitors alſo differ in the word *cen*. The moſt tranſlate, That lies, or words are not vpright: others, that lies are not true. For the ſubſtance, I am almoſt of their opinion: neither doubt I but the Prophet meant to ſay that Moab vtters his vaine brags, becauſe he can not attaine to his chiefe enterpriſe.

For the ſenſe of the words we ſhall beſt gather it out of the foure and fortieth Chapt. of *Ieremiah* verſ. 30. for hauing there repeated the very words of our Prophet, he preſentlie addes by way of expoſition, *They ſhall not do ſo*, as if he ſhould ſay, That which they haue reſolued in themſelues to do, ſhall neuer come to paſſe. Yet notwithstanding I am not of opinion that there ſhould be a particlē of ſimilitude in the firſt member, but rather of confirmation, as it were by a negatiue, becauſe he declares that there ſhall be no ſtedfaſtnes in Moabs counſels: neither ſhould his diuinations or lies come to effect. Thus the proude often determine of all things no otherwiſe then as if the diſpoſing of them were in their owne hands, and themſelues exempt from being ruled by the prouidence of God. Such pride ſaith *Iſaiah* ſhall fall, and whatſoeuer they promiſe vnto themſelues concerning their power, ſhall vaniſh like ſmoke.

Heereby wee are admoniſhed, that pride is greatly diſpleaſing vnto God: and by how much the more men be puffed vp in regard of their riches, ſo much the neerer are they to their owne deſtruction.

Verſ. 7. *Therefore ſhall Moab boule*

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vnto

Riches begets pride, pride brings forth wrath, and wrath is for the moſt part accompanied with outrage.

We muſt ſet Chriſts ſpeedines in coming to our reliefe, againſt our impatiencie.

Although Chriſt ſeeme to tarrie long in our ſenſe, yet he knows what time is fitteſt to help vs.

* Or, inſolencie. * Or, ſhall not be approued, or, ſhall not take effect.

Moab vtters his vaine brags, when he can not attaine his chiefe enterpriſe.

Pride diſpleaſing to God.

vnto Moab; *every one shall howle: for the foundations of Kir-hareseb shall wee mourne: yet they shall be stricken.*

derneffe: her goodly branches stretched out themselves, and went over the sea.

Iam. 4. 6.
1. Pet. 5. 5.

HE sets forth that more plainly which he touched before: to wit, that this pride and crueltie which proceedes thereof, shall be the cause of Moabs ruine. For seeing the Lord rescis the proud, hee must needs take downe this haughtinesse, vnder which the Church was miserably and shamefully trodden vnder foote. According to which example, the end of all proud persons must of necessity bee lamentable. Where it is added, *Moab vnto Moab*; his meaning is, that there shall bee a *dolorous song* as it were, when they shall make their *none one to another* touching their calamities, and shall weepe for one anothers griefes.

Some translate, Because of Moab; but vnto. For it is by and by said, that the howling shall bee *generall*, or amongst the people.

[For the foundations.] It sufficiently appears that Kir-hareseb was the head Citie, and the Kings regall seate: but some thinke it to be a proper name; others say it is appellatiue: no doubt but the etymologie of the word was raken hence; namely, because it was built of chalke. It may be also that it was called thus, in regard of the height of the walles which were made of bricke. Now this was a citie greatly renowned in that Country: yet he rather names the *foundations* then the Citie it selfe, because it should be raced to the ground. As if he should say; You shall not lament the ruine of the Citie or buildings, but the utter subuersion of it, because there shall nothing remaine of it.

They expound the word *Necaim*, Lame: I had rather translate it, Hurt. The particle which is set before it, signifies as much as, Certainly, or, Surely: sometimes it is taken for But, or, Notwithstanding. Those which take it in the affirmatiue, expound it thus: You shall surely mourne, when you shall be hurt or stricken: that is to say, you shall not neede to hire those that shall faime a mourning for you, as they vsually doe at the buriall of some; but you shall mourne in good earnest. But I expound it Onely; as if he should say; All that shall remaine, shall be *stricken*; not one shall escape in safetie. And by this manner of speech he expresseth the extreme ruine of that Citie, shewing that those which lue, shall not onely bewaile the calamities of others, but their owne also: because they themselves shall be stricken. If the proud be thus sharply corrected, let vs learne to carry our selues modestly and peaceably; and freely to humble our selues vnder the mightie hand of God.

Verf. 8. *For the vineyards of Heshbon are cut downe, and the vine of Sibmah: the lords of the heathen haue broken the principall vines thereof: they are come to Iazer: they wandred in the Wil-*

THE Prophet describes the destruction of the whole Country here vnder an allegorie. It is very credible that it abounded with good vineyards: which wee may easily collect fro this place, and another like vnto it in the 48. of Ieremy, verf. 32. Now when the Prophets threaten any Countreies with destruction, they are wont to recite the chiefest things in them. For example, if wee were to speake of Picardie, truly we would not mention vines: as if we spake of Orleans, or Burgondie, The Cities which the Prophet describes in this verse, are the head Cities in the Country of Moab.

He saith, that *the principall vines of the vineyards were plucked up by the Lords of the nations*: that is to say, by the conquerours which bare sway as they list over the people who they had subdued. Where he saith, that these *branches came to Iazer*, it is for amplifications sake; because this citie was situated vpon y bounds of the land of Moab. As if he should say, They shall not onely cut downe some part of your vines, but the whole Country shall be laid waste from one end to the other. Some referre this to the enemies: but I had rather referre it to the vines which stretched so far, that they came to Iazer: so as the sense shall be; Although these vines should spread euenvnto Iazer, and should couer much land from thence vnto the *wildernesse*, yet shall the *lords of the nations* tread them vnder foote. So that the text runnes well, because it is said afterwards, that the vines spread themselves vnto the *wildernesseyea, vnto the sea*: thereby signifying, that it was a fruitful soile, but especially for *vines*; he addes, *ouer the sea*; because in fertile groundes they are wont to keepe backe the sea with rampires for gaining of ground: and they prevent the violence of the water with boords and timber, to enlarge the land.

Verf. 9. *Therefore wil I weep with the weeping of Iazer, and of the vine of Sibmah: O Heshbon and Elealeh I will make thee drunke with my teares, because vpon thy summer fruites, and vpon thy harvest a shouting is fallen.*

HERE the Prophet takes another person vpon him, as we haue noted before: for he sorrowes and complaines in the person of the Moabites. I deny not but the faithfull haue alwaies trembled at Gods iudgements, neither could they euer so put off the bowels of pitie, but they had still compassion vpon the wicked; yet doth he not describe his private affections here: but his meaning is, to get authoritie to his doctrine, that none might doubt of the accomplishment of it. And therefore he represents the sorrow and heavinesse which they should all feele after
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the diſcomfiture (as it were vpon a ſcafold) in the perſon of a Moabite; and all to the end he might the better confirme the Iewes in the truth of this prouiſe, which might otherwiſe haue ſeemed incredible vnto them.

Becauſe vpon thy ſummer fruites.] The expoſitors interpret this latter part diuerſly. I he verbe *Naphal*, ſignifies to Fall, and to run vpon. Thoſe which take it in the laſt ſignification, referre the word *Hedad*, to the enemies themſelues: as if he ſhould ſay, The cry of the enemies ſhall runne vpon thy harueſt: ſo as there ſhould be a cloſe oppoſition here betwene this cry, and the ſinging whereof he will ſpeake in the next verſe. Others expound it, It ſhall come to paſſe that they ſhall caſt forth cries: as if ſinging ſhould ceaſe, and as if the pleaſant ſongs and mirth of the reapers, who are wont to reioyce after harueſt, ſhould be no more heard. But I had rather referre it to the cry of the enemies: wherein I follow *Ieremias*, the faithfull expoſitor of this place, who ſaith, That the deſtroyer ſhall runne vpon thy ſummer fruites. Which *Iſaiah* calles here the cry of the enemies: as if hee ſhould ſay; When thou ſhalt prepare thy ſelfe to gather in thy harueſt, the enemies ſhall run vpon thee, from whom thou ſhalt heare this hideous cry in ſtead of thy cheerful ſongs, and ſhall chaſe thee thence.

Verſ. 10. *And gladneſſe is taken away, and ioy out of the plentifull field: and in the vineyards ſhall be no ſinging nor ſhoutiſg for ioy; the treader ſhall not treade wine in the wine-preſſes: I haue cauſed the reioycing to ceaſe.*

Hee confirms his threatning by more words, ſhewing that the whole region ſhall be deſtroyed and laid waſte, ſo as there ſhall be no more *vintage* nor *harueſt*. When he ſaith, that God will take away the ſongs of the vine-dreſſers, hee reſpects the ancient cuſtome. For they were wont to dance and manifeſt their ioy after the grapes were gathered in. For which cauſe, *Virgil* ſaith, that the vine-dreſſer ſings when his laſt labours about his vines are finiſhed, euen as the Mariners ſhout for ioy when they be artiued in the haven. For then hauing ſuffered much, and eſcaped many dangers, they hope to haue reſt, and to obtaine ſome reſreſhing. This is as much then as if the Prophet had ſaid, Being deprived of the reuenuē of their fruites, nothing ſhall remaine vnto them, but the bewailing of their pouerty.

Verſ. 11. *Wherefore my bowels ſhall ſound like an harpe for Moab, and mine inward parts for Kir-hareſeth.*

The Prophet vnder the perſon of a Moabite doth againe deſcribē a great lamentation proceeding from ſuch grieuous ſorrow, that their bowels ſhould breake, or make an horrible noiſe. For hee would ſhew the

thing it ſelfe by the ſigne of it. Now we haue already ſhewed wherunto theſe liuely deſcriptions tend; to wit, that hauing the thing demonſtrated as it were in the ſight, wee might the more confidently expect the obtaining of that which far ſurmounts all our thoughts. In that he names the chiefe Ciue againe, he notes out the ruine of the whole Country, taking a part for the whole.

Verſ. 12. *And it ſhall appeare that Moab ſhall be weary of his high places: then ſhall he come to his Temple to pray, but he ſhall not preuaile.*

Or, Sauguary.

He now returnes to the ſentence which he touched in the ſecond verſe: to wit, that the idolaters ſeeing their affaires to ſucceede ill, doe runne to idols, thinking to find ſome comfort in them. Although he here expreſſeth ſome thing more: for in as much as Idolaters haue their temples and ordinarie chapels, they trot to that temple which they take for the moſt holy (when any great calamitie befalls them) as to the place where they hope to finde God moſt fauourable vnto them. For if the Papiſts at this day fall into any great and extreame danger, they perſwade themſelues they ſhall ſooner obtaine their requeſts (and this hath been a common and ancient ſuperſtitious conceit) if they trot to *Saint Claude*, or to our Lady of *Limeux*, or to ſome other Idol more famous than the reſt; than if they ſhould reſort to the Church that is neereſt hand. They make their extraordinary prayers in places furtheſt off. Thus the Prophet calles the moſt renowned and frequented temple among the Moabites, a *Sanctuarie*; and ſaith, they ſhall goe thither: but to no purpoſe. Now it appeares by the holy hiſtorie, that the ſamouſt temple of the Moabites was dedicated vnto *Chemosh*: 1. King. 11. 7.

Some expound the particl, *They ſhall not preuaile*: that they ſhould be ſo wearie, that they ſhould not haue ſo much ſtrength as to goe to the temple. But the firſt ſenſe is the fitteſt as I thinke: for he takes away all hope from the Moabites, ſo as they ſhould finde no ſuccour, no nor in the gods themſelues. This member, *and when it ſhall appeare*, hath great waight: for it ſignifies that the Idolaters are nor led with reaſon but rather by their natural appetites, euen like vnto brute beaſts. For as beaſts iudge by touching, ſmelling, and ſeeing, ſo alſo the Idolaters haue no better ſchoolemaſter to inſtruct them than their owne carnall ſenſe. If any then conuince them by ſound arguments, that they doe ill; a man ſhall gaine nothing from them. And howſoever they ſometimes haue experience that all their labour in vexing themſelues after their maner is but loſt; yet will they not therefore giue ouer, but ſeeke new means, and will bring in ſeruiſes of their owne inuention, which they would faine haue God to approve of. If they haue good ſucceſſe, that they attribute to their ſuperſtitious, and ſo waxe the more obdurate: and if matters ſucceed

succeed ill they reiect their inventions, condemn their new devised worship, and blame their gods. To be short, they depend wholly upon cuncts, iudging of nothing neither by reason, nor by the word of God. Therefore they are newfangled euermore, according as experience leads them. But it seemes the Prophet passeth yet further, to wit, that the Moabites shall come to the *Temple of Chamos* when their follie shall be manifestlie discovered vnto all; rather with shame and blushing, then of any mature deliberation.

Verf. 13. *This is the word that the Lord hath spoken against Moab since that time.*

This short sentence is the confirmation of the prophesie: for his meaning is, that he hath euen pronounced the very decree of God himselfe, and hath vttered nothing but the Lords message. Thus putting off as it were the person of man, he brings in God speaking in this manner:

Verf. 14. *And now the Lord hath spoken, saying. In three yeeres, as the yeeres of an hireling, and the glorie of Moab shall be contemned in all the great multitude,*

and the remnant shall be very small and feeble.

Three yeeres.] The time is not only prefixed for the certaintie, but also to the end the faithfull might not languish in waiting any longer. Now he alludes to the agreements and covenants of men, wherein they have been wont to set downe a certaine day which they must not breake. This is speciallie done in mercenarie busineses; which similitude is often vsed in the scriptures, because the hireling waits with exceeding desire for the appointed day wherein he is to receive his wages. For they groane as it were vnder the burthen, and beare their ordinarie labors vnwillinglie. Thus God saith, he will assigne a certain day vnto the Moabites which they shall not escape; but all their puillance shall therein be brought to nothing. He speakes expresse of *the multitude*, because they were a great people; and therefore bragged of it as if they had been invincible. Where he ads that *the remnant shall be feeble*, he meanes, there shall be such a change, that there shall be great ods betwene their former and latter estate, because nothing shall be seene but a wofull and hidious spectacle in those that remaine.

Job. 7. 1. 2.
& 14. 6.
Chap. 21. 16.

Idolaters depend also on cuncts.

THE XVII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a Citie, for it shall be a ruinous heape.*



He prophesieth against the kingdom of Syria, and mentions the head Citie, which was the regall seate of the Kingdome. Now it was requisite that this destruction should be described as well as y

rest, to the end the faithfull might assure themselves that God would assist them in time conuenient, and would not alwaies suffer the wicked to molest them without ceasing. For the king of Syria was confederate with the king of Israel against the king of Iudah; as we haue seene before in the seuenth Chapter: and because the Iewes were not strong enough to resist them, being destitute of sufficient meanes, they might also haue doubted of succor from God, as if he had left them at fixe and seauen. That he might therefore free them from this perplexitie, he threatens destruction to this kingdom of Syria, from whence they might well conclude, that God fought for the defence of his people.

It is not known in what time *Isaiah* prophesied this, neither (as I haue touched heretofore) doth he obserue the precise order of times when he threatens any nation with the chastisements which it deserued: but as I

coniecture he foretold this, when the two kings of Israel and Syria had inuaded Iudah: hauing therewithall conspired the destruction of the Church. For in as much as he ioines the Israelites and Syrians together, he calles them both to the same iudgement; to let them vnderstand that they had so profited by this wicked and cursed league, that both of them should be inwrapped in one and the same destruction. The Prophets meaning then is to comfort the faithfull of the tribe of Iudah, because he especiallie nor regard to them (and not to the Israelites nor Syrians, whose ruine he now foretels) left they should be left comfortlesse.

The particle demonstratiue, *Behold*, scales vp as it were the truth of this prophesie. Whereas he only mentions *Damascus* in particular, it follows not therefore that hee meant to exempt the other parts of the kingdom: but this manner of speech is very vsuall in the Prophets, namely, to take a part for the whole, so as vnder the ruin of the principall Citie, he comprehends that which should befall the whole Nation: for what could the lesser Citie expect but confusion, when the fortresse of the kingdom should be taken? There is also another reason why the Prophets threaten the chiefe Citie, directing their speech against them, to wit, because they were the seminaries of all wickednes, from which as out of a fountaine it dispersed it selfe ouer the whole land.

The time when this burden was threatened.

Reasons why the Prophets threaten ruin to the chiefe Citie, rather then to the inferior.

The reason why this burden is pronounced against Damascus.

Verf. 2. *The Cities of Aroer shall be forsaken: they shall be for the flocks; for they*

they ſhall be there, and none ſhall make them afraid.

Num. 32. 34
Deut. 2. 36.
3. 12. &
4. 48.

IT is vncertaine whether by *Amos* here, he means that Citie whereof mentio is made ellewhere. It ſhould rather be the name of a Region or Country; howſoever hee deſcribes the forme of a Country laid waſte: for hee ſaith, that the places where Citie were built, ſhould now be *common paſtures*; ſo as nothing ſhould remaine but the lodges & tents of ſheepheard: for if any inhabitants were left there, they ſhould drue their ſtocks to another place.

Verſ. 3. *The munition alſo ſhall ceaſe from Ephraim, and the Kingdome from Damascus: and the remnant of Aram ſhall bee as the glorie of the children of Iſrael, ſaith the Lord of hoſtes.*

HEC now ſhewes the cauſe why the Lord would cut off the Kingdome of Syria. The Prophet *Amos* recites many: *Amos 1. 3.* But that which *Iſaiab* mentions here, was the principall; to wit, that they had drawne the Kingdome of Iſrael to the bent of their bow, to make warre againſt the Iewes. No doubt but the Iſraelites were inticed by the flatteries of the Syrians, to make a league with them to fight againſt their brethren. And the better to deceiue them, the Syrians alledged that they would aide them againſt all their aduerſaries. And therefore the Iſraelites alſo reſted themſelves vpon the ſtrength of their confederates: ſo as they were perſwaded, that none were too hard for them. Vnder the word *Ephraim* hee means all Iſrael, as in many other places; for *Ephraim* was the chiefe Tribe of the people. Beſides, he ſaith, that the *munition and kingdome* ſhall ceaſe from a place, when the ſtrength thereof is broken, and the excellency thereof brought low.

The remnant.] That is to ſay, the peoples both of Syria and Iſrael ſhould bee brought to nought: and the better to authoriſe his prophecie, he addes forthwith, that *God hath ſpoken it.* Now when God puniſhed theſe two kingdomes ſo ſeuerly, no doubt but hereby he provided for the ſaluation of his Church, redeeming and deliuering it euen by the deſtruction of the enemies. And for the rooting out of them both, he vſed the helpe of the Aſſyrians, whom the Iewes themſelves had called: in which fact of theirs, they ſinned very groſſy. Yet could not their offence hinder the Lord from being carefull of his Church; deliuering it, by ſetting his enemies together by the eares. And by this wee may ſee how great care the Lord hath of vs, ſeeing he ſpares not to puniſh euen great and mightie kingdomes for our ſafetie. We may alſo obſerue, that although all the wicked ſhould band and ioyne themſelves in league together to deſtroy vs; yet the Lord will eaſily finde a way how to deliuer vs out of their deuouring iawes. Beſides, we may note how

God ſometimes deli- uers his Church, by ſetting her aduerſaries together by the eares.

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needfull it is for vs to be deprived of all humane helpes, wherein wee often put vaine confidence, and that againſt Gods helpe: for being once blinded with proſperitie, we begin ſo to pride our ſelves in it, that we can giue God no audience. Hee muſt be ſaine therefore to remoue all impediments out of our way, to the end we may come to the true ſight of our pouertie: as it happened to the Iſraelites, who were ſtripped of all their ſucours, after Syria was once deſtroyed.

It is fit we ſhould now be left helpeleſſe, to bring vs to the true ſight of our owne weakeneſſe.

Verſ. 4. *And in that day the glory of Iacob ſhall be impoueriſhed, and the fatneſſe of his fleſh ſhall be made leane.*

5. *And it ſhall be as when the harneſt man gathereth the corne, and reapeh the eares with his arme: and hee ſhall be as he that gathereth the eares in the valley of Rephaim.*

ALTHOUGH hee had promiſed to ſpeake of Syria and Damascus, yet now he ioynes the *Iſraelites* with the Syrians: and the reaſon is, becauſe they were confederates in one and the ſame quarrell. The Syrians, to whom *Iſaiab* eſpecially directs his ſpeech, were euen as a firebrand to kindle the wrath of the Iſraelites, as hath been ſaid: but the Iſraelites were no leſſe guilty, and therefore iuſtly are they wrapped in the ſame afflictions, as if they had been yoked with them. It is vncertaine whether hee means all the cle& people, when he ſpeakes of *Iacob*; ſo as he ſhould comprehend the Tribe of Iudah alſo. Yet is it very likely it ſhould bee referred to the ten Tribes onely, who challenged this name vnto themſelves: ſo as hee calles them *glorious*; by way of deriſion, becauſe when they waxed proud of their ſtrength, multitude, and confederacies, they deſpiſed their brethren the Iewes. Whereas he threatens them afterward with *leanneſſe*, he doth it to taxe their inſolencie: as on the contrary the Prophets ſcorne and reproch them for being become fat. For their proſperitie made them proud, being puffed vp with the fruitfulnes of their country, euen as fat horſes, ouermuch pampered, are wont to kicke with the heele; which is the cauſe why *Amos* calls them fat kine: *Amos 4. 1.* How wanton and luſtie ſoever they were then, the Lord proteſts, that hee will take downe their *fat*, which cauſed them to be ſo *glorious*.

Amos 4. 1.

And it ſhall be.] By this ſimilitude he ſhewes how fearefull the iudgement ſhall be. Looke ſaith he, how *reapers* gather the corne into their armes, ſo ſhall this multitude (how great and mightie ſoever) be reaped by the enemies. And that he might not omit any thing, he addes, that after the *harneſſe ſhall be ended*, ſome looſe eares ſhall be gathered, which lay ſcattered here & there: as if he ſhould ſay, After the multitude ſhall be gathered in, & the land made bare, cu& as a field that is reaped, the remainder which ſhall be ſcattered, ſhall not therefore reſt in ſafetie. Moreover, hee vſeth this ſimilitude of the *harneſſe*, becauſe

Verſ. 5.
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Similit.
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3

the

the people were growne secure vpon trust of their great multitude : But as the reapers are not amazed at all when they see the corne very thicke ; so, saith he, the great multitude shall not disable the Lord from rooting them whollie out. We may in like maner referre this to the Assyrians ; but yet the sense will be y^e same, because they were Gods seruants to execute this vengeance. Wee neede not stand to debate much about y^e verb *To gather*, because it signifies nothing else but that the slaughter shall be like *an harvest*, which being once ended, others are permitted to *glean* the *caves* which lie scattered. For after that the tenne tribes had bin led captiues, the Assyrians gleaned vp the remnant also, when they vnderstood of their new deuices, 2. King. 17. 4. 5. He makes especial mention of *Rephaim*, because the Israclites were well acquainted with the fruitfulness of it.

Chap. 24. 13. *Yet a gathering of grapes shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the utmost bowes, and foure or fise in the high branches of the fruit thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel.*

HE had preciselie affirmed that nothing should remaine of the discomfiture; euen as if the name of the nation should be vtterlie defaced. Now he addes a consolation to assuage the bitterness of the slaughter. For he shewes y^e there shall some remaine, although the enemies determined to consume and destroy the vtterlie. Euen as a man neuer *plucks his vine so cleane* but there will some *grape or cluster* lie hidden vnder the leaues : Likewise as a man neuer *shakes his olives* so thorowlic but that *some one will hang still in the top of the trees* : so howsoeuer the enemies be enraged, and the wrath of God kindled, yet as he therein shewes himselfe a seuerer iudge, so will he shew himselfe gracious and mercifull, in reseruing a small number ; in not suffering the spoile of the enemies to fall vpon his cleft.

Whence we may gather, that his mercie will alwaies take place in the midst of his most fierce vengeance. For he speaks here of the children of *Abraham*, who albeit they were reuolted fro God, and had made themselues vnworthie of their adoption, yet did the goodnes of God overcome their malice. True it is they had deserued no such fauour, but yet must the covenant of the Lord remaine sure and inuiolable, so as the testimonie thereof appeareth in this *remnant*, although the people for their parts had abolished it whollie as much as lay in them. Which we ought diligentlie to obserue, that when we see no face of the Church at all, but that the faithfull seeme to be perished, wee should not thinke it is therefore rased out, because God is immutable, who hath promised that it shall stand for euer, Gen. 17. 7. There shall euer be some remaine then, although to outward appearance wee oftentimes behold the contrary.

Verf. 7. *At that day shall a man looke to his maker, and his eies shall looke to the holie one of Israel.*

Now he sets forth the fruit of this chastisement : and this is the second consolation, which should susteine the faithfull in their aduersities. For howsoeuer they felt nothing but the wrath of God ; yet were they to thinke that the Lord (who neuer forgets his owne) would still preferre his Church for euer : and withall, that the corrections should be profitable to his children. Having spoken then of the perpetuall of the Church, he also adds, that afterwards men *shall looke vnto God*, which is the most desirable good thing of all others. For when we returne vnto God, then the world, which was laid waste before, begins to be brought into his right frame againe. Therefore when we are estranged from lum, because none of vs repents willinglie, we can not be brought backe againe into the right way vnlesse he vse the spure and corrections to drue vs forward. Hereby then wee are admonished to beare our chastisements cheerefullie, seeing God vseth the same means to purge vs from a most deadlie apostasie. For *to looke vnto God*, is nothing else but (having once turned out of the way) to come into his fauor by turning againe vnto him, and to put our selues vnder his protection. What is the cause why men giue ouer themselues to all leaudnes ? Surely because they forget God. For where the true knowledge of God is, there is also reuerence of his Maiestie ioined with it : and wheresoeuer forgetfulness beareth sway, there contempt must needs reigne. Although this manner of speech appertaine properlie to faith, as if he should say, when the Israclites shall be once tamed by these sharp chastisements, they shall then feele by experience that there is no succour but in God alone ; in which sense he presentlie adds the word *maker*. True it was a detestable senselesnes that they rested not vpon that God only who had indued them with so many excellent gifts. The Prophet shewes then that they shall become wiser by being humbled vnder calamities and afflictions, and shall beginne to hope in him who had bound them vnto him by so many benefits.

He calles God their *maker*, not as in regard that he created all mankind, but in the same sense that he calles him the *holie one of Israel*. Although then that all me^e be created according to Gods image, yet Israel was properlie the worke of his hands, because they were his holy inheritance and chosen people. And this repetition is vsed to signifie the same thing according to the common custome of the Hebrue tongue. He calles God *holie*, not only because he is so in himselfe, but also in regard of the effect, for he *sanctifies* and chuseth to himselfe the children of *Abraham* : whence it follows, that the *creation* whereof he speaks, ought to be referred to spirituall regeneration, for so God is speciallie called the *maker* of Israel.

The second consolation.

1
2

God vseth corrections as a speciall remedie to preferre vs fro apostasie

What it is to turne vnto God. Knowledge of God breeds reuerence : forgetfulness contempe

Gen. 1. 27. Exod. 19. 6.

A Consolation.

1
2

In wrath God alwaies remembers mercie.

The Church may seeme at sometime to be vtterlie wasted, but God still reserues a small remnant because of his promise.

Verf. 8.

Verſ. 8. *And he ſhall not looke to the Altars, the workes of his owne hands; neither ſhall hee looke to thoſe things which his owne fingers haue made, as grones and images.*

THIS expoſition declares more cleerely, that this looking, whereof he ſpake in the former verſe, is to be vnderſtood properly of faith and hope. For hee ſaith, that all falſe truſts ſhall vaniſh, when men begin once to hope in God: for the very truth is, no man be- holds the Lord aright, that forſakes not al his ſuperſtitious. And therefore we are here taught to take away all impediments if we will haue acceſſe vnto God: thoſe therefore doe fouly deceiue themſelues, who will ioync him with idols; as the Iewes once did, and as the Pa- piſts now doe: and note we alſo, that this vice hath not reigned for a day or two in the world, but alwaies. Let vs thē vtterly abandō all thoſe obſtacles, that fo reſting ourſelues vpon the only goodneſſe of our God, we may rightly and cleerely behold him, and put our whole confidence in his mercy.

Now that hee might more plainly ſhew his deteſtation, hee calles the falſe gods *the worke of their hands*: that the Iſraelites being aſhamed of their folly, might put away and rid their hands of ſuch a reprochfull imputation. Now he ſpares no words in deſcribing this ſinne, becauſe they were principally deſiled with it: as indeed there is no wickedneſſe more abominable in Gods ſight then ic. They had an infinite number of ſuperſtitious among them, and had ſet vp idols and altars in innumerable places; ſo as Iſaiah had iuſt occaſion to reprove and preſſe this ſinne home vpon them.

But ic may be obiected, that the Altar of Ieruſalem was alſo erected by men; why ſhould they not reiect that, as well as the reſt, to come vnto God? I anſwere, that this Altar differed very much from other Altars: for albeic ic were compoſed of lime and ſtone, and decked with gold and ſiluer, and made with mens hands as others were; yet ought they not to reſpect either the matter or workmanſhip, but God himſelfe which was the author of ic, at whoſe commandement this Altar was ſet vp. And therefore the eſſentiall forme (as you would ſay) which ic had receiued by the word of God, muſt be conſidered: and none account to be made of the reſt, becauſe God himſelfe was the maſter builder of ic. As for other Altars, howſoever they ſomewhat reſembled that at Ieruſalem; yet were they deteſtable, becauſe they had receiued no authority from Gods word. And the like reckoning may we make of all the inuentions of mans braine; let them haue what goodly appearance ſoever of holineſſe you will: for God cannot allow any thing but that which is conſecrated by his word.

Verſ. 9. *In that day ſhall the Cities of their ſtrength be as the forſaking of*

boughes and branches, which they did forſake, becauſe of the children of Iſrael; and there ſhall be deſolation.

HE goes on ſtill with that which he began to ſpeake of touching the deſtruction of the inhabitants of the land. Now becauſe the Iſraelites thought themſelues ſafe in regard of their bulwarks and ſtrong Cities; he threatens that this ſhall ſtand them in no more ſtead, than if the enemies walked thorow deſert places. Whereas ſome thinke that *Chorath* and *Azubah* are the proper names of Cities, ic is farre fetched: I rather vnderſtand it that he ſpakes here of thornie or vntilled places: as if he ſhould ſay, Your defence of wals and ditches, ſhall ſerue you to no more purpoſe, then if you dwell among thornes and buſhes. I make no doubt but the particle *Alber*, ſtands here for a note of ſimilitude, and therefore I haue tranſlated ic, *As*: ſo that the Prophet ſhould ſay all with a breath (as ic were) that the people ſhall now be ſcattered by a fearefull flight, euen as God once draue out the Cananites before them. Thoſe which make this particle a relation, are conſtrained to ſupply ſomething, and to breake off the courſe of the ſpeech.

But the Prophet puts them in minde of an ancient example, to the end the Iſraelites might perceiue how vaine and deceiueable that defence is, which is oppoſed againſt the hand of God. It is a very grieuous reproch: for the Iſraelites conſidered not that God had giuen them this land to inherit, to the end they ſhould obey him: that he had therefore driuen the enemies out of ic, to put them in poſſeſſion: they had therefore made themſelues vnworthy of ſo great bountie by their owne vnthankfulneſſe. Being then deprived of ſuch a mercy, they iuſtly felt the difference betweene the preſent evils, and the former benefits which they once ioynoyed.

This text will be the eaſier to vnderſtand out of *Mofes*, whom the Prophets often follow: for in the promiſes, he ſaith thus in expreſſe termes; One of you ſhall chaſe a thouſand: and contrariwiſe in the threatenings; A thouſand of you ſhall be chaſed by one: *Leu. 26. 8. Deut. 32. 30. Iohs. 13. 10.* Euen as he had then ſo aſtoniſhed the Cananites, that they fled by and by before the Iſraelites: ſo alſo did hee puniſh the vnthankfulneſſe of the people, by leauiug them without power to reſiſt. Thus the Lord manifeſted his power two waies: firſt, in driuing out the Cananites: ſecondly, in taking vengeance vpon his people. The Prophet then in calling this ancient benefit to mind, doth therewithall vpbraid this vnthankfull and forgetfull people with their diſloyaltie, that ſo they might acknowledge their chaſtiſement to be iuſtly inflicted vpon them: as alſo that ic was from Gods own hand that they were thus afflicted by their enemies, to whom in times paſt themſelues were a terrour and aſtoniſhment.

Verſ. 10. *Becauſe thou haſt for-*
gotten

obicct.

Anſ.

God can allow of ſo- thing, but that which he hath conſecrated by his word.

gotten the God of thy saluation, and hast not remembered the God of thy strength: therefore shalt thou set pleasant plants, and shalt graffe strange vine branches.

HE shewes the cause why God handled the ten Tribes so severely, lest they should complaine that they suffered wrongfully, or were hardly dealt with. To be short, his meaning is to say, that all these afflictions are come vpon them, because they have wickedly contemned God. For their vnthankfulness was too too vile, and altogether vnexcusable; that hauing receiued so many benefits, they hold now prostitute their hopes, by relying vpon the helpe of idols and profane nations: as if they had neuer tasted the bountie of God in any thing. Indeede none of the vnbeleeuers being called to iudgement, shall be able to excuse themselves for not offering wrong to God in running after creatures. But the case was far otherwise with the Israelites, to whom God had manifested himselfe in such wise, that they ought to haue rested in his fauour alone, and to haue reiected all the corruptions that reigned in the world. lustly then are they condemned of ingratitude, in that they buried the matter of true confidence in forgetfulness. And to speake the truth, after God hath once caused vs to taste the sweetnesse of his fatherly goodnesse, if it take deepe roote in our hearts indeed, in cannot possibly come to passe, that we should finally let our hearts vpon the inordinate loue of creatures. Whence it followes, that those are very ingratfull, which trot hither and thither, not contenting themselves with God alone. for by this means they set nought by his inestimable bounty. Therefore it is that the Prophet expressly calles him *the God of saluation, and the rocke of strength*. The word *Tsur* signifies both the one and the other: for it was a most prodigious thing not to hold themselves faithfull vnto God, who had so oftentimes deliuered them, and that as it were by an outstretched arme.

Whereas hee addes, *And hast not remembered*: it serues for amplification; because hee closely taxeth them of wicked forgetfulness, in not considering how many fauours God had shewed them before. *Thou shalt plant*. Now followes the punishment; lest they should imagine this their vnthankfulness should scape scot-free; to wit, because they had forsaken the fountaine of all good things. For albeit they should take care how to liue, yet should they be consumed by penurie and famine: because the enemy shall spoile and waste whatsoever they haue gotten by their industrie. This place is taken out of *Moses*: for this curse among others is there pronounced. Deut. 28. 30. 39. Whence we may see, that the Prophets borrowed many things out of *Moses*, and are the true expositours of the Law; as I haue often shewed. He speaks of *pleasant vines*, and of *branches brought from strange*, because the greatnes of the losse should augment their sorrow.

Verf. 11. *In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning shalt thou make thy seede to flourish: but the harvest shall be gone in the day of possession, and there shall bee desperate sorrow.*

THOU shalt make to grow.] He signifies a continuall husbandry employed about planting and sowing. Yet may we vnderstand it of the successe that comes of it: as if a vine newly planted, should immediately bring forth wine. This agrees with that which is presently added; where the *morning* is taken for the day: and thus it seemes he should speake of a sudden ripening; vnlesse any had rather refer it to diligence, because they were busie at worke by breake of day. There is some ambiguity in the words: for some turne it, The branch shall be gone in the day of affliction. But seeing the word *Chalah*, signifies Heritage, it should signifie properly (as I thinke) in this place, a gathering together: neither doe I see how the word Branch should agree. I confesse indeede that when they speake of vines, the word *Harvest* is vsed; but abusiuely. It might also be translated, Collecting; yet would I not obstinately stand to contend about these two words, because the sense will alwaies be one; provided that the foresaid word be taken for the gathering of fruits. Thus then the text will runne well; Although thou ceasest not from labour, holding thy selfe hard at it from morning to night: yet shalt thou gaine nothing by it, because the fruit shall wither of it selfe, by the shaking of the bowes; or, thy vines shall be spoiled.

Thus then by the figure Synecdoche, vnder the verbe To plant, hee comprehends a daily labour which husbandmen and vine-dressers take in the fields and vineyards. Such a labour must needs bee very irksome, and proceeds from the very curse of God. For if he that is destitute of possessions, be oftentimes banished out of his Country, hee will not be so much grieued as hee that inioyeth fruitfull lands, especially if he haue bestowed any long time in husbanding of them: the Lord then meant to execute his vengeance vpon the Israelites, because they had abused the abundance of the land, and let loose the raines vnto all excess. The like punishment is also threatend generally to all the wicked; to wit, that they shall rise early, and labour extreme'y; because it shall be without any fruit: whereas on the contrarie, those which rest vpon the Lord, are well assured to reape the certaine fruit of their labours, because the blessing of God accompanieth the worke of their hands. Reade Psalme 127. 2. and 128. 2.

Verf. 12. *As the multitude of many people, they shall make a sound like the noise of the sea: for the noise of the people*

*Or, rocke.

*The sunne.

The punish-
ment.

The Pro-
phets are
the true ex-
positours of
the Law.

ple ſhall make a ſound like the noiſe of mightie Waters.

Others expound *Ab, Woe*, as if it were a curſe: ſometimes it is uſed as a word of calling, as we haue ſeene heretofore. But as I thinke, it ſhould rather ſignifie Alas in this place: for he mournes for the calamitie which he foreſaw would befall Iſrael: be it that he doth it of a brotherlike affection, or that he thereby would pierce the deeper into the hearts of this ſenſeleſſe and blockiſh people. No queſtion but the Prophets feared the vengeance of God whereof they were the Heraulds, more then any other: and howſoeuer they ſharplie threatned the people as in regard of the perſon they ſuſtained, yet did they neuer ſo caſt off the affection of loue, but they alwayes had compaſſion of thoſe that ſhould periſh. Notwithſtanding the conſideration of the covenant which God had contracted with the ſeed of *Abraham*, was the cauſe of this: and we ſee that this affection was in *S. Paul*, who deſires to be accuſed for his brethren the Iewes, *Rom. 9. 3.* When *Iſaiah* then ſets the matter thus before his eyes, it could not be but that he was touched with extreme griefe. Now in that he ſets this deſtruction before the view of the Iſraelites as if he himſelfe beheld it, it is to confirme his threatening, as wee haue ſhewed elſewhere. The word *multitude* is ſet downe, becauſe the armie was gathered of many and diuers nations, whereof the Monarchy of the Aſſyrians was compoſed. By the ſimilitudes which he addeth afterwards, his meaning is only to amplifie his ſpeech: for he compares the enemies to a *Sea* or deluge which drownes the whole countrie.

Verſ. 13. The people ſhall make a ſound like the noiſe of many Waters: but God ſhall rebuke them, and they ſhall flee ſurre off, and ſhall be chaſed as the chaffe of the mountaines before the Wind, and as a rolling thing before the Whirlwinde.

Although he ſeemes to continue on the threatening which he began before, yet doth he now begin to comfort the faithfull, by repeating again the very ſame words with the former: as if he ſhould ſay, It muſt needs be that thoſe who haue forgotten God ſhould be chaſtiſed, and as good as ouerwhelmed for their wicked reuolt: but the Lord according to his wonted goodnes will repreſſe the ouermuch crueltie of the enemies; for hauing once ſerued himſelfe of their rough dealing, he will finde a meanes well enough to beate them backe and chaſe them away. See heere a ſingular conſolation, by which he meant to put the faithfull which remained in good hope. Now he ſpeakes not of the Iewes onlie, as the moſt haue imagined, for hitherto he hath directed his ſpeech vnto the ten Tribes: amongſt whom no doubt there were ſome that truly feared God; who had been left in a deſperate caſe if they had had no promiſe whercon to reſt.

By theſe ſimilitudes he deſcribes horrible ſtoormes & tempeſts: for when the holy Ghoſt would comfort the faithfull, he ſets theſe things before them which are wont moſt of all to terrifie and caſt downe their ſpirits: to the end we might learne that it is eaſie for the Lord to ſhal all the violence of tempeſts, be they neuer ſo furious. And looke how he hath the ſea, the winds, and tempeſts at his command, ſo eaſie can he curb the rage and violence of their enemies. Therefore he by and by after compares the Aſſyrians to *ſtraw*, or ſtubble: for howſoeuer their furie was terrible to the Iſraelites, yet the Prophet ſhewes notwithstanding that they are no more in Gods account then *ſtraws* or ruſhes: becauſe without any paines whatſoeuer he will ſcatter all their preparations. They were not then to iudge of their forces and power according to ſenſe. As oft therefore as wee ſee that the wicked haue gotten the bridle in their necks to runne vpon vs for our deſtruction, let vs arme our ſelues (as much as is poſſible) with this meditation: True it is that we ſee no matter of hope left, but God ſeeth a meanes readie to bring all powers that are raiſed vp againſt vs to nought. The word *Gaius*, ſignifieth a round thing which the wind driues eaſilie away.

A meditation of great vſe.

Verſ. 14. And loe, in the evening there is trouble: but afore the morning it is gone. This is the portion of them that ſpoile vs, and the lot of them that rob vs.

The ſenſe is this, looke how a tempeſt raiſed vp in the evening appears not in the morning if it be by and by appeaſed: ſo alſo ſhall it come to paſſe that immediatlie after the enemies ſhall be driuen away, you ſhall ſuddenlie eſpie (beyond all hope) a ſweer and quiet calme. The Prophet meant to ſet downe two things: firſt, that the rage of the enemies ſhall ſuddenlie fall vpon them: ſecondly, that the ſpoile which they ſhall make ſhall not laſt very long. For as the Aſſyrians roſe ſuddenlie againſt the Iſraelites, ſo alſo they were ſoone brought to nought. All the faithfull ought to gather great conſolation from this place as oft as they ſee things troubled and conſiſed, and fearefull changes to approach: for is all this ought elſe then a tempeſt which the Lord will eaſilie ſtill? Tyrants come vpon vs as waues and billowes, but the Lord will quicklie diſperſe their rage: let vs therefore patientlie wait for his help. For albeit he now and then ſuffers vs to be toſſed to and fro, yet will the Lord in the end bring vs to the hauen, and that euen thorow the miſt of all ſtoormes.

A Conſolation.

Now if the Prophet thus comforted a ſmall handfull of the remnant, we need not doubt but this promiſe alſo belongs vnto vs. For we in deed are but an handfull, and the poore Church is ſhut vp within very narrow boundes. But if we conſider the eſtate of his kingdome of Iſrael, how ſmall a number of Gods ſeruant was to be found there? Alas there was none almoſt that durſt open his mouth, ſo

much was religion and godlinesse hated of all sorts. Although then that the Lord destroys the multitude of the wicked, yet will hee alwaies leaue some planke for his Church to saue her selfe from shipwracke, and to bring the small remnant of the poore faithfull, who are tossed with others as in the same ship, to a safe haven.

[*This is the portion.*] He speaks of the faithfull which were hid in the kingdom of Israel, and ioynes them to the body of the Church, although the members were scattered here and there; as it often comes to passe to the children of God. And here we may be-

hold the end of the wicked, which haue persecuted vs. For howfoeuer we be exposed to their rage and furie, although they spoile, rob, and tread vs vnder foote, offering vs all the outrages in y^e world; yet shall they be but like vnto *waves*, which disperse themselves by their owne violence, and so vanish suddenly away. We ought to wait till the like befallles all such tyrants at this day, who miserably vex and afflict the Church, and handle the children of God vnkindly. Let this consolation then bee ingrauen in the table of our hearts, being fully assured that the like iudgment will ouertake them.

The end of persecuters.

THE XVIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Oh the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the riser of Ethiopia.*



Cannot affirme of what people *Isaiah* speaks; although it be apparent enough that it was some country bordering vpon Ethiopia. Some refer it to the whole land of Egypt; but without

any good probability, seeing he makes a particular treatise thereof in the Chapter following: and therefore wee must vnderstand this as spoken to a people separate from the Egyptians. Many suppose that it should be the Troglodites; which yet seemes not very likely, because they had no familiaritie with other nations: for their speech (as the Cosmographers testifie), was rather a whistling or hissing, then any distinct sound of words. But as touching these here mentioned, it is plaine that they had both society and league with other nations. Yet is it vncertaine whether they conspired against the Iewes or no, or whether they ioyned with the Egyptians to make war vpon the Assyrians. If they were the open aduersaries of the Iewes, then *Isaiah* denounceth their punishment. But contrariwise, if they did feede the Iewes with deceitfull promises, he shewes that they were to expect no succour from them; because they did nothing but entertaine time with their frivolous messages. How euer it be, we may gather by that which he speaks of the nations neere adioyning, which he will name in this Chapter, in what place this people was seated; to wit, very neere vnto Egypt and Ethiopia. Vnlesse any had rather assume, that it is meant of part of the sea coast of Ethiopia, because it will appeare by the 37. Chapter of this booke, that the Assyrians had warre with the King of Ethiopia. Now when it is said, that this land makes a *shadow with wings*, it appears that the sea was nigh vnto it; so as it became rich in regard of much navigation. For small and poore regions cannot frequent nor occupie in strange Countries. His

Chap. 37. 9.

meaning is then, that this people vsed to traffique much by sea.

Verf. 2. *Sending Ambassadors by the sea, euen in vessels of reedes vpon the waters, saying; Goe yee swift messengers, to a nation that is scattered abroad and spoiled, to a terrible people from their beginning euen hitherto; a nation by little and little, euen trodden vnder foot*, whose land the floods haue spoiled.*

*Or, russet. On euery side.

This is properly to bee referred to the state of those times. It seemes that this people had solicited the Egyptians, or Syrians, to vex the Iewes: or else that the Assyrians vsed them to molest the Country of Iudea; or, that they were companions of the Egyptians, ioyning hand in hand to beate backe the Assyrians, lest they should wax too strong and mightie. We can affirme nothing but by way of coniecture, because all histories are silent in this behalfe. Seeing then that we want witnesses in this case, we must vse probable coniectures. It is very likely that these iournies were not taken in hand to goe to some place neere vnto them, but farre off. Whereas hee calles them ships of *russet*, wee are not to thinke it strange; because it appears by ancient histories, that the Egyptians commonly vsed such vessels by sea, in regard that Nilus is so steepe and dangerous to those that saile in it in some places, by reason of the height from whence the waters doe violently fall; (which they call *Catadupes*) that it is impossible to bring ships of wood that way, without breaking & renting them vpon the rocks. And therefore they are constrained to vse little pliable vessels. And lest the water should enter in and drown them, the histories say, that these ships were lined with pitch in the insides of them.

[*Goe yee swift postes.*] This place is obscure; yet will I follow that interpretation which I take to be most probable. The Prophet shewes the end of his propheticke; that is to say, why he foretold the destruction of this people; to wit, (if we take them for the sworne enemies

of

of the Iewes) to bring ſome conſolation to the faithfull, which were miſerable ſcattered and diſperſed, that by receiving this good tidings, they might reioyce and giue thanks vnto God. But if any had rather ſay that the Iewes were drawne by this nation to an vnlawfull league, then this exhortation is by way of deriding them, ſo as he rebukes the folly of the elect people, who forſooke God to depend vpon vaine and friuolous ſuccors. For whereas ſome attribute theſe words vnto God, as if he ſhould command theſe nations inhabiting neere the ſea to haſten to the deſtruction of the Iewes: I ſee not how it ſhould agree to the ſenſe of the text. Neither is there any more appearance in that which others thinke, to wit, that by the words following the Prophet ſets forth the deſtruction of this obſcure and vnknowne people, becauſe that by the *ſpoiled people* hee meanes the Iewes, which ſhould be vexed and ſcattered after a ſtrange maner, ſo as no part amongst them whatſoeuer ſhould remaine ſafe.

He calles them a *terrible nation*, becauſe they ſhould be an aſtoniſhment to all thoſe that ſhould behold them, being diſfigured with ſuch horrible calamities. For I cannot approve of their iudgement who expound this of ſignes and wonders which the Lord ſhewed amongst the Iewes to make them feared of all: he hath regard rather to that place of *Mofes* where it is ſaid, The Lord ſhall make thee an aſtoniſhment and a wonder, Deut. 28. 28. 37: alſo, the nodding of the head, and a prouerb and deriſion is vsed in other places, Iere. 18. 16. & 19. 8. & 25. 18. He ſignifies a people then whoſe ſight ſhall be ſo *fearfull*, that they ſhall be an aſtoniſhment vnto all: and we know that as this was foretold, ſo alſo did it come to paſſe to the Iewes.

When it is ſaid on *every ſide*, it is as much as if one ſhould draw lines, and that they ſhould be ſowell knit together, as there ſhould no place be left emptic betwene them: or as if an husbandman made ſuch furrowes in his field, that he leaues not one clout of earth vturued vp, or broken. Thus was this people *beaten downe* and broken.

By the *floods*, he meanes a great armie of enemies, to wit, of the Aſſyrians. Now he alludes to that which he ſaid before in the 8. Chapter, verſ. 6. to wit, that the people being diſcontented with their little river *Shilo*, deſired rather *roaring and violent waters*. After then that they had called the forth for their ſuccor, they were ouerwhelmed by them as with a *deluge*. So that the cauſe of all this ill ſucceſſe was for that they contented not themſelues with Gods promiſes, but fought out ſtrange helps. If now then this commandement giuen to the *ſwift poſts* be taken as fro the perſon of God; thence we gather that he doth not alwaies aſſiſt his elect at the firſt brunt, but withholds his help till things be growne to a deſperate eſtate. For he ſends not a ioyfull and happie meſſage to thoſe that were in ſafetie, or to thoſe that were onlie lightlie touched with the rod, but to a *nation ſpoyled and ſwollen vnder foote*: yet in that he commands them to *haſten*, his meaning is,

that the iudgement ſhall be ſudden and vnllooked for; ſo as light ſhall ſhine out of darknes (as it were) euen in a moment.

Verſ. 3. *All ye the inhabitants of the world and dwellers in the earth ſhall ſee When he ſeteth vp a ſigne in the mountaines, and When he bloweth the trumpet, ye ſhall heare.*

HE ſhewes that this worke of God ſhall be ſo excellent, that the Iewes ſhall not onlie perceiue it, but all the *inhabitants of the world* alſo. Theſe words which are put in the future tence, are by ſome tranſlated in the Imperatiue, according to the ſcripture phraſe: but it agrees beſt to take it in the time to come. As if he ſhould ſay, euen the people farre off ſhall be witneſſes of this calamitie: becauſe all ſhall behold the ſtandard, and ſhall heare *trumpets* ſounding thorowout the world. And hence it ſhall appeare, that this warre was not raiſed vp by men; but that God himſelfe will ſhew that he is the only author of it, and that by excellent witneſſes. When warres are made euery man diſcernes what is done openlie: but the greater part of men attribute both the beginnings and iſſues thereof vnto fortune. *Iſaiah* contrariwiſe ſhewes, that all theſe things ought to be attributed vnto God, becauſe he will plainly manifeſt his power by a new and extraordinary meanes: for he works ſo ſometime, that his hand is hidden, and his worke vnknowne vnto men. And ſometimes againe he ſhewes his power in ſuch wiſe that euery one is conſtrained to acknowledge it, and that is it which the Prophet meant to ſay in this place.

Verſ. 4. *For ſo the Lord ſaid vnto me, I will reſt and behold in my tabernacle as the beate drying vp the raine, and as a cloud of dew in the beate of harneſt.*

AFTER he hath threatened the deſtruction of the Ethiopians or of their neighbours; and hauing therewithall ſhewed that great conſolation ſhould thereby redound to the Iewes; or elſe by way of a ſhout hauing derided the fooliſh confidence which deceiued them: now he addes that God will ſo moderate theſe conſuſions, that he will in the end gather his choſen people vnto himſelfe. The particle *Et*, which I haue tranſlated Furthermore, is ſometime put for ſhewing the cauſe; ſometimes aduerſatiuelie. But the latter ſenſe in this place ſeemes to agree beſt: the reaſon is, becauſe the Prophet prevents a doubt which might otherwiſe haue greatly troubled the conſciences of the weak. For when wee ſee things in an vproate, there is a vaile forthwith ſpread as it were ouer our eyes, which takes away from vs the ſight of Gods prouidence: for the eſtate of this people whoſe deſtruction he threatens was ſuch, that this propheſie might ſeeme a fable or matter of ſcorne: for (as we may collect) there was no danger nor change to be expected.

Some referre this to the person of *Isaiah*, as if he satisfied himselfe, by depending vpon that which God had revealed vnto him: that is to say, as if hee had now quieted and settled his minde; which indeed wee ought to doe after we haue heard the voyce of God, waiting assuredly for the accomplishment of that which is foretold vs. As *Abacuc*; faith; I will stand in my watch-tower: *Abac.* 2. 1. But I rather think, that the Prophet recites that which the Lord had revealed vnto him, and that the Lord himselfe pronounceth this sentençe with his own mouth: as if he should say, *I will rest*; that is, I will hold me still and do nothing: for the word also signifies to See. Now hee which lookes earnestly, sees nothing; but onely content himselfe with beholding that hee sees with pleasure and delight.

Hereunto serues also the word *Tabernacle*, as if the Lord should rest himselfe on the roofoe of an house: as on the contrary, hee is said to ascend into his iudgement seate, when he auentureth himselfe vpon the wicked behauiours of the vnbeleuers: for these phrases of speech are fitted to our capacitie. Vnlesse any had rather affirme, that the Prophet alludes to the *Sanctuarie*: so as howsoeuer the maiestie of the Lord may seeme to be hidden for a time from this afflicted people, yet should not his rest be vnterly without fruit. The summe of all is this; that howsoeuer all things should be cōfounded, so as one might imagine that God would meddle no more with the gouernement of the world; yet doth he take his ease on this wise, as you would say of set purpose, euen as if hee were thus vp, and fallen asleepe in a chamber, minding to manifest the fruite of this his rest in due season.

As the heate drying vp.] *Isaiah* doth yet better expresse that which hee hath said before, by this similitude. Wee may apply it to the Prophets meaning two waies. First, as if God being awaked out of his sleepe, would shew such a gracious countenance as should reioyce the hearts of the faithfull, or, as if he would reuiue and quicken them by watering them with sweet showers: and thus the Prophet should shew a diuers successe. There may be also a close opposition, whereby he admonisheth, that when God shall be thought to take his ease, and behold things heere below as it were carelesly; that euen then hee may as it were sport himselfe in executing his iudgements. Truly because the two verses following are ioynced with this, it seemes that *Isaiah* would say; Howsoeuer God shewes not himselfe carefull after the maner of men, neither runnes with violent heat to take vengeance; yet hath he secret meanes in his hands to execute his iudgements, and yet in the meane while neuer stir his least finger. It may be also, that hee meant to shew that God would vse an extraordinary meane in rooting out this people. But that which I touched erewhile may suffice; to wit, that whilest men are besotted with prosperitie, and drunken in their delights, thinking that God hath no more to doe with them; euen then their destruction is at hand. The reason is, because

God is able with his onely looke to cast downe all the forces and preparations of the whole world. And therefore he faith, he will be like to a faire bright day, and to the heate, drying vp the raine: secondly, to a warriish cloud, in the hottest day of summer. Now wee know that such a raine is very fit to ripen fruits; and that the heate coming after the raine, brings them forward and makes them swell; because it disperseth all the moisture that is in them, by the force of his heate.

This it is then which the Prophet meant to say, that howsoeuer many miseries and calamities be prepared for the reprobates, yet all things notwithstanding fallles out for a while as they would wish; so as they seeme the onely happy men in the world; no otherwise then if God meant to satisfie them to the full with the best of his benefits. But in conclusion, they shall finde that they were onely fatted vp, as Oxen for the slaughter: for they shall perish in an instant, and that euen then, when they seemed to bee come to the very top of their happinesse. Whence wee may learn, that we are not to iudge of Gods iudgements according to outward appearance: for when the wicked thinke themselues most secure, then their ruine & ouerthrow is at the doores. Thus doth he comfort the faithfull in very fit season, lest they should thinke the vnbeleuers more happy then themselues, because God winked at their faults: for albeit hee seemes to cocker them whom hee so forbears, yet will he quickly bring them to destruction.

Now we are to apply these things to these miserable and troublesome times wherein the persecuting tyrants of the Church haue their full swinge, abounding in all wealth; bringing their enterprises to passe no lesse then if all things were in their owne power: why so? because they surpasse all others in strength, counsell, and policie. But let vs know for certaine, that all these things are brought to passe by the determinate counsell of God, who is contented to let them go on forward with their deliberations, and lets them prosper: that so he may at the last destroy and vnterly cut them off. I am not ignorant that some others draw the words of the Prophet to another sense: but I hope, that whosoever shall wisely consider the whole context, will easily subscribe to mine exposition.

Verf. 5. For afore the harvest, when the flower is finished, and the fruit is ripening in the flower, then hee shall cut downe the branches with hookes; and shall take away, and cut off the boughes.

Word for word it is, For the presence of the harvest: but we must a little mitigate the sharpnesse of the words. The Prophets meaning is not obscure: for when harvest drawes neere, and that grapes be ripe, the wicked shall finde themselues disappointed, and that suddenly of their whole revenue; in hope wherof they meant to glad themselues. Thus hee goes on still with the same

The wicked are neere to their ruine then, when they thinke themselues most secure.

A consolation for the Church.

ſame matter, and confirms that which hee ſpake before by the former ſimilitudes; to wit, that the wicked are not ouerthrowne at the firſt, but ſloriſh for a time, and the Lord ſeemes to ſpare them: but when the *harveſt is come*, and that the vines haue once budded and bloſſomed ſo as the iuice begins to vter it ſelfe, then are the very *branches* cut vp by the rootes. So, when the wicked are neere vnto their ripenes, they ſhall not only be deprived of the fruit they expected, but ſhall be cut vp roote and rinde.

The Lord will giue this iſſue to wicked men, after he hath ſuffered them to inioy their delites for a time: for they ſhall be ſo rooted vp, that they ſhall neuer be able to reuiue, nor yet to be plaited in any fort. From hence then wee gather a ſingular conſolation, to wit, that when the Lord ſeemes to winke at the practiſes of the aduerſaries, he thereby tries our faith, but yet ſuffers not things to be guided by the vnbridled hand of blind fortune, as prophane men thinke. For he is in heauen as in his Tabernacle, and is reſident in his Church as in a poore tent or cotrage, yet ſo, as he will come forth when it ſhall be fit and conuenient time. Let vs thus enter into our conſciences, and lay all theſe things to our heart in priuie, that by this meanes wee may fortiſie our ſelues with ſo excellent a promiſe, by which only we may be enabled to overcome and ſurmount all temptations.

Let vs alſo thinke with our ſelues how the Lord ſhewes vs that he ſets forward and liſts vp the felicitie of the wicked, to the end his mercie toward his Church may be ſo much the more admired. For if he ſhould cut them off as corne before it be ripe, we ſhould neither ſo certainly nor clearly know his power nor his goodnes, as when he ſuffers them to grow vp to their full height, ſuffering them to be full eared and to ſloriſh, to the end that their owne weight may the ſooner overthrow them, or that he himſelfe may cut them vp with his ſickle as fat and full eares.

Verſ. 6. They ſhall be left together vnto the fowles of the mountaines, and to the beaſts of the earth: for the fowle ſhall ſommer vpon it, and every beaſt ſhall winter vpon it.

HE ſhewes that the wicked ſhal be reiected as a thing of nought: *Iohn Baптиſt* in like maner compares them to chaffe which is caſt out vpon the dunghill. And *Iſaiah* ſhewes, that they ſhall be left to the *beaſts* and *birds*, ſo as the birds ſhall make their neſts in the mids of them in *ſommer*, and the beaſts ſhall make their lodgings in them in the *winter*: as if he ſhould ſay, they ſhall not only be a reproch vnto men, but euen to *beaſts* alſo. Such then is the condition of the wicked, who thinke themſelues cockſure euen then when they liſt vp themſelues moſt againſt the poore Church. But the *birds* ſhall make their neſts vpon them on the one ſide, and they ſhall ſerue for houſes and food for the *wilde beaſts* on the other ſide: ſo as they ſhall not

only be in worſe caſe then the meaneſt man in the world, but their condition ſhall be far inferior to that of the brute beaſts: for being expoſed to all ſhame and contempt, they ſhall manifeſt to the whole world that Gods prouidence is wonderfull.

Verſ. 7. At that time ſhall a preſent be brought vnto the Lord of hoſtes (a people that is ſcattered abroad, and ſpoiled, and of a terrible people from their beginning hither vnto, a nation by little and little euen trodden vnder foote, whoſe land the riuers haue ſpoiled to the place of the name of the Lord of hoſtes, euen the mount Zion.

^a Or, ten, or torne.

THE Prophet ſhewes againe wherefore he threatened the ruine of this prophane people. For in as much as all nations in a maner had conſpired the deſtruction of the Church, it ſhould ſeeme that her vter ſubuerſion was now come. The Lord ſhewes then that he will aſſiſt her in due ſeaſon; for had he not reſiſted ſuch enterpriſes, and reſpreſſed the plots of the enemies betimes, the Iewes might haue deſpaired: therefore hee lets it be knowe that he hath a care of his Church, ſo as howſoeuer it pleaſeth him to chaſtiſe her, yet ſhall the feeble his help in time conuenient. Yea, hee will oppoſe his ſtrength againſt the power of tyrants and of her enemies, leſt they ſhould overthrow her, and ſo attaine their long expected hopes. That the Iewes then might be emboldned to wait with patience, he not only ſeparates them from the Ethiopians, but aduertſeth them in like maner that God will moderate his iudgements for their ſaluation.

Now he alludes to the ſecond verſe of this Chapter, where wee ſaw the people of the Iewes termed by theſe names and titles. He vſeth the verb *To bring*, becauſe before this they ſhould be led away as captiues, ſo as it ſhould be no more lawfull for them to goe vp to the Temple, then for forcene nations. We muſt alſo note this word *Rem*: for his meaning is that the people ſhall be ſcattered, as if hee ſhould ſay, Howſoeuer you muſt bee brought to a ſmall number, and ſhall be but a poore remnant, yet ſhall this little portion that remains be offered vnto God for a ſacrifice.

From hence we are to gather a moſt fruitful doctrine, and exceeding fit for our time. We ſee the Church at this day to be almoſt paſt recouerie; for ſhe is ſcattered, oppreſſed, ouerwhelmed, and trodden downe on eue-ry ſide. What ought we to do in the mids of ſo great diſtreſſes? We muſt lay faſt hold vpon theſe and the like promiſes; and aſſure our ſelues that howſoeuer the world goe, yet God will defend and maintaine his Church. And albeit the be as a bodie torne in pieces, and ſcattered here and there, yet will he eaſily gather her ſcattered members together againe, by the worke of his ſpirit: for he will neuer ſuffer the remembrance of his name,

A doctrine of ſingular vſe.

A ſingular conſolation.

The reaſon why God ſuffereth the wicked to ſloriſh for a while.

Mat. 3. 12.
Luk. 3. 17.

nor the inuocation thereof to perish. The Lord will so worke, that of these peeces which lie now scattered here and there, there shall be a people made and gathered together. For it is easie with him to gather into one, those whom he knits together by the vniue of his Spirit, although they be diuided farre asunder one from another. Although then that we see the Church diminished, and some of her members cut off; yet shall some gift be referred out of her, to be presented and offered vnto the Lord.

To the place of the name] The Prophets are accustomed to vse this manner of speech often. For when they mention the seruite of God, they set it forth by externall exercises: as by altars, sacrifices, washings, and such like. Now the very truth is, that in regard the seruite of God is internall, it cannot be represented but by outward signes; whereby men refuse that they serue and worshippe God. Now he names the *mount of Zion* here chiefly, because this place was consecrated vnto God, as the place wherein he would haue sacrifices offered vnto him. For the Lord honoured this place aboue all others, in causing the doctrine of his word to come out thence, as we haue seene Chap. 2. 3. so that vnder this name we may rightly vnderstand the pure and sincere worship of God. To conclude, the Prophets describe not this seruite in such wise as it should be after Christ his coming; but such as it was in their own times: the reason is: because it was needfull for them to apply themselves to the capacite of the people whom they taught. Hence we may gather, that we appertaine not vnto the Church, vn-

lesse we be offered vnto God in sacrifice: Rom. 12. 1. & 15. 6. 2. Cor. 5. 15. Whosoeuer hee be the that challengeth any interest in God, let him offer himselfe vp such a sacrifice vnto him, and let him no longer liue vnto himselfe, but giue and consecrate himselfe vnto God. The meanes where by this is done, is by the sword of Gods word, (to wit, the Gospell) whereby *Paul* glorifieth that he sacrificed and offered vp men vnto God: as Rom. 15. 6. before alleaged.

By the place of the name of the Lord, he means not that the essence of God (of which we must not thinke in any wise as of a carnall or earthly substance) should be inclosed therein, as if he were tied to any one place: but because it was the place wherein the Lord was pleased to manifest testimonies of his power, and to be honoured and called vpon: where he also shewed his presence by his goodnesse and power; especially in regard of the weaknesse of the people, who otherwise could not comprehend his maiestie. And yet we are to note, that wee cannot be acceptable vnto God, vnlesse we be vnited vnto him in the same faith: that is to say, vnlesse we be knit together as the members of his Church. It is not needfull indeed that we should runne to Ierusalem or to mount Zion: for Zion is now spread ouer all the world, and is consecrated vnto God in generall. It remains then that we haue the same faith amongst vs, and that wee be ioyned and linked together by the band of loue. For if these be wanting in vs, then is there nothing in the midst of vs but pollution; neither haue we any thing that is holy and consecrated vnto vs.

Where faith and loue is wanting, there all things are vndercane vnto vs.

THE XIX. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. The burden of Egypt. Behold the Lord rideth vpon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt shall be moued at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of her.



THE burden of Egypt.] Heere the Prophet prophesieth against Egypt, because she was y^e refuge vnto which the Iewes fled as soon as they saw any danger neere. For hauing forsaken the Lord, in

whom they should haue reposed all their helpe, they looked for no succour at all, vnlesse they had it from the Egyptians. And therefore it behoued that this Nation also should be brought low: so as there should no riches nor strength remaine any longer in it to deceiue the Iewes withall: who (as long as Egypt flourished, because it was well peopled, and furnished with all prouisions)

contemned the Lord; or at the least made verie slight reckoning of his promises. There was a twofold euill then in this matter: first, that whereas they should haue rested vpon God onely, they were puffed vp with this vaine confidence in Egypt: secondly, in that the Lord no sooner visited them with his rods, but they by and by fortified themselves with the power of the Egyptians against the same: as if they had beene able to ouercome his iudgements, by setting the arme of flesh against them: whereas they ought rather to haue taken occasion by them, to haue turned wholly vnto God. But the Prophet wil handle this matter more largely hereafter in the 30. and 31. Chapters.

Behold the Lord rideth] This manner of speech is found in other places of the Scripture, as in the 104. Psalm, verse 3. but onely in generall. But *Isaiah* applies it heere vnto this prophetic; because the Egyptians thought themselves so well fenced on euery side, that God could no way finde a gap open to enter into their Country. Hee derideth this their foolish querweening then, and against that, sets the high and mighty power of God, who is borne or carried vpon a *swift cloud* by means whereof, he will easly enter in vpon them, neither

The reason why this burden is pronounced against Egypt.

neither ſhall any of their ſtrengths or bulwarks be able to keepe them out. Now becauſe the riches of Egypt had not onely bewitched the Iewes, but their falſe religion alſo, therefore the Prophet doth in like manner take their ſottiſhneſſe in this behalfe; becauſe God would make all their helpe which they looked for from idols, to vaniſh and come to nought alſo. I forbore to ſpend time in ſhewing the vanitie of their childiſh conceits, which ſome haue dreamed of touching the idols of Egypt; to wit, that Chriſt made them fall downe when he fled thither in his infancy: for it deſerues no reſutation at all. Yet haue they abuſed this place to proue this goodly fiction, as alſo many places more like vnto it, and yet the Prophet meant no ſuch matter. For hee ſpeakes of that diſcomſure which the Aſſyrians gaue the Egyptians; ſhewing how it ought to be attributed vnto God, and not vnto fortune; as profane men are wont to doe. Hee ſhewes then that this is a iudgment of God: by whoſe hand all things that fall out in heauen and in earth, are guided and gouerned.

Now he telles them that *their idols ſhall fall*: that is to ſay, that they ſhall profit the Egyptians nothing at all, although they put their confidence in them, & thought to be in ſafetie vnder their protection. For it is not to be imagined how much this people was addicted vnto ſuperſtition; inſomuch as they worſhipped cats, oxen, crocodiles; yea onions and all kindes of plants. So as there was nothing to which they attributed not ſome diuinitie. His meaning is to ſay then, that the power of all theſe falſe gods which the Egyptians had taken for their patrons, ſhall fall to the ground. Hauing therefore ſhewed that the Egyptians doe reſt in vaine vpon their ſuperſtitious; hee therewithall alſo beates downe the proud imaginations which they had conceiued in regard of their earthly powers. By the word *heart*, he means the magnanimitie which ſhould quaile at the length, euen in the moſt valiant amongſt them: ſo as as they ſhould not dare to enterpriſe any thing, although they had all the furniture they could deſire. Thus he ſhewes that they ſhall make warre againſt God, who will ſo *weaken their hearts* ^{in them}, that they ſhall wax cowards, when the time comes that they muſt enter battel with ther enemies. Neither doth he ſay, that they ſhall be terrified onely; but he addes, that it ſhall be in the *middeſt* of all the Kingdome, where was the ſafeſt & quieteſt abiding; becauſe they were there far enough off from all aſſaults of the enemies. The faithfull had good occaſion to conſider well of this, when the Egyptians were at war: and wee alſo ought to behold the ſame in all mutations of Kingdomes, which proceeds from no other cauſe then the hand of God. If the hearts of thoſe, who are otherwiſe warlike perſons, and haue made great prooue of their valour, doe faile them, if their forces bee alſo feebled; all muſt be attributed to the iuſt vengeance of God.

The Egyptian
an groſſe
idolaters.

Verſ. 2. *And I will ſet the Egyptians againſt the Egyptians: ſo euery one ſhall fight againſt his brother, and euery one againſt his neighbour; Citie againſt Citie, and Kingdome againſt Kingdome.*

HE here deſcribes in a more ſpeciall manner, with what calamitie God was determined to ſmite the Egyptians. In ſaying, *that he will ſet the Egyptians together by the eares*; he means ſuch ciuill diſſenſions which cauſe thoſe to be rent in ſunder, which ought to defend one another: which is the moſt hurtfull miſchiefe that can befall any Citie or people. Now it was needfull the Iewes ſhould be perſwaded that God (in whoſe hands the hearts of all men are) could make the Egyptians to be inflamed with hatred one againſt another, by a ſecret inſtinct, whereby they might bee brought to deſtroy themſelues, although they were more mightie then their enemies abroad. Hence wee learne, that the people neuer fall to be mutinous, but the Lord ſets them on to fight and make warre one with another: as if a man ſhould gather a companie of Fencers together into the market place. For hee ſets them agog to fight, and driues them forward to hurt, yea euen to kill one another. So then euen as we are to attribute it vnto God, when there is friendſhip and loue among Citizens: ſo alſo ought we to attribute it to his vengeance, when one of them riſeth vp againſt another, killing and murdering one another.

Ciuil diſſenſions the worſt calamitie that can befall a Common-wealth.

Ciuill diſſenſions fall not onely by chance, but Gods prouidence.

Now by way of amplification he addes that which is yet more horrible and prodigious, to wit, that thoſe who are knit together by *parentage*, ſhall band themſelues to deſtroy each other. If men be worſe then beaſts whē (in forgetting they are created of one and the ſame nature) they fight together: how much more is it a thing abhorring to nature, that brethren or kinſfolks ſhould deuoure one another? By how much the more monſtrous this is, ſo much the more ought wee to acknowledge it to be God his reuenging hand, & his fearefull iudgement vpon them. It ſeemes then that *Iſaiah* proceeds by degrees: for firſt of all he mentioneth the *brother*, ſecondly the *neighbour*, thirdly the *Cities*, and in the fourth place the *Kingdomes*. By *Kingdomes*, hee means the Prouinces into which Egypt was diuided, which the Greekes call *Lordſhips*, which word alſo they haue vſed in this place.

1
2
3
4

Verſ. 3. *And the ſpirit of Egypt ſhall ſale in the middeſt of her, and will deſtroy their counſell,* and they ſhall ſeeke at the Idoles, and at the ſorcerers, and at them that haue ſpirits of diuination, and at the ſoothſayers.*

*Or, yea, though they ſhould.

EVEN as the Prophet in the former verſes tooke *heart* and courage for the Egyptian;

ans, so takes he from them now minds and *spirits*. These two things are exceeding necessarie for the defence of kingdomes; because whensoever they be taken away, there is no meanes left for vpholding of a State. Now the Egyptians thought themselves farre before all other nations, as touching the conceit they had of their owne wisdom: and proudly disdaind them as barbarians; thinking themselves to be the only learned, industrious, ciuill, courteous, and honest men of the world. For they bragged that they were the inuenters of learning, that Philosophie and Aitologie came from them; in a word, that Egypt was as it were the shop of all the liberali sciences. Therefore they could not imagin that *wisdom* and *counsell* should thus faile from amongst them; and doubtlesse if this prophesie had come to their view they would haue scorned it, thinking that the Sea should sooner lack water, and that the whole order of nature should be ouerturned, then that they which thought themselves so naturallie wise, should become fooles. Yet doth *Isaiah* boldly affirme it: for indeede, he spake not of his owne head, but hauing foretold that they should be stripped of their pride and arrogancie; the context requires that we vnderstand now that they should be smitten with amazednes, seeing both these faculties of the soule depended vpon the free gift of God.

The word *Ruach* in this place is taken for vnderstanding, or sharpnes of wit: which we ought diligently to note, because many deceiue themselves touching this word. The former sentence is yet better expressed by the word *counsell*: for thereby he shews whēce this abasement should proceed; truly from this, God would deprime them of *counsell*.

Yea though they should seeke.] This is an anticipation or cutting them off: for he preuents the objections which the Egyptians might make. Haue not wee gods to goe and aske counsell at? Are there not wise men, diuiners, and enchanters amongst vs? and makest thou so slight account of these? He affirms that none of these shall doe them any good, though they trust neuer so confidentlie in them, being puffed vp also with a vaine persuasion of their wisdom. I will not bestow much time about these names, wherein notwithstanding it seemes *Isaiah* proceeds on by degrees. For he names the *gods*, then the *magicians*, and next the *diuiners* and soothsayers.

Now they had their oracles, wherein they chieflie trusted: the magicians were inferior to them, albeit they had great authoritie amongst them. In the third place, when there was any question of things of small importance, then they asked counsell of the diuiners and soothsayers. And thus you see that the superstitious are so tossed vp and downe with vnquietnes, that nothing can content them. For as they are inconstant and variable vpon all occasions, so run they first to one shelter, and then to another; and in the meane while Satan by that meanes doth so cōfosen them, that in the beginning he repre-

sents vnto them some appearance of rest and quietnes, which they make account shall continue: but to no other end (as the sequell proueth) but to shew them soone after, that being farre off from their expectation, hee might vex and torment them so much the more; and constraine them still to be seeking of new hopes. From whence we learne, that the only way to haue true contentment of heart is to rest vpo God only. And no doubt but the Prophet condemnes these arts, as being farre remote from all reason. For God hath manifested all things which are necessarie to be knowne by those arts and sciences which he hath allowed, and would wee should vse. If any man will be wise beyond these, he must of necessitie haue the Diuell for his scholemaster.

The only way to attain true contentment.

Hee that walks plainly, walks safely.

Verf. 4. *And I will deliuer the Egyptians into the hand of cruell Lords, and a mightie King shall rule over them, saith the Lord of hostes.*

Now he shewes what should befall the Egyptians being once deprived of *vnderstanding*, and their *courages* being quailed, to wit, they were to expect nothing but *bondage and slauerie*. For a people being once destituted of vnderstanding and magnanimitie, needs must they become their owne overthrow, although no enimie else should assault them. So that the Lord is wont after this manner to reuenge himselfe vpon his enemies, depriving them of all meanes whereby to defend their liberties. I grant that the Prophet threatens a thing more grieuous, to wit, that the dominion whercof the Egyptians proudly bragged, should not only fall to the ground, but that they themselves also should be subdued vnder a sore slauerie & bondage. Now howsoeuer the word *cruell* be put in the singular number, yet notwithstanding hee saith in the plurall number that they shall be in subiection to *Lords*, which is much more comberome to beare, then if they should only obey one.

And a mightie King &c.] Hee means that the power of the tyrant vnder whom they shall be subdued shall be so great, that it shall be hard for them to recouer their libertie. Histories make mention of diuers changes which haue happened in many Countries, which yet could not be kept long by those which haue conquered them. For oftentimes the keeping of that which a man hath woon is more difficult, then the Conquest it selfe. But the Prophet tels vs that this estate shall nor easily be changed, for the seruitude of the Egyptians shall be of long continuance: the reason is, none shall dare to oppose nor make warre against so mightie a Conqueror. We may also vnderstand it thus, that Princes ouer a small people are more courteous and humane towards their subiects then those that are more puissant: who trusting vnto their greatnes, let loose the raines to doe whatsoever they list. For as they thinke, their power is inuincible; so do they giue libertie

What opinio
the Egyptians
had of them-
selves.

Let not the
wise man
reueye in
his wisdom.

Idolaters so
tossed to and
fro with rest-
les thoughts,
that nothing
can quiet
them.

to themſelves to act whatſocuer their ſanctified diuines ſhew to. Whether of the two expoſitions we receiue, the ſumme will be this; That the Egyptians, who eſteemed themſelves in the fiſt ranke, and the moſt renowned among men, ſhall fall into the power of another; and ſhall be oppreſſed vnder an hard bondage; to wit, vnder a mighty King againſt whom, none ſhall dare to oppoſe himſelfe. By this we may ſee how great the folly of ſuch men is, who deſire a mighty King, that ruleth ouer many Countries; as alſo how iuſtly they are puniſhed for their ambition, which yet notwithstanding cannot be reformed, though ſo manie experiences do daily fall out in the world. France and Spaine boaſt at this day, that they are ſubiects to ſomightie Princes: but they ſhall ſeele to their ſmart, how profitable ſuch a falſe pretence of honor is to them. But we haue ſpoken of this matter before in another place: Chap. 8. 6, 7.

Verſ. 5. *And the waters of the ſea ſhall ſuile, and the riuers ſhall be dried vp and waſted.*

6. *And the riuers ſhall goe farre away: the riuers of defence ſhall be emptied and dried vp: the reedes and flags ſhall be cut downe.*

HE goes on with that which he began before; to wit, that the ſtrengthes in which the Egyptians kept themſelves ſo ſtrongly, and in ſuch ſecurity, ſhould auail them nothing at all. For they ſeemed to be impregnable, becauſe they were inuironed with the ſea, with the riuer Nilus, and with many ſtrong places: and the hiſtories teſtifie, that the paſſages whereby they entred into the Country, were very difficult, becauſe there was no mouth or entrance into Nilus: for which cauſe they could eaſily repulſe the ſhips which came to land there. Thus they gloried much in this goodly ſeate and place that was ſo ſtrong by nature: euen as the Venecians at this day, ſeeing themſelves ſo ſtrongly inuironed with deepe and long riuers, thinke themſelves altogether inuincible. But ſuch ſtrengthes and defences are vterly vnprofitable, when God is purpoſed to chaſtiſe vs. Hereunto ſerues that which hee addes touching their munitions. He alludes to the cauſes, which not onely let and hinder the ouerflowings of Nilus, but alſo kept the whole land: as if he ſhould ſay; You ſhall need no ſuch things, becauſe Nilus it ſelfe ſhall be dried vp.

But it is very certaine, that this riuer was neuer drawne dry; and yet hath the Prophet foretold nothing which was not fulfilled. We muſt therefore call to minde what wee haue ſaid in another place; to wit, that theſe deſolations are repreſented in liuely colours before vs, as well in regard of our dullneſſe, as alſo to ſet forth the thing performed (as it were) euen in our view. For it is very neceſſarie we ſhould haue ſuch a ſpectacle as might moue our ſpirits, and quicken vs vp to conſi-

der of the iudgements of God: which wee ſhould eaſily contemne, if by this means we were not prevented. Obſerue we then this pride of the Egyptians, who had abundance and diuers ſorts of riches; neuer imagining that it was poſſible for them to be humbled by ſo fearful a ruine. He mentions the *reeds* and *flags*, becauſe there was abundance of them; which ſeemed to ſundry purpoſes: velleſſe any had rather ſay, he meanes that the matthes and ponds ſhall be drie.

Verſ. 7. *The graſſe in the riuer, and at the head of the riuers, and all that groweth by the riuer ſhall wither, and be ſtrumen away, and be no more.*

AT the mouth. Others tranſlate, Riuers: but he vnderſtands it rather of the ſpring it ſelfe, which is ſeldome or neuer drawne dry; although it may fall out that floods and riuers may waxe dry. He takes the *mouth* then for the head of the riuer, which ſhall ſo dry vp, that no place in the Country ſhall be watered by it. And howſocuer the head of Nilus was very far off, yet is it not without cauſe, that the Prophet threatens that this riuer, ſi ſom whole ouerflowing the fertileſt almoſt of the whole land proceeded, ſhould be dried vp, euen to the very head and ſpring it ſelfe. For it ſeldome rained in this Country; but Nilus perſo med that office for them euery yeere and ſit ouerflowed but ſparingly; it preſaged want and famine. This is the reaſon why the Prophet threatening the *druie* of it threatens therein the barrenneſſe of the whole Country. And for this cauſe alſo he ſaith, that there ſhall be ſuch want euen in the head it ſelfe, from whence the waters ſhould flow forth, that the *graſſe* ſhall be dried vp.

Verſ. 8. *The Fiſhers alſo ſhall mourne, and all they that caſt angle into the riuer ſhall lament; and they that ſpread their net vpon the waters, ſhall be weakened.*

Iſaiah hath reſpect ſtill vnto the eſtate of Egypt. We haue ſhewed in the 16. Chapter, A note touching the vſuall courſe which the Prophets hold in their writings. verſ. 8. how the Prophets are wont to vſe theſe liuey deſcriptions: as when they prophete againſt any Country, they ſpecially mention that with which it moſt aboundeth, as alſo that for which it is moſt renowned. If it be a Country of vineyards, then they mention vines: if it abound with gold, they mention that alſo: if with ſiluer, then they ſpeake of ſiluer. So prophecyng here againſt Egypt, he ſpeakes of fiſhing; becauſe this region was wateriſh, and abounded with manie riuers.

I wil not reiect their tranſlation who tranſlate the verb *Amal*, To cut off; but the beſt interpretation is, *They ſhall be weakened*: for this anſwers to the ſorrow and grieue of which he ſpake before. Now we know that there were great numbers of *fiſhers* in this Country, which

Defences ſerue vs to no vſe, when God is minded to correct vs. Nor the ſtrong man in his ſtrength.

which was not the least part of the riches of Egypt. When the Fishers then should be taken away (of which the Country was full) in which trade also consisted a great part of the riches of the Egyptians, it must needs follow that they should be much *weakened*. As for example, if draperie should be taken from a people, which are accustomed to liue vpon it, great pouertie must needs ensue. He therefore notes a wonderfull change of the whole Country.

Verf. 9. *Moreover, they that worke in flaxe of diuers sorts, shall be confounded; and they that weaue nets.*

As he spake before of their *sorrow*; so now he speaks of their *hauie*: because those who before liued well, and at their ease vpon this trade, should gaine nothing any longer by it. Now these occupations depend one vpon another, to wit, fishing and *net making*. And yet some doubt whether he speaks onely of net makers or no: for if we take the word *Seriketh*, for all exquisite linen, it is very likely that this is to be referred to those weavings which are the fairest when they are made of small & fine threed. We also know, that there are clothes of very great price made in Egypt. And it shall not be amisse to comprehend the garments of linen vnder the name of *networke*, or white nets: for these garments were of great price, in regard they were wouen with great difficultie. Thus then it should be a metaphorical maner of speech, vnder which the Prophet closely nips the dissolutenes of the Egyptians, who clothed themselues with lincen garments as if they had bene wrapped in *nets*. If we vnderstand it so, then the next verse coheres with it: and for mine owne part, I can not see how so exquisit and artificiall maner of weauing can belong to the trade of fishing. But if any had rather referre it to fishermen, the sense shall be, that all such as exercised the arte of fishing, and gained much thereby, should now be oppressed and ouerwhelmed with griefe. I thinke it is not needfull to translate the Hebrue word *Seker*, which the Prophet vseth, *Nets*, because the Etymologie of it sheweth it rather to signifye a trade by which much is gained.

Verf. 10. *For their nets shall be broken, and all they that make ponds shall be heauie in heart.*

Where great store of fish is they also haue great Pooles or litle fish-ponds to keepe them in: for were it not for them, the fishermen should be constrained to sell their fish for nothing. Besides that, they oftentimes cast their nets into the water and rake nothing. He therefore continues the former argument: for if fish can neither be taken, nor kept, the *ponds* shall serue to no purpose.

Verf. 11. *Surely the Princes of Zoan*

are fooles: the counsell of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become foolish: how say ye vnto Pharaoh, I am the sonne of the wise? I am the sonne of the ancient kings?

He here ioines *wisdom* and *folie* together very fitly: for it is vnpossible this persuasion should be plucked from men, but they will be wise, yea and so esteemed, although it be in despight of God himselfe. It is all one then as if he were of their opinion: when he calles them *wise*, whom by and by after he taxeth with *grose folie*. The Hebrue particle *Ac*, is sometimes aduersatiue: but because it seemes the Prophet sets himselfe against the Egyptians, I had rather translate it, *surely*, or certainly, or, now at the least: because he derides *Pharaohs Counsellors*, who of all others were the greatest fooles, and yet in the meane while tooke themselues, and would be reputed for the wisest men. Thus it is a kinde of exclamation, as if he should say, Where is this wisdom of Egypt become? What is become of these Counsellors which despised euery man? Why defend they not the Kingdome? Now is the time when their wisdom may be manifested. Wee see then how this serues for a confirmation and ratification of this present prophesie, for as much as it appears that the Prophet speaks not of things vnknowne, but hath the certentie of Egypts destruction apparent as it were before his eyes. Being follie perswaded then that he was authorized from God, he is bold to proclaime that all these Princes are but *fooles*, how wise foeuer they make themselves. In a word, the Prophet teacheth, that all their glorie who attribute to themselves the least dram of wisdom without God, is but follie, because it will be perceived to be so in the end, for when they shall come to triall, they will shew themselves no better then children.

I deny not but the Lord suffers them to bring many enterprises to passe, that they may get credit and fame among men: but he bestows them in the end, so as notwithstanding all their experience and ripenes of wit, they will shew themselves more fond then litle babes. Let vs be admonished then to pray for the spirit of counsell and vnderstanding of the Lord, and when we haue obtained it, let vs carefullie vse it in vprightnes with all modestie. For God resists mens wisdom, whē they attribute more to themselves then is meete: and such as too proudly aduance themselves doe well deserue to be punished for their follie. He therefore oft times makes them stand confounded, to the end men may know that their wisdom is nought else but a vanishing smoke. For there is no true wisdom but that which is grounded vpon the feare of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, as *Salomon* teacheth, *Prou. 1.7. & 9. 10.*

How say ye &c. He reproues *Pharaohs* counsellors for flattering of him, as parasites are wont to do now ad~~ays~~es to get y^e fauor of Princes: for all their flatteries tend to none other end; because they finde that the only readie

All wisdom which is separate from the word, will in the end proue extreme folie.

If any man want wisdom let him aske it of God.

The feare of God, the only foundation of true wisdom.

way

way to get their ſuites, and to creepe into fauour. And thus among ſo many flatteries and lies, truth can finde no place at all among them. Now howſoeuer this is an ordinarie fault in the Courts of great Lords, yet here it the ſway, eſpecially among the Egyptians at that time: for they ſtood vpon their antiquitie, as being the moſt ancient of all nations beſides, boaſting, that they found out the arts and liberal ſciences. Now, if the common people had this good conceit of themſelves, how much more were their Kings infected therewith in reſpect of them?

There was a double boaiſting then; that is to ſay, of antiquitie and knowledge, both which *Iſaiah* reproves; and tells them, that neither of them ſhall doe them any good. *Pharaoh* gloried much of the antiquitie and wiſdome of his Nation, which was ſe peoples fault alſo as well as his; but he ſpeakes of the King eſpecially, as of the head, in whom this pride was more plainly perceived, then in the common people. But let vs beware how we brag of our anceſtors, as if we were borne to it by inheritance; no, let vs goe to heauen to finde wiſdome; and let vs aſke it of him that is author of it. As for antiquitie, it is a ſottiſh and vaine brag; and yet Princes are ſo hampered with this vice, that they could finde in their hearts to goe ſecke their race and beginning beyond the Moone, as they ſay: yea, they can verie hardly be diſſwaded from this vanitie. flatterers alſo helpe to augment this folly, who (as wee ſee) haue found out many pleaſant things touching the genealogies of Kings and Princes. For no muſicke ſounds more delectable in their eares, then when they are ſeparated from the common people; as if they were petty gods. But it often comes to paſſe, that whiles they be ſo buſie in ſeeking too curiouſly their grandfathers, and great grandfathers, that they make themſelves ridiculous by it, becauſe it comes to paſſe, that they finde themſelves deſcended from ſome handicrafts man, or trades man.

I haue heard a pleaſant ſtorie from ſome of good credit of the Emperour *Maximilian*, who (becauſe hee was wonderfull curious in ſeeking out his pedigree) a merry fellow perſwaded him that hee had found his genealogie in *Noahs* Arke. This wrought ſo vpon him, that neglecting and forgetting all other affaires, hee onely doted vpon this newes; in ſo much that hee would permit none to ſpeake with him; no not the Ambaſſadours which were come vnto him to deale in matters of importance. Every one wondered at this folly, and diſliked it in themſelves; yet none ſo hardy that durſt take in hand to counſell him. At the laſt his Cooke being bolder then the reſt (whom the Emperour vſed as a letter, and tooke pleaſure many times to heare him talke) hauing obtained leaue to ſpeake, ſaid to the Emperour; No man deſires the honour of your imperiall muſicke more then my ſelfe; but me thinkes it pleaſe you, this your great induſtrie to find out your pedigree, is neither profitable nor honourable. I now honour and reuerence your Maieſtie

(ſaid hee) as a god; but if you will ſtand ſo much vpon your title from *Noahs* Arke, then you and I muſt needs be cozins at the laſt; for we all came from thence. *Maximilian* was ſo moued with the ſpeech of this knauith ſoole, that he was then aſhamed he had gone ſo farre in the matter, although before, neither friends, counſellers, nor affaires could hold him backe from it; or he knew well that his name, which he meant to make more honourable then his anceſtors, ſhould be made leſſe honourable if they came once to the firſt originall, from whence Princes and ſubiects, noble and baſe, are all deſcended. But is not the folly of theſe men great, when ſooles and ſoilers can perceiue it? Yet this is no new vice, but it is rooted deepe in the ſpirits of the moſt men.

That we may auoid this cuill then, let vs learne to depend vpon God onely, and let vs prefer this grace of our adopiſe before all riches, nobilitie, & parentage. As touching the Kings of Egypt, they were indeede deſcended from moſt ancient Kings, who had reigned a long time; and this made them to ſwell thus with pride, euen as if wiſdome had bin borne in their houſe.

Inſtruction.

Vers. 12. Where are now thy wiſe men; that they may tell thee, or my know what the Lord of hoſtes hath determined againſt Egypt?

Although it be word for word; And they ſhall ſhew thee, and ſhall know: yet the claue ſhould bee thus reſolued, That they may ſhew thee, yea that they may know at the laſt. Which phraſe of ſpeech is very common among the Hebrewes. Now becauſe the Egyptians had their ſoothſaiers, they thought nothing ſo obſcure or ſecret, but they might haue ſufficient reſolution from them of it: for they went to aſke counſell as well in things of ſmall importance, as in great; and held whatſoeuer theſe men ſaid, as oracles. This vanitie the Prophet derides, ſaying; How will they thew you that which they know not? Hath God made them of his counſell? It is verie likely alſo that the art which they vſed in diuining, is heere condemned: for the art was not onely vnlawfull of it ſelfe, but enchantments and ſorceries were contained vnder it. There are three waies whereby we may know or foreſee things to come. The firſt and chiefteſt is, by the reuelation of the holy Ghoſt, who onely can reſolve vs: as alſo by the gift of prophecie, which is imparted but to a few: the ſecond, by Aſtronomie: the third, by coſterring of things already paſt, whence they haue beene accuſtomed to gather the definition of prudence. As touching the knowledge of the ſtares, a man may at ſome times come to the diſcerning of certaine things, by their ſituation and coniuſion; to wit, famins, fruitful and vnfruitfull ſeaſons, the peſtilence, and ſuch like: yet this is vncertaine, becauſe it hath its ground vpon coniecture onely. Reſpect therefore muſt alwaies be had herein, what proportion the

Three waies by which we may foreſee things to come.

- 1
- 2
- 3

Maſter Calmyns judgement touching Aſtronomie.

Iter. 1. 5.

A ſtorie touching *Maximilian* the Emperour.

flarres haue with these inferior places. For mens actions are not governed by them as a sort of sooth and deceitfull Astrologians thinke, of whom there are multitudes at this day that insinuate themselves into the fauour both of Princes and subiects, as if they had the knowledge of all things both present and to come in their sleepe. But such fellows are mere coseners, who beguile men by their illusions, and resemble those of whom the Prophet speaks in this place: and yet Princes giue care vnto them, reuerencing them as if they were gods. Truly they are well worthe to be so abused; and it is also a iust punishment vpon them for their curiositie.

These goodly diuiners forsooth doe likewise brag that they vnderstand the arte Magick, wherein the Egyptians were very skillfull; but thereunto they also adde things that are worse and much more detestable, to wit, coniuurations and inuocations vpon diuels, which is the most hatefull and hurtfull thing that a man can either conceiue or vtter. The Lord curseth such coniectures and customes of diuining; neither can it be but the issue and euent thereof will be most wofull, and full of confusion.

If these things were condemned in the Egyptians, how much more do they deserue to be condemned in those who throwd themselves vnder the name and worship of God? It is a wonder me thinks that those who otherwise are both wittie and well learned should suffer themselves to be so grosely abused by such impostures, as if they were vtterlie deprived both of wit and iudgement: but it is iust with God thus to auenge himselfe vpon the ingratitude and vnthankfulness of men. Truly so farre forth as we may iudge of things to come by that which is past, which also wee haue obserued and knowne by vse and experience in things, which is best of all; this in it selfe can not be disliked: yet I would haue no man imagin that any certencie can be gathered from hence of that which is to come, because the matter alway hangs vpon coniecture. Notwithstanding *Isaiah* doth professedlie set himselfe against this subtletie, which men account a great vertue; not that it is euill in it selfe; but because such a wittie and subtle fellow is hardlie to be found, that with this his knowledge is not also confident to haue at his fingers ends whatsoever is worthe and necessarie to be knowne. And thus they set light by the secret prouidence of God, as if nothing were hidden from them.

There is yet another vice besides: that is, they affect rather a kinde of subtletie & iugling tricks, then true wisdom in deed. But *Isaiah* especiallie taxeth this pride which is in men of great wits, who by their owne reason will presume to measure the euents of things, as if (they) and not the Lord had not the gouernment of the whole world in his hand: therefore against their diuinations hee opposeth the heauenly decree. Hence we may gather how siclie *Ifoerates* said that Gods felicitie is powerfull and mightie in deed, but that our wisdom is so likewise. The Apothegme

of this elegant Orator seemes a goodly one at the first blith: but seeing he takes wisdom and prudence from God to giue it vnto mortall men, such a parting of stakes is no lesse fortiff then wicked. For what blasphemie is it to attribute a prouider counsell vnto men, & only leaue to the Lord an happie fortune? If any now dare leaue those means by which the Lord doth instruct vs, to haue recourse to the impostures of the diuell, truly such a one is most worthe to be deceiued with shame and great dishonour, for he seekes the remedies which are not, and despiseth those which God offers him.

Those that seeke to coniuurers, are most worthe to be confounded with shame and dishonor.

Vers. 13. The Princes of Zoan are become fooles: the Princes of Noph are deceiued, they haue deceiued Egypt, euen the corners of the tribes thereof.

Zoan was one of the chiefe Cities of Egypt: Noph was also very much renowned: but we can not certainly iudge what Cities they were, vntill any shall take it to be Alexandria, the antiquitie and wealth whereof may be gathered from many places of the scripture. Whereby also their error is refuted, who say, that *Alexander* the Great built it. For albeit it was often laid waste before, yet he neuer built it vp againe whollie, but only repaired it. Now it appeeres by the third Chapter of *Nahum* vers. 8. that it was ouce a free Citie, and had league with the Egyptians, being as greatlie renowned as any Citie in the world. He rightlie affirms then that the beginning of her destruction came because of her *folly*. For the chiefe strength of a common-wealth or of a kingdome consists in counsell, and wisdom, without which, neither riches, nor multitude of men do profit any thing.

Wherein the chiefe strength of a common-wealth consists.

I take this word *Angulum*, which signifies a corner, by way of similitude for the principall part of the building whereupon the whole weight resteth: so that I had rather reade it in y^e nominatiue case then in the accusatiue, because it should be referred, as I take it, to these wise men, vpon whom the Egyptians relied as securely, as though no mishap could possiblie befall them. But *Isaiah* tels them that this leaning-stock is too weak, because the resting ouer-confidentlie vpon their counsels was the destruction of Egypt. Therefore after a taunting maner hee condemnes this deceitfull wisdom, which in deede rather deserues the title of vanitie and *folly*, because it is separate from the feare of God. For men not only abuse this excellent gift of God, but they are also puffed vp with vaine ambition and subtletie, which pleaseth them farre better then true wisdom. Besides, there is also a diuellish surie in them, for they quite suppress the prouidence of God, referring all these euents whatsoever to the capacite of their owne braine.

This is the cause why the scripture cries out so often against such wise men, shewing all their wit to be mere madnes. For they take that vpon them which belongs to God, whereby

Coniuring most hatefull and hurtfull, as may be scene by the wofull euents it brings forth.

Ifoerates.

whereby they commit horrible and intolerable ſacrilege. We neede not recituaile then if the Lord thew fearefull examples againſt ſuch wiſards For how ſoever they be ingenious and quicke witted, yet they ſtumble and miſſe the marke euen in ſmall matters, caſting themſelues into ſuch great dangers, as a ſimple clowne or artiſicer could haue eaſily auoided and foreſcene. Let this be a warning vnto vs leſt we waxe proud in heart, in attributing ſome praife of wiſdome to our ſelues. If ſo be wee haue any prudence and dexteritie in vs, let vs wholly refer it to the free liberality of God, and keepe our ſelues within the rule of modeſtie and ſobrietie. For if we make the Lord the ſtay of our wiſdome, wee haue a ſure corner ſtone, which can neuer be beaten downe, nor ouerthrowne.

The ſureſt corner ſtone.

Verſ. 14. The Lord hath mingled among them the ſpirits of errors: and they haue cauſed Egypt to erre in euery worke thereof, as a drunken man erreth in his vomit.

BECAUSE it was incredible, and vnexpected, that the leaders of ſo wiſe and polittike a people ſhould overthrow the Country by their folly, therefore the Prophet attributes the cauſe of it to the *iudgements of God*; to the end the Iewes ſhould not be as it were hoodwinked in ſo excellent and memorable an example. For prophane men are wont to attribute Gods iudgements to Fortune, when any thing that is new and vnlooked for fallies out. now he ſpeakes by way of ſimilitude: as if hee ſhould ſay, euen as wine is powred into a cup or glaſſe; ſo will the Lord make the wiſe men drunke, by powring the *ſpirits of quidiſſe* into them, that being at their wits end, & becoming ſenſeleſſe, they may be made vnable either to ſay or doe any thing rightly. The cauſe why they deceiued Egypt then was, becauſe themſelues were deceiued firſt. And in that the Egyptians ſuffered themſelues to be ſo abuſed, and were not able to keepe themſelues from it; therein may we ſee the iudgement of God vpon them.

How God is ſaid to deprive men of wiſedome and counſell.

And yet *Iſaiah* makes not God ſo the author of this their ſenſeleſſe; as if the Egyptians might haue laid the blame vpon him. But thus ſtands the caſe; men of themſelues haue neither vnderſtanding nor iudgement; for whence comes wiſdome but from the Spirit of God, which is the onely fountaine of light, vnderſtanding, and truth? Now if the Lord takes this his Spirit from vs, what haue we to charge him withall? Hee is bound to vs no way at all: and in that he is liberall in giuing to men, it proceeds from his meeke fauour. So then when ſoever hee ſmites mens hearts with the *ſpirits of quidiſſe and error*, he doth it alwaies vpon iuſt cauſes, how ſoever (I grant) they may be hidden from vs. But for the moſt part he puniſheth the wicked, who haue liſted vp themſelues againſt him with this blindneſſe: as it happened to the Egyptians, who being ſwollen with an opinion of

their owne wiſdome, were ready to burſt with pride, & deſpiſed all in regard of themſelues. It is a ſuperfluous matter then to diſpute of predeſtination in this place, ſeeing the Lord puniſheth them for a notorious vice. Wherefore when hee blindes or giues them vp, hee cannot be accuſed of crueltie; for it is a juſt chaſtiſement of their rebellion and wickedneſſe: neither can he which puniſheth mens iniquities be called the author of euill.

Let vs now ſhew after what manner God inflicteth this puniſhment vpon them. He deli- How God works iuſtly by iuſt instruments. uers them vp to Satan. who effects this: for hee it is properly who ſowes the ſpirit of error and frowardneſſe in mens hearts; but becauſe hee acts nothing but at Gods commandement, it is ſaid, that God doth that, which Satan indeed doth. For where it is commonly ſaid, This or that is done by Gods permiſſion nothing is more fruſtulous. The Prophet expreſſeth yet more; to wit, that this puniſhment was ſent of God beſauie hee is a juſt Iudge. For hee works by Satan as a Iudge doth by the executioner, and iuſtly puniſheth thoſe that haue offended him: as we reade in the booke of the Kings; Satan then preſents himſelfe before God, and aſkes leaue to deceiue the Prophets of *Aſſyria*: his request being granted, he executes Gods commandement: for of himſelfe hee was able to doe nothing. 1. King. 22. 21. We neede not heape vp many teſtimonies of Scripture; the thing it ſelfe is manifeſt enough.

In that hee addes, they were *deceiued* by their counſellers, he therein ſets forth the iudgement of God in the ſecond manner. For it might well be, that although the Princes had beene wiſeſſe, much like to men *drunke*, that the people neuertheleſſe were ſober and offſound iudgement: but hee alſo ſaith, that the ſeducers ſhould obtaine the efficacy of error to deceiue the people alſo. Thus you ſee a twofold iudgement of God in this place, both againſt the ſeducers, and the ſeduced. By *vomiting*, hee means a beaſtly kinde of drunkeſſe, adding it by way of amplification, ſhewing, that they are not drunken after an ordinarie manner, ſome wit remaining ſill in them; but that they were drunke like ſwine.

Verſ. 15: Neither ſhall there be any worke in Egypt which the head may doe, nor the taile, the branch nor the ruſh.

THIS is the conſequence of the former ſentence: for his meaning is, that there ſhall be ſuch a brutiſh blockiſhneſſe in all the Egyptians, that whatſoever they enterpriſe, ſhall vaniſh away and come to nothing. This muſt needs befall them who are deſtitute of counſell, and it is a juſt puniſhment of our pride and ouerweening. The Prophet then meant to note out the euent and effect; to ſhew that all things ſhould haue woſull ſucceſſes. And in menacing the *head and taile*, he ſignifies thereby, that all eſtates, from the higheſt to the loweſt, ſhall be deſtitute of counſell; ſo as they ſhall be able to doe nothing

What is meant by Head and Taile.

thing to the purpose: vnlesse any had rather vnderstand it as touching the manner of the proceeding of their actions. Let vs learne from hence, that the beginning and end of all things depends vpon God only, of whom we must aske counsell, wisdom, and a prosperous successe in all our busines: vnlesse we meane to haue things succeed with vs, as they did with the Egyptians.

Verf. 16. In that day shall Egypt be like Women; for it shall bee afraid and feare because of the moving of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shaketh ouer it.

HE repeates that againe which he had said before, to wit, that the Egyptians should haue no strength at all. Some thinke the Prophet alludes to a womanish behauiour, wherewith the Historiographers haue taxed the Egyptians: which was this, all order being peruerted, women managed the publike affaires, and men kept the houle, and performed the offices that belonged to women. It may be *Isaiah* aimed at this. But all being well considered, this coniecture can not be currant, because he threatens a iudgement heere which should bring men into a wonderfull mannering. If he should speake of their accustomed behauiour, it should appertaine nothing at all to y^e matter in hand: neither doth he reprove the Egyptians for their womanish hearts, but rather tels them they shall be so terrified, that they shall become timorous like women. For they not only esteemed of themselves as of a warlike people, able to wage battaile, but would take it in hand themselves without any proouocation thereunto, and were also helpfull vnto other nations. For wee see that many prophane authors tell sundrie things of the fricts of the Egyptians, and stand much vpon their commendation. Howfoener then they were more nice and delicate then any other people, yet they were desirous to be esteemed a valarous and warlike people.

But now in so sudden a change we may see an admirable iudgement of God. And therefore he addes that the *shaking of the Lords hand* shall be the cause of this feare: by which words he shewes that the Lord will order and take all this warre in hand, so as the Egyptians shall neuer be able to stand, in regard they shall not haue to doe with men, but with God himselfe. Now this which *Isaiah* pronounceth against Egypt ought also to be applied to other nations: for when troubles arise, and warres are proclaimed, the iudgement of God must be acknowledged therein if men seee cowards and faint-hearted. For wee see the most warlike men sometimes to giue place, shewing themselves more delicate then women: yea, to be ouercome with little or no power, when God once smites their hearts with trembling.

Verf. 17. And the land of Iudab shall

be a feare vnto Egypt, every one that maketh mention of it shall be afraid thereof, because of the counsell of the Lord of hosts, which he hath determined vpon it.

SOME expound it simple, that the land of Iudab shall be a wonderment to the Egyptians as well as other nations; comparing this place with Chap. 18. 2. 7. where it is said, You shall be an astonishment, &c. But I thinke the Prophets meaning is otherwise in this place: for his purpose is to shew the cause why the Lord will shew such an example against the Egyptians, to wit, because they had been the occasion of the destruction of the Iewes. For they had turned them from the confidence which they ought to haue had in God: it being the custome of Princes to sollicite their neighbours, and offering them help, to the end they may vse them afterward in the like case. But God had forbidden the Iewes to goe downe into Egypt for any succour, Deut. 17. 16. Yet did this wretched people chuse rather to yeeld to the solicitations of the Infidels which offered themselves vnto them, then to God: they are chastised therefore very iustly. Neither did the Egyptians escape vnpunished, because they had giuen them occasion of incredulitie and distrust: for they were so sharplie chastised that they quaked for feare as oft as they remembered the Iewes.

We may gather a very profitable doctrine from hence, to wit, that all such which shall alienate the Church from the true seruice of God, and from trusting in his help, hauing giuen them offence either by fearing, or counselling them, or by any allurements whatsoever, shall be punished and that seuerely. The Prophets words are as much in effect then, as if one should say, That the very looke of a woman will make him to blush which hath entised her to leaudnes, when the filthines of the fact shall come to light; and when God the auenger of the marriage knot shall appeare.

Such as shall be so wickedly minded as to withdraw Gods children from his seruice, or from trusting in him, shall be punished seuerely.

Verf. 18. And in that day shall five Cities in the land of Egypt speake the language of Canaan, and shall sweare by the Lord of hosts: one shall be called the Citie of destruction.

HAVING threatened the Egyptians, and laid forth the cause of Gods iudgements, he now comforts them, and promiseth them mercie: for he shewes that all of them in a manner shall be restored, and shall recouer a prosperous and flourishing estate againe. For of fixe Cities, saith he, five shall be saued, so as one only shall perith. He had before threatened an horrible iudgement to fall vpon the whole kingdom, so as if any shall consider the former prophesie well, he can comprehend nothing therein but a state vtterlie past recouerie. He promiseth then that they shall be restored by a speciell fauour of God, so that this is to be taken as an increase of the

Churches.

Churches reſtauration, or as a full meaſure of Gods grace after the redeemer is ſent.

The manner of ſpeech is ſomewhat obſcure: but if we examine it well, there is little or no difficultie at all in the ſenſe. For his meaning is, that the ſix part of the Cities ſhall onely periſh, and that the reſt ſhall continue ſafe. The moſt difficultie is in the word *Haheres*: ſome read it *Haherez*; that is to ſay, of the Sunne: but they deceiue themſelves by taking one letter for another. Thoſe who expound it of the Sunne, thinke that the Prophet ſpoke of Helopolis: but it ſutes not well with the ſcope of the text: becauſe hee' not onely promiſeth that *ſix Cities* ſhall bee reſtored (for that had been no great matter) but ſaith in generall, that of ſixe townes or cities, ſixe ſhall remaine vntouched: and doubtleſſe there were manie Cities in Egypt.

Let paſſe the fables of the old writers, and of thoſe who haue affirmed, that it contained twenty thouſand Cities. Yet it muſt not be denied, but there were a great number in a Country ſo renowned and well peopled; in a Kingdome that flouriſhed as it did, and was ſo frequented; and in ſo ſweete and well tempered an aire. Let vs put the caſe then, that there were a thouſand Cities, or a few more. Hee ſaith, that the ſix part onely ſhall periſh, and that the reſt ſhall be reſtored: ſo as the number of the deſtroyed, ſhall bee little in compariſon. Now it appeares ſufficiently by that which followes anon after, that this reſtauration is to be vnderſtood of the worſhip and ſeruiſe of God.

By the word *lip*, hee vnderſtands the *ſongue*; taking a part for the whole: meaning thereby, to ſhew the agreement that the Egyptians ſhould haue with the people of God, and the faith whereby they ſhould make profeſſion of his name. By the *ſongue*, hee alſo notes out by a figuratiue maner of ſpeech, a confeſſion. For in regard there was but one tongue onely which acknowledged and called vpon the true God, to wit, of this people that dwelt in the land of *Canaan*; it thereby appeares ſufficiently, that by this word *ſongue*, we muſt alſo vnderſtand their conſent in religion. To ſpeake the ſame or diuers language, whereby either agreement or diſcord are ſignified; are phraſes of ſpeech very frequent in the Scripture. But let vs obſerue that euery conſent is not ſufficient: for example; if men ſhould agree together to retaine a worſhip of their owne deuiling and approbation, ought they not to come and conſent to that truth which was reuealed to the fathers? Neither doth he onely ſay, that the Egyptians ſhould ſpeak one and the ſame language; but the *language of Canaan*: for they were to change their ſpeech, & to vſe y which God had ſanctified: not that the pronunciation of this language was more holy; but it is commended, becauſe it contains the doctrine of truth. We are to obſerue this diligently, to the end wee may learne the true manner of conſenting. We ought to ſeek agreement by all means; but let vs beware that the conditions be good where-

by it is procured: for it is not lawfull to ſeek a meane betweene both, as the deſtroyers of true religion doe, which yet would be taken for makers of pacifications. Away with ſuch light and double tongues; let the truth be retained, which hath no other foundation but the word of God. Let them that draw neere to it, ſpeake with vs: and whoſoever falſifieth that, let him auoid, and chuſe a language ſitting his owne humour: but let vs continue firme and conſtant in this truth. The Egyptians then cannot ſpeake the language of *Canaan*, vnleſſe they firſt of all forſake their owne; that is to ſay, all ſuperſtitions.

Some refer this to *Protemius*, his time, but without any good ground: becauſe wee may gather from the verſes following, that the Prophet ſpeakes of the pure religion and true worſhip of God. And firſt of all vnder the figure *Synecdoche*, hee teacheth that the ſpeech ſhall be holy, taking one onely kinde thereof; to wit, that they ſhall profeſſe themſelves to be Gods ſeruants, by ſwearing by his name. It may be read, *They ſhall ſwear in the Lord, or, by the Lords name*; becauſe the letter *Lamed*, often ſignifies *By*. If we reade it, *In the Lord*; the ſenſe will be, that they ſhould promiſe to obey him, and that with a ſolemne oath; as when a nation takes an oath of allegiance to their Prince. And it is all one as if he had ſaid; they ſhall ſubmit themſelves vnder the power of God, and yeelde themſelves vnder his government. But in regard the other reading is more generally receiued, I alſo the more willingly allow of it. For ſeeing an oath is a part of Gods worſhip, the whole is hereby ſignified, by taking a part for the whole. To ſwear alſo by the name of God, is often taken to beare witneſſe that hee is the true God.

His meaning is in a word, that they ſhall ſoundly giue their names to Chriſt. Hence we may gather, that wee muſt make an open profeſſion of our faith; if we meane to yeeld God his true ſeruiſe; and if any will keepe his faith ſhut vp in his heart, ſuch a one ſhall be ſure to haue but a cold opinion in ſtead of faith; becauſe true faith brings forth a franke confeſſion, and ſo inflames vs inwardly, that we ſhall neither wil nor chuſe, but make that knowne to others which we carry in the cloſet of our hearts. Every knee ſhall bow before mee, and euery tongue ſhall ſwear by my name, ſaith the Lord; *Iſai. 45. 23*. Where faith is then, there ought alſo to be the outward worſhip & the confeſſion of the mouth: *Rom. 10. 9, 10*. Wee muſt in like maner obſerue, that the things which appertaine to Gods ſeruiſe, ought not to be applied to profane vſes: it is the profanation of an oath then, to ſwear by any other thing then by the Lord. For it is written, Thou ſhalt ſwear by my name: *Deut. 6. 13*. Doe wee not contemne and deſile his holy name, if wee mixe Saints or any other creature in our oathes? Let vs note here alſo with what reuence we ought to take an oath: for if wee thereby make profeſſion of Gods honour, ought wee not to come thereunto with feare and humility? Afterwards, where he ſaith in the end

which prouided that the condition be good.

I

2

If faith in the heart bring not forth an open profeſſion, it will ſurely prouid but a cold opinion in ſtead of faith.

Holy things muſt not be applied to profane vſes.

How we ought to ſwear.

We ought to labour for a conſent in religion, 21.

of the verse, that every sixth Citie shall be destroyed, the meaning is, that all such as turne not vnto God to serue him shall perish, without hope of restitution: this is the reason why he opposeth the Citie of Egypt which should begin to acknowledge God, against those that are appointed to confusion. Where the seruice of God is wanting then, there we can expect nothing but utter ruin: for the word *Herei* signifies cursing and execration, after which follows ruin and eternall death.

Vers. 19. In that day shall the Altar of the Lord be in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar by the border thereof vnto the Lord.

HE continues on still that which he spake in the former verse, and expresseth more fullie the renument of Egypt, because true religion shall flourish there, the pure seruice of God shall be established, and all superstitions shall fall to the ground. Now he vseth this word *Altar*, to represent Gods worship, as by the signe thereof; because sacrifices and oblations were exercises of pietie. By the *middest* of Egypt he vnderstands the principall part of all the kingdome, as if he should say, in the middes of the kingdome, or in the most excellent part of it. As touching the word *pillar*, we may not thinke he speaks of Images that represents the shape of Saints, or men, but memorials of the feare of God: or his meaning is, that they shall be as signes or land-marks, like to those which bound out the ends and limits of kingdomes: and that after this manner there should be signes set vp, whereby all men might know that God governed this people. And doe we not see it ordinarily fall out, that when a people is truly conuerted vnto God, hauing once forsaken and detested their Idols and superstitions, how they openly set vp signes of true religion, so as all may know that God is purely worshipped there?

Iosephus tells how *Onias* abused this place, when he fled to *Ptolemeus Philometor*: for he perswaded him that it should be a very profitable course to set vp an *Altar* in the Countrey, vpon which the Iewes, that dwelt there, might offer sacrifice: and alledged this text, affirming, that this prophesie ought now to be fulfilled. And in the end this wicked Priest made the King beleue it to be true, although the Iewes openly gainesaid him: for the King regarded his owne benefit; and this bad fellow, who had been deposed from his office, meant to obtaine new credit and fauour. So by this meanes what opposition sooner there was, yet could not this wicked counsell be hindred. But *Isaiab* vnder these figurative signes plainly describes the pure worship of God which was then in vse: for he hath respect to his owne time, and to those with whom he had to deale, *Onias* then did wickedly peruert this place to serue his owne turne.

But the popish Doctors are no lesse impudent at this day, in drawing in a place of Ma-

lachie by the haire, as it were, to maintaine the sacrifice of the Masse. For where he saith, It shall come to passe that incense shall be euery where offered vnto God: from thence they conclude, that there are some sacrifices differing from the ancient sacrifices: for neither oxen nor other beasts are to be sacrificed; therefore it is the Masse, say they. Truly a very trim argument. Wee may easily discern that *Malachie* speaks there of the seruice of God, noting it vnder one of the shadowes of the Law, as *Isaiab* doth in this place: and we ought to marke these kinds of speech diligently, which the Prophets are wont to vse very often.

This then may be plainly explained by another place in *Ioel*, which we will alledge by way of example, Your sonnes and your daughters shall prophesie, saith he, your yong men shall see visions, and your old men shall dreame dreames, *Ioel* 2. 28. *S. Peter* tells how this prophesie was fulfilled when the Apostles being inspired with the holy Ghost, spake diuers tongues: for whereas they were vncleaned before, they then began to be fit to teach the heauenlie mysteries, *Act* 2. We reade nothing there of dreames. The Apostle then seemes to alledge this place very vnfitly: but it appeeres that *Ioel* meant to signifie nothing else in this place but Prophecie; and vseth the word *dreames* and *visions* for ornament sake, because the Lord in times past did make his minde knowne to the Prophets by this meanes, *Numb.* 12. 6. He also had respect to the custome vsed at that time, because the Iewes would hardlie haue vnderstood what the gifts of the holy Ghost meant, seeing it was a thing as yet vnknewne vnto them: for being nourished vp vnder rudiments of the Law, they could aspie no higher then to the sacrifices and ceremonies; or whether the signes and sacraments led them.

The Prophets listened to them then as vnto babes or children, to whom we vse not to speake of higher matters then that which they may be able by little and little to comprehend by custome. This doctrine therefore will giue vs the meaning of many texts, the obscuritie whereof wee might otherwise be held a long while in doubt of. It plainly appeeres that the Prophet speaks of Christ his kingdome, so that the things whereof hee speaks, were not fulfilled till his coming. The shadowes must be taken away, that we may behold the truth of things; and so by the *Altar* we vnderstand the pure and true inuocation of Gods name. But yet the Prophet therewithall shewes by these outward signes, that the pure seruice of God can not be preferred without the publick exercises of religion, the maner whereof must not be disposed according to our will. Let mens inuentions cease then, that God alone may be heard in this matter.

Vers. 20. And it shall be for a signe, and for a witness vnto the Lord of hostes in the land of Egypt: for they shall crie vnto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he

shall

Nothing but ruin to be expected, where the seruice of God is wanting.

Mal. 1. 11
The place of Malachi truly expounded.

The Papists argument out of Malachi for the sacrifice of the Masse, answered by another place out of Ioel.

When men are truly turned vnto God from their idolatry, they testify it by some publick signe.

Onias.

Papists wresters of Scripture.

ſhall ſend them a Saviour, and a great man, and ſhall deliver them.

and doe ſacrifice and oblations, and ſhall vow vowes unto the Lord and performe them.

WE cannot offer any acceptable ſervice unto God, unleſſe he preuent vs by his grace. For who will dedicate himſelfe to his obedience, that is not drawne firſt by the ſweet taſte of his goodneſſe, to embrace him with a right affection? He muſt needes call vs firſt then to himſelfe, before we can call vpon him: and all acceſſe is ſhut vp againſt vs, till hee haue firſt of all allured vs to come vnto him. He ſaid before, that they ſhould be ſubdued by diuers aſſiſtētōs, to the end that they might be ſubjected to God: he now repeats the very ſame thing; for men will neuer renounce neither themſelues nor their vanities, till they are brought to teachableneſſe by ſtrong hand. Notwithſtanding he by and by adds another kinde of ſummons; to wit, they ſhall goe familiarly vnto God, after they haue taſted of his louing kindneſſe. For the cry whereof he ſpeakes, proceeds from faith; becauſe they would neuer betake themſelues to this refuge, unleſſe they were allured thereunto by the taſte of his mercy. And whereas hee promiſeth to ſend them a Saviour, by whole hand the Egyptians ſhall be deliuered; it can be meant of none but of Chriſt; becauſe Egypt was not deliuered from her miſeries, but in regard that the Goſpell was firſt of all preached there.

We reade what ſundry changes this Country indured by the ſpace of foure hundred yeeres, in ſomuch as it was almoſt utterly deſtroyed and laid waſte by forraigne and ciuill warres: but when it ſeemed to be at the laſt caſt, as they ſay, behold, it was conuerced to the Lord, and deliuered out of the hands of tyrants and enemies. Thus Ieſus Chriſt deliuered this Country, when he began to make himſelfe knowne vnto it. We in like manner ought to bee thus diſpoſed to know and ſerue God, that when wee ſhall be diuers waies aſſiſted, we may know that our ſaluation conſiſteth in him alone. And would to God the world had learned this leſſon at this day, ſeing it is in ſuch diſquietneſſe that it ſeemes neere to deſtruction. For what end of theſe troubles can it looke for, but utter ruine, unleſſe by repentance it acknowledgeth that it hath been iuſtly puniſhed for the owne impieties: And when it is added, *To deliuer them*; we are to gather from thence a verie profitable doctrine; to wit, that God helps vs by Ieſus Chriſt; through whole power hee hath aſſiſted his owne, euen from the beginning: for hee was the perpetuall mediator; and by his interceſſion all good things haue been obtained at the hands of God the Father. Who being now come and revealed, let vs know that wee can obtaine nothing of the Father, but by his meanes.

Verſ. 21. *And the Lord ſhall be knowne of the Egyptians, and the Egyptians ſhall know the Lord in that day,*

Iſaiah adds now that which was the principal: for the Lord can neither be ſerued, nor called vpon, unleſſe we firſt know him to be our Father. As ſaith Saint Paul; How ſhall they call vpon him whom they know not Rom. 10. 14. For we cannot be partakers of Gods gifts to our ſaluation, unleſſe the true knowledge which is by faith goe before. Hee hath good reaſon therefore to adde *knowing*, as the foundation of all religion; or the key which opens the kingdom of heauen vnto vs. Which knowledge we cannot haue, but by doctrine: whence we may conclude, that God reiects all new found ſeruices; for hee cannot approve of that which is void of that knowledge, which proceeds from the hearing of the true and pure doctrine. Men ſhall neuer be able to fettle a right forme of Gods ſervice then, if they onely bring that which themſelues haue deuſed. Theſe places are worthy to be well obſerued; for therein the holy Ghoſt ſhewes vs what true adoration and inuocation is; namely, hauing baniſhed all the inuentions of men, whereto they obſtinately ſticke, we ſhould ſuffer our ſelues to be taught by the word of God; and if wee once be furniſhed with the authoritie thereof, let vs freely and openly condemne whatſoener the world extollet and admirereth. Whereas he ſaith againe, that *Egypt ſhall know*; it is a repetition of ſome waight; for this knowledge is of ſo great importance, that it ought not to be ſlightly paſſed ouer, becauſe it holds the chiefſt place; without which there is no true worſhip of God.

And they ſhall ſacrifice. This place muſt be expounded like the former, where he mentioned the *Altar*. For to what end ſhould ſacrifices ſerue, when Chriſt is manifeſted? Vnder this ſhadow then, he mentionerh the confeſſion of faith and prayer, which followed the preaching of the Goſpell. Now vnder this word he comprehends whatſoever was offered to God, as beaſts, bread, all ſorts of fruites; and whatſoever ſerued to the acknowledgement of Gods goodneſſe. But the difference betweene the old Teſtament and the new, is to be noted; and vnder theſe ſhadowes and ceremonies, we are to vnderſtand that reaſonable ſervice whereof Saint Paul ſpeaketh in the Epiſtle to the Romans, Chapter 12, verſ. 1.

That which is added of *vowes*, is alſo a part of God his ſervice. The Iewes were wont by vowes, to profeſſe that they acknowledged the goodneſſe of the Lord: and they therin eſpecially gaue thanks by a ſolemne vow, after they had received ſome rare and excellent benefit of him. They alſo made voluntarie vowes for diuers reſpects, according as euery one thought good. Yet none had liberty to vow this or that, after their owne imagination; but there was a certaine rule preſcribed them. How euer it were; it appeares that the Prophet ſignifies nothing elſe by

Draw me, and I will runne after thee: C. int. I ſhall runne the way of thy Commandements, when thou haſt ſet mine heart: Pſal. 119.

Chriſt promiſed.

Whence we are to expect deliuerance out of troubles.

God helps vs, but it is through Chriſt.

I ſay.

No ſaluati- on we haue ſaving knowledge.

Note.

Why this word know- ledge is re- peated.

The diffe- rence be- tweene the old Teſta- ment and the new.

this word *vowe*, but Gods seruice, vnto which the Egyptians should giue themselves after they had receiued \bar{y} knowledge of the truth. But he mentions those excretes of pietie, by which the Iewes made profession of the true religion. From hence the Papists draw an argument to prouoe that wee must fulfill our vovves to God; but seeing their vovves are n \bar{a} jd \bar{e} at random, and without any discretion, this place giues the no warrant for the maintenance of their error. For *isaiah* foretels what the Egyptians should do after they had imbraced and followed the doctrine of saluation. So in like maner when *Dauid* exhorts the people to vowe, and to pay their vovves, they thinke it makes for them; but he meanes not that they should therefore make *rash* or *vnlawfull* vovves. For the rule of right vowing stands alwaies in force, beyond which wee must not passe; to wit, Gods word, by which wee are taught what he requires of vs, and what we should vowe and fulfill.

There was neuer any libertie giuen vs to vow whatsoever wee list: the reason is, because we giue our selues the raines too much, and suffer our selues to r \bar{u} th against God in all things, being more impudent in this behalfe then if we had to deale with men. Now ye see the cause why it was needfull that men should be restrained by some bridle, euen to the end they might not giue themselves ouergreat libertie in Gods seruice and religion. Seeing it is thus, we may all see that God approves of nothing but that which his Law confirmes, and reiects all things else as a strange and superstitious worship. What soeuer then any man voveth of his owne head without warrant from Gods word, can not be found; and if he fulfill it, he sinnes double, first, for vowing foolishly, as if he toyed and plaid the foole with God: secondly, for accomplishing that which he hath rashly vovved without warrant: whereas he ought rather to haue repented himselfe, and to haue forborne the doing of it. So farre off is it then that such vovves do binde any man, that on the contrarie hauing acknowledged his fault and rashnes in so doing, he ought to change his mind, and to cease from performing of it. If any now shall make enquire-rouching Papistical vovves, it is easie to prouoe that they haue no affinity with Gods word. For if those which they esteeme lawfull, and the most excellent about the rest are wicked and vnlawfull, as the vovves of Monks are, what may wee thinke of the rest? They vow perpetuall Chastitie, as if it were granted to ali in a like measure: now wee know this gift is rare, neither is it promised to all; no not to those who otherwise are indued with great and excellent graces.

Abraham was of an excellent faith, and constancie, of singular meekenes, and holines, yet had he not this gift. Christ himselfe refuseth that it is not giuen to all, euen then when his Apostles \bar{y} highlie commended single life, *Math.* 19. 6. 10. 11. 12. and *S. Paul* saith the like, *1. Cor.* 7. 7. 9. He then which hath not this gift of continencie, and yet

vovves it, doth ill, and shall be iustlie punished for his presumption. Hence haue come those infinite shamefull examples, whereby God hath iustlie punished such pride in the Papacie. They vowe pouertie also; as if it were vnlawfull for them to inioy any thing of their owne; yet doe they abound in wealth about all men: is not this a plaine mocking of God? As touching the obedience which they vow, it is nothing else but mere rebellion: for they shake off Christes yoke, to subiect themselves to men. Others vow pilgrimages, to eate no flesh, to keepe certaine dayes, and other things full of superstitions. Others vow vnto God fond and doltish toys, as if they had to deale with a litle child: for we are ashamed to make such promises vnto men, amongst whom nothing is confirmed vnto men, both parties be first agreed betweene themselves, and doe allow of one anothers fact. Surely we should much lesse enterprise ought in Gods seruice, vnlesse wee haue good warrant for our decde out of his holie word. What seruice will you call that where the statutes of God are nothing accounted of, and where the will of man only takes place? Can this be acceptable vnto God, thinke we? Nay, shall it not rather be termed superstition, which *S. Paul* so much detesteth: *Coloss.* 2. 23. Those which make such vovves then do brag in vaine that they serue God therein, as if this place any thing at all fauored their conceit, because the Lord detesteth such worship.

Verf. 22. Wherefore the Lord shall smite Egypt, he shall smite and heale it: for he shall returne vnto the Lord, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heale them.

NOW the Prophet concludes that which he had said before, to wit, that the chastisement whereof he spake should be profitable to the Egyptians, because it should be as a preparatiue to bring the to repentance; as if he should say, The affliction wherewith the Lord shall smite Egypt, shall turne to the singular benefit and good thereof. Those who reade, He shall smite with an incurable wound, do interpret this place amisse, and do much diminish the Prophets meaning: for he shewes that the wounds shall be profitable, because God will vse them as a meanes to bring them home. Whence we are to gather, that we should neuer refuse to be chastised of the Lord, seeing he doth it for our great good; in regard that impunitie ingenders a greater licence to commit sinne. And because men are wonderfullie prone in giuing themselves the raines whilst God spares them; therefore he himselfe, is faine to prevent the mischief as we say, which he doth by chastisements and afflictions, that he might thereby prouoke and prick vs forward to repentance and amendment of life. Loe heere an excellent example set before vs in *Egypt*, who found grace and mercie at Gods hands, although

The Papists argument out of this place touching their vovves, answered.

Psal. 76. 12. *Eccle.* 5. 3.

Gods word must be our rule in vowing.

Note. 1 2

Vovves of Monks.

Gen. 11. 29. \bar{c} 25. 11.

Presumption in any to vov single life.

Willful p \bar{u} ertie.

Papists vovves of obedience mere rebellion.

Pilgrimages.

Note.

although ſhe was ſtuffed with ſuperſtitions and impie- tie, and ſubmounted all other nations in idolatry.

But note the meanes how; to wit, by *turning vnto God*: for this is the expoſition of the former member: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, *God ſhall heale the Egyptians, becauſe they ſhall conuert.* Let vs gather from hence, that conuerſion is as it were a reſurrection from eternall death; for we are but dead all the while we remaine vnconuerted: but being once conuerted, we enter into fauour with God, and are deliuered from hell. Not that we merit this grace by our repentance; but becauſe by this meanes the Lord ſaith vs as it were from death to life. To this repentance there is a promiſe added: whence we gather, that our requests are not in vaine, when we craue pardon for our ſinnes; provided that our repentance be not hypocriticall.

Now when the Lord ſaith, that hee will be *mercifull* to the Egyptians; hee therewithall ſhewes, that they ſhall obtaine fauour immediately after they be once conuerted. It ſhall be a true conuerſion then, when *calling vpon the name of God* ſhall follow it. But this inuocation cannot be without faith; for the wicked themſelues may haue ſome knowledge of their ſinnes; yet none of them will haue their reſcourſe to Gods mercy, neither ſhall they euer be truly reconciled vnto him, unleſſe they bee touched at the heart with the true feeling of that repentance which is toy- ned with faith: Rom. 10. 14.

And I will heale.] Hee repeats not that which he ſaid; to wit, the Lord *ſhall ſmit* Egypt, and *heale it*; but he promiſeth *to heale it* in another ſignification; that is, the Lord ſhall ceaſe to correct it. The healing whereof he made mention before, was inward: but this latter is referred to the puniſhments and afflictions. In a word, his meaning is, that God will prepare a ſpedie remedie to heale all their diſeaſes. For as ſoone as we be reconciled vnto God, hee findes nothing in vs that deſerues to be puniſhed. Doe not chariſtgements come for ſinnes? But ſinnes being pardoned, ſo are alſo the corrections which they haue deſerued. And if ſo be we be rechariſted, it is a ſigne that our repentance is not yet ſuch as it ought to be. To bee ſhort, let vs keepe in minde this order which the Prophet here ſets before vs. Firſt, men are prepared to repentance by *corrections*. Secondly, they are *healed*, becauſe they are deliuered from *eternall death*. Thirdly, being brought to the knowledge of their ſinnes, they *ſeeke pardon*. In the fourth place, God becomes *gracious* and fauourable vnto them. Laſtly, *corrections ceaſe*, hauing once obtained pardon of the Lord. Now I thinke there is no man which ought not to acknowledge theſe things which *Iſaiah* pronounceth here of the Egyptians in himſelfe, in whoſe perſon God ſets as it were a type and an example before the whole world.

Verſ. 23. *In that day ſhall there be a path from Egypt to Aſſur; and*

Aſſur ſhall come into Egypt, and Egypt into Aſſur: ſo the Egyptians ſhall wor- ſhip with Aſſur.

*Or, Ioue.

Now the Prophet ſhewes how it ſhall come to paſſe: that the Lord will ſhed this his bountie forth euery where: as if he ſhould ſay, This largell ſhall not bee that vp in ſome corner, neither ſhall it be felt of one people alone, as it was wont to be. Now he ſpeakes heere of two nations which were the ſworne enemies of the Church, and therefore ſeemed to be the fartheſt off from Gods kingdom of all others. For a man might haue had much more hope of nations further off, in regard that theſe two made warre, as you would ſay that, vpon God himſelfe, and perſecuted his Church wth ſer perſe. Oh Lord! if it be ſo that he ſhewes himſelfe thus mercifull to the capital enemies of his Church, that paſſing by their ſinnes, hee adopts them for his children, what wil he then do to other Nations? Thus yee ſee a manifeſt vocation of the Gentiles, contained in this prophetic.

Note heere the patience and bounty of the Lord our God.

When he ſaith, *The way ſhall be open*, and there ſhall bee a mutual accesse, ſo as one ſhall goe to another; hee therein notes their brotherly conference. Wee know that the Egyptians had warres with the Aſſyrians almoſt continually; ſo as they hated one another deadly. Now the Prophet proclames heere, that God ſhall turne their hearts, and reconcile them one one another in ſuch ſort, that they ſhall trade and craſſique one with the other; & the paſſages which in times paſt were ſhut vp, ſhall now be *ſer open*. We are to note that in this place then, which we haue obſerued before in the ſecond Chapter; that is, when men are reconciled vnto God, they ought to nourish brotherly kindneſſe betweene themſelues; for all ſtrifes, debates, eniues, and grudgings, ought to ceaſe with vs, when God is at one with vs. Is it not to be meruelled at then, when he ſaith, that the way is open to goe out of Egypt into Aſſyria? But all this doubtleſſe ought to be referred to the Kingdom of Chriſt, ſeeing wee read not that the Egyptians had this agreement with the Aſſyrians till they came to the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt.

Men being reconciled vnto God, ought to nourish brotherly kindneſſe betweene themſelues.

ſhall Ioue] This member may be tranſlated, They ſhall ſerue, or worſhip God: but becauſe this word *God*, is not heere expreſſed, it may be referred to the Aſſyrians, and indeed the Hebrew particle *Ech*, leades vs to thinke ſo. Thus you may expound it then; Thoſe which in times paſt burned with a deſire to doe hurt, ſhall change their mindes, and in ſtead thereof, ſhall deſire to doe good. In a word, you ſhall ſee in them the fruit of true repentance; becauſe whereas they had wont to ſpoile one another by often warres, they ſhall now take delight and pleaſure in one anothers company. And this ſenſe will ſure well to the ſcope of the Prophets words. And yet I ſeieſt not the other interpretation which is followed of the moſt; to wit, that thoſe who etewhiles worſhipped many gods,

Conuerſion a kinde of reſurrection from eternall death.

Repentance merits not remiſſion of ſinnes.

Conuerſion and inuocation goe alwaies hand in hand.

The word Healing, taken heere in a double ſenſe.

1
2

Where God forgives the ſinne, there he vſually remits the outward puniſhment.

1
2
3
4
5

shall now acknowledge but one God onely, and shall make one confession of faith. Thus it shall be free for euery one to follow which of the two expositions he liketh best. But if the last bee receiued, the Prophet then makes this brotherly loue to flow from the feare of God, as the ruer from the fountaine.

Verf. 24. *And in that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and Asshur*, euen a blessing in the midst of the land.*

*Or, a third.

*Or, shall be.

Now *Isaiah* sets downe the conclusion of the promise heere, which hee had touched; namely, that the Egyptians and the Assyrians shall be blessed as well as *Israel*. For before, the grace of God was shut vp as it were in *Israel*, in regard the Lord had made a covenant with this people only, and had spread out his cord vpon *Jacob*; as *Moses* speaks Deut. 32. 9. And *David* saith, God hath not dealt so with euery nation, neither had they knowne his iudgements: *Psal.* 147. 20. To be short, the blessing of God abroad in *Iudea* onely: but here he saith, that it shall be communicated to the Egyptians and Assyrians; vnder which two names hee comprehends all nations besides. They are not named heere by way of honour; but in regard they had been the perpetuall enemies of God, they seemed to much the further estranged from him, and to haue lesse hope of fauour then any others. Wherefore howsoeuer he adopted to himselfe the children of *Abraham* onely, yet now he is content to be called the father of all nations, indifferently. Some translate, *Israel shall be the third*, which I approue not: for in as much as the nowne is of the feminine gender, it should bee ioyned with the word *berahub*: and this word *blessing*, is as much to say, as example, or mirrour of blessing.

Verf. 25. *For the Lord of hostes shall blesse it saying; Blessed be my people, Egypt and Asshur, the work of mine hands, and Israel mine inheritance.*

HE comes againe to the reason and exposition of the former sentence: for he teacheth that the Assyrians and Egyptians shall

be companions with the elect people by the free goodnesse of God. And it is as much as if he had said; Howsoeuer these titles appertaine onely to *Israel*, yet shall they be transferred notwithstanding to another people; whom the Lord shall adopt to himselfe. Now there is a mutual correspondency betwene God and his people; so as those whom he pronounceth to be his people with his own mouth, may also answer, and by good right say, *that he is their God*. This priuledge is indifferently granted both to the Egyptians and Assyrians. But although the Prophet ineaunt to make these strangers companions with the Lewes, which were the household-people of God, yet he distinguisheth their degrees by speciall markes. For in calling the Egyptians *Gods people*, he means that they are partakers of that honour which God vouchsafed onely to the Lewes. He adorns the Assyrians with the proper title giuen to the Church, saying, that they are the *work of his hands*.

The Church (as we haue said elsewhere) is called the *work*, or *workmanship* of God. *Eph.* 2. 10. because the faithfull are reformed by the spirit, of regeneration, to the end they may beare the image of God. Thus by the *work of the hands*, he means not our *creation*, as we are made men, but *regeneration*, as we are created vnto newnesse of life; that so being separated from the world, we may be made new creatures. Whence wee perceiue, that in the matter of our new life, we ought to attribute nothing vnto our selues, because wee are altogether the workmanship of God. But when the Prophet speaks of *Israel*, he adorns him with his prebeminence; to wit, that he is the *heritage of God*: to the end hee might still retain the right and honour of the first borne among his new brethren. For this word *heritage*, hath a greater emphasis in it then we thinke commonly of. For questionlesse that same covenant which God made first with them, gaue them such a priuledge, as could not be disanulled by their vnthankfulness; because the gifts & callings of God, are without repentance: as *Saint Paul* teacheth, *Rom.* 11. 29. *Ephes.* 2. 12. Which shewes, that they are the first borne in Gods house. Howsoeuer then that the grace of God be now shed forth and spread abroad further of; yet cease they not to hold the first degree; not by their merit, but by the steadfastnesse of the promise.

The meaning of this phrase, The work of mine hands.

If our new birth be the workmanship of God, ought we to attribute any thing to our selues?

The Lewes.

THE XX. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *In the yeere that Tartan came to Asshad, (when Sargon King of Asshur sent him) and had fought against Asshad and taken it.*



IN the former Chapter *Isaiah* prophesied of that calamitie threatened against the Egyptians, there-withall promising them Gods mer-

cie: now repeating againe the same argument, hee shewes that *Israel* shall be confounded by this chastisement of Egypt, because they put their confidence in thum. He also ioines the Ethiopians with him. Whence we may coniecture that the Ethiopians were ioined in league with the Egyptians: which I haue touched heretofore, and shall touch it again in the 37. Chapter. First, we are to note the time of this prophesie: for necessitie did

The time of this prophesie, presse &c.

2. King. 18.
17.

Tartan, Rab-
ſaris, and
Rabſache.

preſſe the Jewes in ſuch wiſe then, that they were conſtrained to ſeek help of other nations. The holy hiſtorie witneſſeth, that *Tartan* was one of the Captaines of *Senacherib*; for which cauſe we muſt needs acknowledge that this *Sargon* was *Senacherib*, who (as we may ſee by this place) had two names. We are likewiſe to conſider in what caſe the ſtate of Iſrael was: for the ten Tribes had been led away captiue; and it ſeemed that the kingdome of Iudah was vtterlie waſted, in regard the whole Countrey was almoſt conquered, *Ieruſalem* excepted, which was beſieged by *Rabſache*, *Tartan*, on the other ſide, laid ſiege againſt *Ahdod*, 2. King. 18. 13. & 17. Now in the 17. verſe of the 18. Chapter there are three Captaines named: whence we mighte tolke, that *Senacherib* camp at that time was diuided into three parts, that ſo at one inſtant all being amazed and troubled, and ſome put to their ſhifts, the reſt might haue no opportunitie to aid and ſuccour one another. The Jewes therefore had no other refuge but to ſeek for help of ſtrangers. The Prophet in the meane while is ſent from God to tell them in flat termes, that it is but in vaine for them to depend vpon the ſuccour of the Egyptians, who were alreadie purſued euen by Gods immediat hand; and ſo farre was it off that they ſhould be helpfull to others, that they were ſcarce able to defend themſelues againſt their enemies. Thus the Jewes were to know for certaine, that they were iuſtly puniſhed for their inſidelitie, becauſe they left God, to ſeeke for help to the Egyptians.

The drift and
ſcope of this
propheſie.

We are heere then to obſerue the drift and ſcope of the text: for it is not Gods meaning to admoniſh the Egyptians, but to correct the inſidelitie of his people: which inſidelitie often caried them away to falſe and peruerſe hopes. That the Prophet might teach them therefore to reſt vpon God alone, he heere ſets before them what iſſue and ſucceſſe they ſhould haue fro theſe vaine helps which they ſo greedily fought after. Now this admonition doubtleſſe was very reaſonable, becauſe the Egyptians had now begun to hinder the paſſage of the Aſſyrians, and had conſtrained them to returne from whence they came: which was the beſt newes the Jewes could poſſible heare tell of. But to the end they might not reioiſe too much in theſe goodly beginnings, he threatens that this ſuccor ſhall turne into ſmoke, becauſe the Ethiopians and Egyptians ſhall in ſhort ſpace be overcome to their great diſgrace and confuſion.

Verſ. 2. *At the ſame time ſpake the Lord by the hand of Iſaiab the ſonne of Amoz, ſaying, Goe, and loſe the ſackcloth from thy loines, and put off thy ſhooe from thy foote; and he did ſo, walking naked and bare-foot.*

TO the end the Lord might confirme this propheſie by ſome externall ſigne, he commands *Iſaiab* to walke naked. For if the

Prophet had done this of his owne head, he had iuſtly deſerued to haue been mocked for his labor: but in regard he did it at Gods bidding, there is nothing to be ſene in him which is not worthe of admiration, yea, of great feare. Vnder this nakednes, and ſuch other ſignes, there are weightie matters included: beſides, God neuer did any thing either immediatly by himſelfe, neither yet by any of his ſeruants, but the reaſon of it is forthwith declared. Thus *Iſaiab* walks not naked only, but thewes what his drift is, that is to ſay, why the Lord enioined him to do it; otherwiſe the falſe Prophets might imitate the ſeruants of God, changing themſelues into diuers feartfull tormes to dazzle the eyes of ſimple people, and ſo get eſtimation: but ſuch ſignes are nought worth, becauſe God is not the author of them. Which we are diligent to obſerue, in regard of the Papiſts, who are readie to aduance and ſet vp new Ceremonies in ſtead of true Sacraments. This is the rule which we muſt oppoſe againſt them, to wit, if theſe Ceremonies of theirs be of God, then ought we to receiue them: if not, then is it lawfull for vs to recte them; nay, we can in no wiſe approve of them, but we therein offer wrong vnto God, becauſe mortall men doe then ſurp that authoritie which vnto him belongeth.

Papiſts readie to ſet vp new Ceremonies, in ſtead of true Sacraments. What rule muſt be oppoſed againſt popiſh Ceremonies.

Beſides, God impoſeth not, nor ſets ſignes before vs without the word: for what Sacrament would it be if wee ſhould only behold the bare ſigne? It is the doctrine only which makes the Sacrament. Let vs know then that there is nothing but plaine deceit when the word goes not before. The Papiſts do therefore tonidie impoſe the name of Sacrament to their vaine Ceremonies, when they are not able to confirme them by the pure Scriptures. Well, the Lord hath ſo ioined theſe things together, that none can ſeparate the, but withall they offer violence to the order which he hath inſtituted.

When God impoſeth any Ceremonie, he add. s his word vnto it.

Now in that *Iſaiab* is commanded to looſe the ſackcloth, the moſt of the interpreters gather that the Prophet was at that time clothed with a mourning weede, in regard that he bewailed the calamitie of Iſrael: for ſackcloth was a mourning garment, as appears by that which is ſaid in *Ioe*, Chap. 1. 13. They ſay then that this was done, that in bearing vpon him the garments of the guiltie or condemned, he might aſke pardon of God: or, that it could not be that his apparell and countenance ſhould reſtifie gladnes, becauſe his heart was in heaurnes. And indeed it was vnpoſſible but he muſt needs be ſore afflicted in beholding ſo great and horrible calamities.

Some thinke it was his ordinarie apparell, in regard that the Prophets uſed to weare a mantle, as teſtifieth *Zachariah* 13. 4. But this is too weake a coniecture; neither hath it any ſhew of reaſon. It is more likelie that he was clothed with ſackcloth, to expreſſe his ſorrow. For thoſe of Iudeah were become ſo ſenſeleſſe, that they cared not awhit; neither thought they that this miſerie ſhould euer be able to come neere them: no not then when their poore brethren were miſerable afflicted

ſuffered

flicted and scattered before their eyes: nay, they rather thought themselves out of all danger, and made a mocke at the words of the Prophets, who threatned and foretold their ruine. This was the cause why *Micha* also complained, that none bewailed the calamitie of *Israell*.

Mich. 1.11.

Some also aske whether this was a thing done indeed, or rather whether it were not a bare and naked vision, which hee was to set forth to the people. The most receiued opinion is, that the Prophet neuer stripped himselfe naked; but that it was shewed him by way of vision onely, and that but once. Their reason is, because he was not able to indure to goe naked the space of *three whole yeeres*, both in regard of the heate and cold, and of other incumbrances occasioned by the time. But what hurt is it if we should say that the Prophet couered himselfe in his house, and abroad also; onely that he shewed this spectacle of nakednes to the people, when he was to performe his propheticall office? For I am not much moued with that reason; that hee could not indure the heate nor cold, because God who had inioyned him to doe it, was also able to arme and preserue him when hee did it. But they bring an other reason; to wit, that nakednesse had been vnbecoming a Prophet? I answer, that this nakednesse was no more dishonest, then circumcision: which spectacle, (in the opinion of prophane men) was the most ridiculous thing that could be imagined, seeing the priuie members were then discovered. I doe not thinke, neither would I say should, that the Prophet stripped himselfe so naked, but that hee couered those vncomely parts which would haue giuen but a foule and deformed spectacle to the beholders. It was sufficient that the people were taught what the Lord meant heereby, and that they might be moued with it, as a thing extraordinarie.

Whether the Prophet stripped himselfe naked, or not.

Verf. 3.

When God inioynes vs any seruice, he therewithall furnishest vs with abilitie to performe the same.

That also which moues mee to be of this iudgement, is that which is said here, *By the hand, or, in giuing commission*: for albeit this manner of speech be often found elsewhere, yet wee neuer meete with it in any place, but it imports some hidden vehemencie; by which the effect it selfe is noted out. The Prophet then sets himselfe before God, and in the midst of the Citizens, as the herald of the calamitie that was to come; and that not by word onely, but euen by a visible signe also. It is to be obserued in like manner, that it is not noted in the text in vaine, that *Isaiah* did so.

Master Caluins iudgement touching the Prophets going naked.

Thus haue you mine opinion; to wit, that the Prophet went naked as oft as hee preached; onely shewing those parts of his body, which might be seene without blushing. As touching the *sackcloth*, although priuate men were wont to confesse their finnes in time of trouble in that maner; yet it is probable that *Isaiah* vsed this signe, both by reason of his office, as also to confirme his doctrine, and the better to rouse the people out of their securitie. If at any time it fall out that the Lord chastiseth either our selues, or our brethren, hee commands vs not to change our

raiment, neither is it needfull: but we are altogether cruell and inhumane, if the afflictions of our brethren, & the subuersion of the Church moue vs not. And if it be our parts to mourne, wee ought also to stirre vp others to doe the like, and by our example, to provoke them to feele the calamitie of the Church, that they may be toucht with some compassion.

*Heb. 13.
Rom. 12.15,
16.*

Verf. 3. And the Lord said; Like as my seruant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoote three yeeres, as a signe and wonder vpon Egypt and Ethiopia;

4. So shall the King of Achor take away the captiuitie of Egypt, and the captiuitie of Ethiopia; both young men and old men, naked and barefoote, with their buttookes vncovered, to the shame of Egypt.

Three yeeres.] Why puts hee this space of time? Because it was granted to the Egyptians and Ethiopians of the Lord, as a time of truce; to the end they might come to repentance: also that hee might thereby proue the faithfulness of his people, that without delay they might pull themselves backe from seeking all vnlawfull succours: thirdly, to the end the Egyptians and Ethiopians might know, that their ruine was not far off; howsoeuer they seemed to bee in a well settled estate. Moreover, the Lord meant heereby to discouer the rebellion of the wicked; for doubtlesse many shewed their impietie in scoffing at the Prophets nakednesse: as on the contrarie, that the faithfull being moued with such a spectacle, might learne not to stay their mündes vpon faire words, although the prosperitie of the Egyptians were a very sweete allurement vnto them. As touching this nakednesse, we are not barely to consider of it alone; but rather the inake and end which the Lord had ingrauent in it: euen as in the visible Sacraments, wee ought to behold the things which are inuisible. These two words, *captiuitie*, and *carrying away*, are collectiues, and are taken for the troope of the captiues, and those that were carried away out of the Countrey. Lastly, he saith, that no respect should be had of age: for the old should be led into captiuitie as well as the young.

Quest. Answ. 1 2 3 4 5

Isaiah his nakednesse not to be considered barely in it selfe, but the end wherefore it was inioyned him.

Verf. 5. And they shall feare and be ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

HE now shewes for whose sakes hee foretold that these things should befall the Egyptians and Ethiopians; to wit, to the end the Iewes might learne to hope in God in the midst of their afflictions, and might not call strangers to succour them; which the Lord had forbidden. He calles them their *expectation*; because the Iewes alwaies turned their

Iſa. 14. 6.
1ob 6.

their eyes towards them, asoft as they were preſſed with any incombrance, putting their truſt in them. For we are wont to caſt our eyes vpon that, from whence wee looke for ſuccour: and thence it is that *to looke*, is often taken among the Hebrewes, *to hope*. But they were to looke vnto God onely: ſo that their wandring lightneſſe is heere reprobud. The like ought to happen vnto vs, and that iuſtly; that being made naked, and forſaken of all, we might be plunged in our owne ſhame and reproch; becauſe we reſuſe the refuge which God hath ſet before vs, when he calles vs to huſſelſe, hauing ſuffered our ſelues to be ſeduced by Satans iuſſions.

Verſ. 6. Then ſhall the inhabitants of this Ile, ſay in that day; Behold, ſuch is our expectation, whither wee fled for helpe, to bee deliuered from the King of Aſſur: and how ſhall wee be deliuered?

HE calles not *Jeruſalem an Ile* onely, but the whole Country of *Iudea*. They thinke

that this name is giuen vnto it, becauſe the *Mediterranean ſea* inuions it, for nine own part, I thinke he brings this ſimilitude for another reaſon; for it hath but a litle portion of the ſea. But as an Ile is ſeparate from the dry lands: ſo had the Lord ſeparated *Iudah* from other Countries. For it was ſeparated from all thoſe nauions which were the deadly enemies of the *Iewes*; becauſe there was a wall betweene them, as *Saint Paul* ſaith, *Eph. 2. 14.* which at the laſt was broken downe at the coming of *Chriſt*. Moreouer, *Iſaiah* here confirms his prophecie: as if he ſhould ſay, Albeit you cannot now bee moued with my nakedneſſe, yet you ſhall in time know by the effects, that theſe things were not ſet before you in vaine. And God is wont to conſtaine the rebellious and vntractable at the laſt, to confeſſe their fault, that being aſtonied, they might learne to diſpute in themſelues, how their hardneſſe of heart coulde poſſibly bhade them ſo farre.

THE XXI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. The burden of the deſert ſea. As the Whirlwindes in the ſouth uſe to paſſe from the wilderneſſe, ſo ſhall it come from the horrible land.

The occaſion of this prophecie againſt *Caldea*.



HE Prophet hauing taught the people to put no conſuſtence in the *Egyptians*, but in Gods mercy onely; & hauing threatned them with the calamities which ſhould happen to thoſe nations that ſuccoured them, whereupon they reſted and relied: he now addes a conſolation for the encouragement of the faithfull. For hee telles them that the *Chaldeans*, vnder whoſe power they were to be held captiue, ſhall be rewarded according to their deſerts: whence the *Iewes* were to gather, that God had a care as touching the wrongs which they ſuſtained.

By the *deſert*, hee meanes the land of the *Caldeans*; not it was inhabited, but becauſe that the *Iewes* had a deſert on that ſide very neere vnto them; as if we ſhould take the *Alps* for *Italia*, in regard they are neerer vnto vs; as alſo that it is our way by which wee goe into that Country. But the reaſon is to be marked; for he deſcribes not the nature of the Country, but telles the *Iewes* that the ruine of their enemies is at hand, and that it is as certaine, as if they ſaw it before their eyes; euen as this deſert was. Beſides, we may note that the Prophets are wont ſometimes to ſpeake ambiguouſly and darkly of *Babylon*; to the end the faithfull onely might vnderſtand ſuch ſecret myſteries. As for exam-

ple, *Ieremiah* changeth the name of the King.

Now he ſaith, that this ſhall come from the *South*, becauſe the ſouth wind is tempeſtuouſ, and is moued with ſtormes and whirlwindes. Where hee addeth that ſuch tempeſts come from the *deſert*; it is by way of amplification: for if any tempeſt ariſeth in a place inhabited and frequented, it will not be ſo fearefull as thoſe which ariſe from the deſerts. That he might expreſſe the horrour then of this diſcomfiture, hee compares it to *tempeſts* which begin to make a noiſe in the deſerts fiſt, and then take a violent courſe, and keepe a great and hideous thundering. Yet notwithstanding it ſeemes the Prophet meant to ſay, that euen as the enemies ouerflowed from this ſide, as a tempeſt to ſpoile the land of *Iudea*: ſo preſently after, there ſhould bee a whirlwind raiſed for their overthrow. For it had not been enough to haue ſpoken of the ruine of *Babylon*; vnleſſe the *Iewes* had therewithal been informed that it proceeded from God.

Wee haue ſhewed the reaſon in the 18. Chapter, why he calles it an horrible or terrible nation; to wit, becauſe after ſo many examples of Gods wrath executed vpon it, it was a tertour to all that beheld it, in regard of the deformitie thereof. For the circumſtance of the place will not beare ſhould be called horrible, in regard of Gods power, which was the protection of it. Although then that *Babylon* was taken and ſpoiled by the *Medes* and *Persians*, *Iſaiah* notwithstanding pronounceth that the deſtruction thereof ſhall come to the cares of *Iudah*; becauſe the Lord will by this meanes bee auenged of the outrages done vnto his people, whoſe gardian he promiſed to be.

Verſ. 2. A grieuous viſion was ſhewed

ed vnto me. The transgressor against a transgressor, and the destroyer against a destroyer. Goe vp Elam, besiege Media: I haue caused all the mourning thereof to cease.

A Griuous vision.] Seeing it is his purpose to asswage the sorrow of the people, it may seeme an improper speech to call that a griuous vision, which was rather matter of ioy. But this is to be referred to the Chaldeans, who were puffed vp with their prosperitie, and feared no danger at all to be nere the. For abundance ordinarilie begets pride and carelesnes: as if he should say, The Chaldeans make a buckler of their strength and riches in vaine: and the hard stone hath met with an hammer harder then it selfe where-withall it is broken.

The destroyer.] Because Babylon had obtained the Monarchie by pilling and wasting other nations, she seemed to be exempt from all danger. Albeit then that they were feared, and had exercised all maner of cruelties and hard dealing, yet must they at length be forced to suffer the same robbing and spoiling which they had executed vpon others. And to the end the Prophet might get credit to his speech, he admontheth them it is iust, that violence should be answered with violence. *Elam* is a part of Persia, but is taken here for the whole Countrie: and for this cause also the Persians are called *Elamites*. But it is to be noted, that there was no appearance of any warre at all when *Isaiah* prophesied these things: yea, himselfe was dead an hundred yeares before there was any suspicion of this discomfiture. Whence it sufficientlie appeareth, that he could no way attaine the knowledge of these things, but by the spirit of God: and this serues greatlie to confirme the certentie of this prophesie, as also to giue authoritie vnto it. Whereas he commands the Medes and Persians to performe this seruice, his meaning is, that such calamities should not fall out to the Babylonians by hazard, nor at random, but by a certaine decree and appointment of God; in whose name he proclaimes these things, and not in the name of a priuat man. Thus representing as it were the person of God, he might well command his souldiers to assemblé thescilues together, and to make warre, as a Generall or Chieftaine. Now we haue already shewed in the tenth Chapter how the Lord vseth the seruice of theeues, robbers, and such other wicked fellows.

I haue caused all the mourning thereof to cease.] Some thinke this mourning whereof the Babylonians were the cause, ceased after they were subdued by the Medes and Persians. For their tyrannie had occasioned many to sigh and lament, which of necessitie befalls the wicked and tyrannicall rulers. But it may be others are neerer the true sense of the Prophets words, when they say, that the mourning ceased because the Babylonians found no mercie, in regard that themselves had shewed none to others. But yet I expound it more

simply, to wit, that the Lord stopped his eares at their mourning: as if he should say, their complaints and lamentations shall nothing auail them. For as they had been vnkinde and cruell, it was iust they should receiue that measure which they had met vnto others.

Verf. 3. Therefore are my loynes filled with sorrow: sorrowes haue taken me as the sorrowes of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed downe when I heard it, and I was amazed when I saw it.

Here the Prophet brings in the Babylonians, lamenting as if the thing had been presentlie acted: for it was not enough simple to foretell the destruction of Babylon, vnlesse the people had bene therewithall so confirmed, as the matter might appeare to be finished already as it were in the sight of the faithfull. This description then was necessarie: not that we should thinke the Prophet here discouers the affection of his heart, as if he had pitied the Babylonians: nay rather he takes the person of some Babylonian vpon himselfe, as we haue said in another place. It ought to content vs that the secret iudgements of God are thus presented before vs as in a looking-glasse, that the dulnes of our faith might be quickned and comforted. The Prophets do therefore more fullie and elegantly describe and set forth these things, then can be any way comprehended by mans reason. Whilest *Isaiah* then thus expresseth his griefe, he therewithall teacheth the faithfull how seuerer Gods vengeance should be vpon the Chaldeans; and what horrible punishment Babylon shall feele: euen as it fares with vs, when some sudden feare surpriseth vs, or whé one brings vs some heauie tidings.

And he yet further expresseth his griefe, when he compares it to *the sorrowes of a woman trauieling with child*: as one who being grieuouſlie pained turnes this way and that way looking for succor with wringing the hands. The Prophets are faine to vse such kinds of speech because of our dulnes: for we perceiue not the iudgements of God, vnlesse they be pointed out vnto vs with the finger as it were, so as we may euen touch and feele them. But we are thus admonished of them before they come, to the end we may stand vpon our watch.

Verf. 4. Mine heart failed: fearefulnesses troubled me: the night of my pleasures hath he turned into feare vnto me.

Others translate not amisse, My heart hath wandred hither and thither, because the mind is almost besides it selfe when any great feare falls vpon it. *Isaiah* declares then the sudden destruction of Babylon, at which a man trembles much more then when it is foreseene, and meanes vsed to prevent it. *Daniel* recites how that which *Isaiah* heere foretold came to passe, and saw it with his eyes,

Abundance
visuallie be-
gets pride
and securitie.

It is iust that
violence
should be
payed home
with violence.

The reason
why the Pro-
phets are
wont to
speake of
iudgements
to come, as if
they had bin
already
present.

eyes. *Balthazar* in the night had prepared a ſtately banquet, and thought of nothing leſſe then to be put to death when the Perſians came in ſuddenly vpon him. Theſe delights were then ſuddenly changed into feares and

vnto me; Goe ſet a watchman to tell what he ſeeth.

The Prophet is commanded to appoint a watchman to ſtand in the Tower, and to tell what he ſees aſſure off; becauſe it could not yet be ſcene with the eyes, neither comprehended by coniecture. To the end then that euery one might vnderſtand that hee ſpake not at raudome, he reſtiſies, that he publiſheth the things which he cleerely and plainly knew by a propheticall ſpirit: for he is mounted aboue the reach of mans iudgement, to whom ſuch things are vnknowne and incredible. And this is diligently to be obſerued: for we muſt not thinke that the Prophets foreſaw things by their owne induſtry, or learned that which they publiſhed, of men; but let vs know, that they were carried vp in the ſpirit farre aboue the reach of mans reaſon, to behold things aſſure off, as if they had been in a watch-tower; for which reſpect, they were rightly termed Seers. For albeit we ſee, yet are we hoodwincked, and haue much adoe to perceiue that which lieth before our ſectet: yea, he that hath the cleereſt ſight, is oftentimes very blinde; becauſe he comprehends nothing but what hee can gather by reaſon. But the Prophets ſpake by the Spirit of God, as from heauen.

Verſ. 5. *Prepare thou the table: watch in the watch-tower: eate, drinke: ariſe yee Princes, anoint the ſhield.*

This may be read otherwiſe: as if he ſhould ſay; When they made readie the table, and whileſt the watch-men were fitted for their places, whileſt they eate and dranke, behold they were ſuddenly ſurpriſed with feare and aſtoniſhment: one beganne to cry alarm, alarm, yee Princes ariſe, anoint the ſhield. Thus the Prophet ſets the matter forth in liuely tables, euen as if it were a thing then acted. Truly *Xenophon* deſcribes not the taking of the Citie more like an Hiſtoriographer then our Prophet heere doth. Whence we may diſcerne, that *Iſaiah* was not taught this prophecie by naturall coniectures, that hee could thus in liuely colours ſet forth that which was to him vnknowne, but that the Spirit of God was his ſchool-maſter.

Xenophon.

A manifeſt prooſe, that the Prophets writ as they were moued by the holy Ghoſt.

2. Pet. 1. 21.

Wee are further to note the time where- in theſe things were foretold: for the eſtate of the Kingdome of Babylon was then moſt flouriſhing, and ſeemed to bee inuincible; ſo as it feared no dangers. *Iſaiah* derides that vaine confidence of theirs, and ſhewes, that this greatneſſe can eaſily bee brought low. It ought not to ſeeme abſurd, that he brings in the watch-man ſpeaking: for albeit the ſiege laid againſt the Citie, yet nothing daunted this proud and wicked Tyrant from plunging himſelfe ouer head and eares in voluptuouſneſſe and exceſſe; and yet it is not to be doubted, but watches were ſet to keepe all ſure.

Princes were wont to haue a guard round about them, to the end they might the more ſecurely ouerflow in all wantonneſſe without feare: but the Prophet of ſet purpoſe mixeth the watches with the delicacies of the Table; the more evidently to ſhew, that this wretched Tyrant was ſmiten with a ſpirit of ſenſeleſneſſe, before he beganne to dinke himſelfe drunke. The King of Babylon then banqueted and made great cheere with his Nobles, at the verie time when hee was ouerwhelmed with ſudden deſtruction, without taking any heede: not that he was out of danger before, but becauſe he was careleſſe, and ſcorned the enimie; A man would haue thought this impoſſible the day before it happened: for the conſpiracie of *Gabrias* and his faction, who betrayed the King, was not yet knowne. But who would haue imagined that ſo ſtrange a thing ſhould come to paſſe, had hee liued in the time when *Iſaiah* vetered this?

The ſumme of all is, that ſuch ouerſhoote themſelues, as would meaſure this prophecie by their owne iudgement; becauſe it came from God, and therefore ſurpaſſeth our capacitie very much. There is alſo much more authoritic giuen to this prophecie, in that he ſets the watch in the name of God. If any obiect then, Thou telleſt things incredible, as if they were already come to paſſe. He answereth, I publiſh nothing at adventure; for he which is appointed a watch-man by the Prince, ſeeth that a ſarre off, which is vnknowne vnto others. Thus *Iſaiah* perceiued thoſe things by the reuelation of the holy Ghoſt, which others knew not of.

1. Sam. 9. 9.

The Prophet ſpake as they were moued by the holy Ghoſt.

Obiect. Anſ.

Verſ. 7. *And hee ſaw a chariot With two horſemen: a chariot of an aſſe, and a chariot of a camell: and he heare- ned, and rooke diligent heede.*

8. *And he cried, Alion. My Lord, I ſtand continually vpon the Watch-tower in the day time, and I am ſet in my watch euery night.*

That which hee now addeth, contains a liuely deſcription of this diſcomfiture: for the Prophet publiſheth that which he vnderſtood from the watch-man, whom he had ſet in the tower by the commandement of God. He here brings in this watch-man loo- king a ſarre off, and reporting that which he ſaw: and as if hee had not ſcene cleerely enough at the firſt bliſh, he ſaith it was a chariot: but afterwards viewing it more circumſpectly, he ſaith there were two horſemen in this chariot. For our iudgement is darke and con- fuſed at the firſt, in regard of the nouclite of

Verſe 6;

Verſ. 9. *For thus hath the Lord ſaid*

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the matter, or by reason of the distance of place; and afterward as the thing approacheth neerer, so we iudge better of it. Now it is no wonder that matters belonging to men should be referred either to the Prophets, or to the visions of God: for we know that God takes vnto him the affections of men, that he may the better apply himselfe to our weakenes.

Lastly, he *saw a Lion*: by which some thinke *Darius* should be signified, who conquered and sacked Babylon, as it appears by the fifth Chapter of *Daniel*: Whereas the watchman saith he is *continuallie* vpon his *watchtower* day and night, it serues to confirme the prophesie; as if he should say, nothing is more certaine then this vision: for those whom God sends to watch, are neither blind, nor sleepe. In the meane while he exhorts and surres vp the faithfull by this example to be as *attentive* as himselfe; that by the light of the word they may discouer Gods power as farre off.

Verf. 9. *And behold, this mans Chariot cometh With two horsemen. And he answered and said, Babel is fallen, and all the Images of her gods hath be broken vnto the ground.*

BY this we plainly see that he brings not in the watchman of king *Nabuzar*: for this kind of speech fits not such a person; the Prophet then by Gods commandement publisheth what should fall out. Now this may be referred vnto *Darius*, and also vnto God, as well as to the watchman; howbeit, there is no great difference: for *Darius* being Gods seruant in this behalfe, it is no absurditie to bring him in heere as his Herald. There would be better shew of reason to apply it vnto God, in regard that *Darius* thought nothing lesse then that he was Gods seruant, when he caused the Idols of the Babylonians to be broken downe. But the matter coheres better to referre it to the watchman, euen as if the Angell should adde an interpretation to this prophesie.

There is a close opposition in this place betwene the liuing God, and dead Idols. This phrase of speech also is to be noted, in that he calles them *Images of God*. For the Babylonians knew well enough (which all Idolaters doe in a manner confesse) that their Images were no Gods: notwithstanding, they attributed vnto them a diuine power. But when men are come to that passe, they turne the truth of God into a lye; yea, they utterlie renounce him. But occasion will be offered vs hereafter, where we shall speake of this matter more at large. We heere see that the ruin of Babylon was as a iust punishment for her Idolatrie: for the Prophet shewes the cause thereof, when he saith, that God could not indure she should glorie in her Idols.

Verf. 10. *O my threshing, and the corne of my floore: that which I haue*

heard of the Lord of hostes the God of Israel, haue I shewed vnto you.

BECAUSE the riches of this so mightie a Monarchie dazed the eyes of all, by the brightness thereof, it might be esteemed but a fabulous matter whatioeuer the Prophet foretold touching the destruction of it. That is the reason why he draws the minds of the faithfull vnto God, that so they might know it is he alone who tooke in hand to roote Babylon out, and that such greatnes should not come to ruine at mens appetites, but by his power only. *The threshing and somes of the floore*, are taken for one and the same thing: for it is an vsuall phrase of speech among the Hebrues, who are wont to repeat one thing often.

This place is diligentlie to be noted, to correct a vice naturallie grafted in vs; namely, when we measure Gods power by our own ell. For his counsell not only farre surpasseth our weak reach, but we are also ill Iudges, and deprauers of his works: neither can we be brought to see the greatnes of them further forth then our owne skill and wit stretcheth. But Gods infinit power ought alwaies to present it selfe before vs: and then especially when our own wit and reason is brought to the last cast: as when the Church is oppressed with tyrants, that it seemes past hope of recouerie, yet euen then let vs know that the Lord will bring them to nothing; and by treading their pride vnder foot, and by breaking their power, will shew that it is his *threshing*. For y^e Prophet foretold this of no mean or common person, but of the mightiest and most flourishing Monarchie of the world, by how much the more then such are exalted, so much the sooner shall their destruction come vpon them, and the Lord shall send his threshers amongst them.

We are also to know that the example of this incredible ruin which the Lord here sets before vs, appertaines to such as are partakers with them in their sinnes. When he saith he heard this of the Lord of hostes, it is as it were a scale to ratifie the prophesie: for he protesteth that he broached none of his owne coniectures, but received them of the Lord himselfe. Wherein we may note that Gods seruants ought to be furnished with this assurance, that they speake in the name of God, as the Apostle *Peter* witnesseth; Let him that speakes (saith he) speake as the words of God, 1. Pet. 4. 11. For seducers will brag much of the name of God, but his faithfull seruants are assured in their consciences that they haue published nothing but that which God hath commanded them. We may also obserue that this confirmation was exceeding necessarie, because the whole world (as it were) quaked vnder the puissance of so mightie a Monarchie.

But it is not without good cause that he adornes God with these two epithites, calling him the Lord of hostes, and God of Israel. As touching the first, it is true that it alwaies agrees vnto God: but doubtlesse the Prophet

Wee must expect the restoration of the church when it seemes she is past recouerie.

* Or, the fountes.

* corne of my floore: that which I haue

had a ſpeciall regard therein now vnto the preſent matter; oppoſing the power of God againſt all the forces of the Babylonians. For the Lord hath not one hoſt alone, but infinite hoſtes for the bringing downe of his enemies. He is called the *God of Iſrael*, becauſe he ſhewed himſelfe to be the protector and defence of his people, in the deſtruction of the Babylonians: for the Iewes were then ſet at libertie, when this Monarchie was abolithed. In a word, all things are done here in fauour of the Church; to which the Prophet hath a ſpeciall eye. For he teacheth not the Babylonians, who would haue condemned theſe prophecies; but the faithfull, that they might be aſſured that God had a ſpeciall care of them, howſocuer the Babylonians moleſted them, and had ſcattered them here and there.

Verſ. 11. *The burden of Dumah. Hee calleth vnto me out of Seir; Watchman, what was in the night? watchman, what was in the night?*

The cauſe of this propheſie againſt Dumah not certaineſie knowne.

IT appeares by the 25. Chapter, verſ. 14. of Genetiſ, that this people came of *Iſmaels* ſonne, to whom this name is giuen: for which cauſe his ſucceſſors were called *Dumans*. The certaine cauſe of the deſtruction which is here denounced againſt them, is not knowne: and this propheſie is ſo much the more obſcure, by reaſon of the briefneſſe of it. Yet we muſt alwaies remember what I touched before; to wit, that the Iewes were to be fortified againſt the horrible offences which were at hand. For when ſo many ſeueral changes fall out, eſpecially if the world be ſo moued, that all things are confuſed; we then begin to be troubled, doubting in our ſelues whether things fall out by chance, or whether they be gouerned by the providence of God. For this cauſe the Lord telleth vs, that he is the authour of this change, and renueth the face of the world; to teach vs that nothing is permanent here below, that ſo we might with our whole heart aſpire to that Kingdome of Chriſt which onely is perpetuall.

The reaſon of it in reſpect of the Iewes.

In regard then that theſe changes were neere, it was needfull the Iewes ſhould be aduertified of it aforehand, that when they ſaw them come to paſſe, theſe things might be called to minde, that therein they might behold the providence of God, and ſo gather increaſe of faith. Neither is it to be doubted but the Iewes were carried with diuers diſtractions of minde to and fro, in ſeeing the world ſo shaken on all ſides, and therefore ſought by all meanes they might, to auoid theſe waues and tempeſts. For it is our deſire alwaies to be in ſuch a place of ſafetie, as we may be free from all danger of gunſhor, as they ſay. Some of them peraduenture then might ſeek ſome other place of aboad, the better to prouide for their owne affaires; but when the miſchiefe ſhould preſſe them on euerie ſide, this might make them tarry at home; and admoniſhed them that they could

ſhinde no better or ſafer habitation then in the companie of the faithfull.

By this example alſo many might be aduertified, who for feare of dangers, ſeparated themſelues from the Church; thinking they could finde none greater out of it. The Iewes then might be ſollicit with ſuch thoughts: for we haue ſeene in the eight Chapter, that they had reſtleſſe mindes. Seeing then they were thus in doubt, that they ranne to ſtrangers for ſuccour; they might eaſilie be out of heart. And therefore as I take it, this is the principall reaſon why *Iſaiab* thus denounceth the ruine of the *Dumans*; namely, that the Iewes might willingly put themſelues vnder Gods protection, and aboute all things might recommend the ſafetie of the Church vnto him.

Let vs hence learne to keepe our ſelues in the lap of Gods Church, be it that we ſee her aſſicted with diuers and ſundry calamities; and let vs rather gladly ſuſteine thoſe lo- uing chaſtiſements which are proper to her children, then to wander abroad to drinke the lees and dregs which ſhall ſtrangle and choke the wicked. For if the children be thus chaſtiſed, what ſhall become of the ſtrangers and reprobates? It may be alſo that the *Dumans* moleſted Gods people, whilſt their neighbours aſſailed them on all ſides.

We ought to keepe our ſelues in the lap of Gods Church, though we ſee her ſuffer ſundry trials. I. Pet. 4. 17. 18.

Of Seir.] It was a mountaine of Idumea, as it appeareth, Gen. 14. 6. And vnder the name of this mountaine, hee comprehendeth the whole Kingdome. Now in this place he repreſents, as in a glaſſe, thoſe things which had neede of words of vehemencie. And ſeeing the Idumeans asked the *watchman what was in the night?* it is very likely they were not farre off, and were in hazard of the common danger: for he brings them not in inquiring, as curious to know what newes; but they aſke what the watch ſaw in the night: as when one inquires, then comes another; and the third will come and doe the like. Hereunto tends the *repetition*, that it was not one alone that inquired, but many; as men are wont to doe when things are doubtfull and perplexed, when euery one affrighted in himſelfe, giues credit to nothing that is told them.

Verſ. 12. *The Watchmen ſaid; The morning commeth, and alſo the night: if yee will aſke, enquire: returne and come.*

HIS meaning is, that this feare ſhall not laſt a day onely, or ſome little ſpace: as if the watchman ſhould answer, I will tell you that to morrow which I told you to day; and if you feare now, you ſhall alſo feare to morrow. Now it is a moſt miſerable condition, when men are ſo troubled, as they hang in ſuſpence whether they ſhall liue or die; it being that extreme curſe, wherewith the Lord threatens the wicked by *Mofes*, Who will warrant me till the euening? And when the euening is come, who will let mee ſee the morning? Deut. 28. 67. True it is, that the faithfull are inuironed about with many dangers:

The faithfull
see life in the
middell of
the horrors
of death.

gers: but they know that themselves and their lues are in the hand of God: and therefore they see life in the middell of the horrors of death; or at the least they asswage their feares and perturbations by hope and patience. But the wicked alwaies tremble, and are not onely vexed with feare, but they also consume away in their troubles.

That which is by and by added, *retourne, and come*: may be expounded two waies; either that they shall lose their labour in running vp and downe without ceasing: or else thus, if any of you be better aduised, get you to Dumah, and there they shall meete with more feares then in the countrie, for they shall finde rest in no place whatsoeuer. Now in regard that God hath alwaies a care of his Church, wee shall finde no place of refuge more safe then there, yea, although we should compasse sea and land.

Verf. 13. The burden against Arabia. In the forest of Arabia shall ye carrie all night, euen in the waies of Dedanim.

The reason
of this bur-
den against
Arabia.

Now he comes to the Arabians, foretelling that they also must keepe their turn in meeting with Gods iudgement, and all to the end hee might exempt no one region which were knowne to the Lewes. Now hee shewes that they shall be surprized with so great feare, that they shall forsake their owne houses to flie into the *forest*. Then he names the place whither they shall flie, to wit, *Dedanim*.

Verf. 14. O Inhabitants of the land of Tema: bring forth water to meete the thirstie, and preuent him that sleeth with his bread.

HE now amplifies that trembling, wherewith God had determined so feuerely to smite the Arabians, that they should thinke of nothing else but of their flight, so as they should not haue so much leisure as to provide them of necessarie things for their voyage. *Isaiah* then tels them that they shall come into the region of *Dedanim* empty and destitute of all things, not hauing any food at all to susteine their life. And therefore he exhorts the Inhabitants there to meete them with *bread and water*: for otherwise they should perish by reason of extreame want. I know that others expound this place otherwise, for they thinke the Prophet derides the Arabians, who had in curish and cruell to the Lewes: as if he should say, you would now be glad to beate water to those that are athirst: but this exposition is too constrained. And yet I denie not but their crueltie was sufficientie recompenced, when they were faine to run on this maner to and fro. Notwithstanding mine exposition is more simple, to wit, that the Arabians should be in miserable a case during their flight, that they should not haue so much as a little *water*: and therefore must needs perish for thirst, ylesse some came in time to succor them: and he also tels them

that they should haue no lesse neede of *bread* then of water. He calles their neighbours to relieue them, not as exhorting them to doe their dutie, but that he might expresse the matter the more clearly. He commands then to bring forth their bread, not as though they deserued it, but because they stood in neede by reason of extreame want. Yet in as much as the law of nature requires this dutie, the Prophet closely intimates, that the vnworthie & hungrie are defrauded of their bread, whē men refuse to supplie their needs.

Verf. 15. For they flee from the drawne sword, euen from the drawne sword; and from the bent bow, and from the grieuousnes of warre.

His meaning is, that the calamitie shall be so fearefull, that the Arabians shall not flee without cause: the reason is, because the enemies shall pursue them so hotlie with *swords and weapons*, that they shall not be able to saue themselves by flight. It is manifest enough why he mentioneth this discomfiture: for the Lewes were to be admonished in time of that which was afterwar to fall out, that they might know the world was gouerned by the prouidēce of God and not by chance: and that by other mens harmes they might learne to see God the Iudge of all nations which way soeuer they turned their eyes. But it is not knowne, neither doe histories make mention whether the Arabians were the enemies of the Lewes or no. Howsoeuer it be, it is certaine that these things are set downe for the consolation of the faithfull, to the end they might behold Gods iustice executed vpon all nations, and might also acknowledge that his tribunall seate was erected and set vp in Ierusalem, from out of which he should passe iudgement against the whole world.

Verf. 16. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, yet a yeere according to the yeres of an hireling, and all the glorie of Kedar shall faile.

HE also addes that the calamitie wherof he hath prophesied was neere to the Arabians, which serued greatlie for the consolation of the faithfull. For our passions do naturallie boile so within vs, that wee can not indure to be deferred any long time: the Lord therefore hath respect to our weaknes when he saith, that he will put his hand to the worke. For this cause the Prophet shewes that he foretels things which should not be long before they came to passe, that so the Lewes might with the more courage beare their afflictions, out of which they were to assure themselves to be deliuered in short space. We haue spoken heretofore of the similitude of the *yeere of an hireling*, which he now addeth the better to expresse the matter: for it is all one in effect as if he had said, Be of good cheere, the time shall not be prolonged. The
Chap. 16. 14
prophane

profane authors haue vſed this ſimilitude, when they would expreſſe a ſet and deſired time : as a place of *Honour* teſtiſeth, where he faith; that the day ſeemes long to thoſe which labour, and are to giue vp an account of their taſke.

Verſ. 17. *And the reſidue of the ſtrong Archers of the ſonnes of Kedar ſhall be few : for the Lord God of Iſrael hath ſpoken it.*

And the reſidue.] He affirmeth that this calanitic ſhal not be as yet the end of their puniſhments; becauſe that which yet *remains* to Arabia, ſhall vaniſh by little and little : as if he ſhould ſay; The Lord will not onely impoveriſh the Arabians by warre, but will purſue them to the vtmoſt, till all hope of ſuccour be cleane taken away from them, and that they be cut off. For ſuch are the iudgements of God which hee executeth vpon the wicked. Whereas on the conſtrarie, he mitigates and tempers the ſtripes wherewith he ſmites his children, leſt they ſhould be quite out of heart. By *the ſtrong*, he means the warlike men that are ſit to beare armes, ſaying; that euen they in the end ſhall drop away, although they eſcaped it in the firſt deſtruction. True it is that hee hath threatened the Iews heretofore with the like plagues; but he alwaies added ſome promiſe, either to aſſuage the burthen of them, or at the leaſt that they ſhould not bee too much out of heart. For it may fall out ſometimes, that the children of God ſhall be ſomewhat ſharply afflicted then the vnbeleeuers; but the hope of fauour which is ſet before them, puts a difference betwene them and the reſt of the

world. Now when we heare that God executes ſuch horrible iudgements vpon the wicked; is it that we ſhould be troubled when we fall into ſore temptations? Nay, rather we ought to gather this conſolation, that he will chaſtiſe vs gently, and not condemne vs to death.

The God of Iſrael.] The Prophet teacheth, as we haue heretofore ſcene, that we are not onely to know that theſe things fell out by the diuine prouidence; but that the God whom Iſrael worſhipped, had ſo ordained them to come to paſſe. For all men are ſometimes conſtrained to reuerence God, albeit they beare themſelues in hand, that things are guided by fortune; becauſe theſe thoughts enter now and then into the mindes of the moſt rebellious, as well in proſperitie as in aduerſitie, that certaine there is a God in heauen : but yet they forge a kind of diuine power, according to their own fantaſie, whether in heauen or in earth. Becauſe then profane men imagine a God in their owne braine, therein ſhowing their vanitie and beaſtlineſſe; the Prophet brings backe the Iews to that God whom they worſhipped, to the end they might acknowledge, that it was in him in whom their felicitie conſiſted, becauſe he receiued them into his ſafeguard and protection. For it is not enough that we honour ſome God at random, who gouernes the world; but wee ought to know the true God, who hath reuealed and manifeſted himſelfe vnto vs in the perſon of his Sonne Chriſt. Yea, we ought to note this diligently againſt all profane thoughts of many, who forge I know not what conſuſed diuinity, becauſe they dare not plainly deny that there is a God.

HORACE.

Though the faithfull are ſometimes more ſharply afflicted then the wicked.

THE XXII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *The burden of the valley of viſion. What aileth thee now that thou art wholly gone vp into the hoſe toppes?*

Or, what haſt thou to doe here?



Iſaiah prophecieth againe againſt Iudea: which he names the *valley of viſion*. And he rather attributes this title to whole Iudea, then to Ieruſalem, of which he will ſpeake afterwards: but now in the Preface hee comprehends the whole land. He calles it a *valley* for iuſt cauſe; for it was inuironed on every ſide with mountaines. The ſimilitude receiued by many; namely, that Ieruſalem is called a *valley*, becauſe ſhe ſhould be debaſed from her dignitie, is ſomewhat too much conſtrained. It is well enough knowne why the word *viſion* is added; to wit, becauſe the Lord had enlightned all Iudea with his word: the Prophet

were euer reſident there, who for that cauſe were alſo called *Seers*. 1. Sam. 9. 9. And here in there is a cloſe oppoſition; for there is leſſe light in the *valleys*, then in places that are plaine and open; becauſe the height of the mountaines hinder the light. Yet notwithstanding all this, he ſhewes that this valley is more cleere, then thoſe regions that lie open on all ſides to the light of the Sunne: which doubtleſſe came to paſſe by the ſingular goodneſſe of God. For his meaning is not, that it was enlightened by the beames of the Sunne, but with the word of God. Beſides, no doubt but the Prophet meant to caſt downe that vaine and fooliſh confidence wherewith the Iews were puff'd vp, in regard that God had beautified them with excellent priuiledges about others: for they deceiued themſelues whiſt they thought, that becauſe they had the word and the propheties, they were therefore fenced againſt all dangers; notwithstanding their diſobedience and rebellion againſt God. His meaning then is, that theſe *viſions* ſhould not hinder the Lord to auenge himſelfe vpon their vnthankfulneſſe: nay, by

The reaſon why Iudea is called a valley.

The reaſon why it is called the valley of viſion.

this note of thankfulness, he aggravates their crime; that in so great light of the heavenly truth, they ceased not to stumble, as if they had been utterly destitute of it.

W hat hast thou to doe here?] He now bends his speech to Ierusalem; not that this destruction concerned that Citie alone, but because the whole land thought themselves secured vnder the shadow of the Sanctuarie, which was in it: as also that the Iewes might thinke what was like to befall them, if this Citie which was so well furnished, should be thus dealt withall. He asks by way of admiration, whence it comes that euerie one left his house, *fleeing to the tops thereof* to saue their liues. Now the roofes of the Iewes houses were made otherwise then ours are: and thence it is that Iesus Christ saith, *What I tell you in the eare, that preach you on the house tops: Mat. 10. 27.* When the inhabitants of Ierusalem then fled to the tops of their houses, and left the houses themselves to the wils of their enemies, it was a signe that they were exceedingly flighted. They might all get vp thither to chase away their enemies with darts and arrowes: but his meaning rather is, that the enemy constrained them to runne vp thither, because they were not onely amazed at their coming, but also fled for feare: yet so, as their flight should not saue them.

Verf. 2. *Thou that art full of noise, a Citie full of brute, a toyous Citie: thy slaine men shall not bee slaine with sword, nor die in battell.*

Or, are not
slaine.

His meaning is, that it was peopled and full of inhabitants; because there is great noise where many people are gathered together, neither can the feare there be so great. *Isaiah* adds this by way of amplification; to wit, that whereas being a sufficient number, they should haue been vpon the walles and ramparts to defend the Citie, they like cowards gaue place to the enemies, and fled vp to the tops of their houses. He therefore professeth the Iewes the more neerely with these words, that they might duly weigh the iudgement of God: for when mens hearts are cast downe with so great feare, it is certaine that such an astonishment is sent of God. It is as much the as if the Prophet had said; *Whence comes it that thou hast no more courage to resist? Surely because the Lord himselfe chafeth and pursueth thee.*

Now this doctrine is taken out of the 28. of *Deuteronomie*: for we haue often said, that the Prophets doe many times borrow sentences out of *Moses*, to serue their turne withall: onely the difference is, that they apply that particularly, which *Moses* spake in generall. The Prophet reprocheth the Iewes then with this their calamitie very iustly: for it was fit they should be touched to the quicke, to the end they might learne that all the trouble and euils which they indured, happened to them in regard of their trespasses and sins. For the Lord had promised them continuall

assistance: but being now left of him, they were to confesse themselves vnworthy of his aid, and that they had caused the Lord to recoile backe from them by their rebellions.

The Lord neuer deceiues, neither promisseth he any thing in vaine: but these poore wretches are depriued of his loue and fauor by their owne default: which is yet better expressed by that interrogation which followeth; *What hast thou to doe here?* For it is as much as if by the present act, he shewed that Ierusalem is left destitute of her protectour and defender: because this manner of speech signifies as much as some strange and vnwonted thing. And to the end he might the better set forth the vengeance of God, hee telles them that those which were slaine, died not like valiant men in battell; but that they died onely for want of heart and courage: for this womanish and timorous heart, was a sure token to them that they were all left of God; whose assistance if they had had, they should boldly and manfully haue made resistance. So then hee not onely affirms that this discomfort was accompanied with shame and dishonour; but he also attributes the want of heart and courage to resist to the wrath and anger of God: neither is it to be doubted, but by the circumstance of this their flight, hee beates downe their vaine arrogance and pride.

Verf. 3. *All thy Princes shall flee together from the bowe: they shall bee bound: all that shall be found in thee, shall bee bound together, which haue fled from furre.*

This verse is expounded diuers waies. The matter in it selfe is cleere enough: but there is some difficultie in the words. Now because the letter *Mem* signifies Before; some expound the word *Merachok* They fled before others: who notwithstanding were neerer vnto danger, in regard they dwelt vpon the borders of the Countie. Others thus, Although they were very far off from Ierusalem, yet they ranne away as men possessed with feare, who flee without stay, thinking that they haue the enemy alwaies at their heeles. But I take this sense to bee better agreeing; *They ranne farre off*: that is to say, those who fled to Ierusalem, as to a Sanctuarie, shall bee taken and bound by the enemies.

Now Ierusalem was as the common Citie of refuge for the whole Countie of Iudea: and therefore after any warre was begun, the inhabitants on all sides drew themselves thither. But they were surprised, notwithstanding they thought it such a place of safetie. Some reterre this to the siege of *Senacherib*: ^{2. King. 18.} but I cannot be led by any means to expound it so, because hee speaks of the destruction of Ierusalem. But we know when it was besieged by *Senacherib*, the Lord deliuered it forthwith; neither was there any taken or bound, neither was any slaine there. These things fell out then a long time after the ^{13.} ^{2. King. 39.} ^{15.} ^{2. King. 24.} ^{12.} Prophets

Prophets death: and the holie hiſtorie wit-
neſſeth the ſame: as alſo that the Princes de-
termined to flee when this calamitie hapned:
but neither their flight to Jeruſalem, nor
their running away from it did them any
good at all, becauſe they fell into the hands
of the enemies.

In that he ſpeakes expreſſie of the *Princes*,
it aggravates the indignitie of the fact, for
they ſhould have been the ſormoſt in ven-
tring of their lives for the ſafety of the peo-
ple, no leſſe then if they had bin their ſhields
and bucklers to ſuſtaine and defend them.

1 But Jeruſalem being now in her flouriſhing e-
ſtate and in great proſperitie, theſe things
might ſeeme incredible, becauſe it was a
2 ſtrong and well fenced Citie: beſides, it bo-
a ſteth chieflie in this, that it was vnder Gods
protection. For the people thought that God
was faſt ſincked (as you would ſay) to the
Temple which was amongſt them, of which
they bragged in ſuch wiſe, that they perſwa-
ded themſelves they could not be hurt by
any power or forces whatſocuer, though the
whole world ſhould conſpire their deſtructi-
on. This propheſie therefore might ſeeme
very ſtrange, to wit, that they ſhould become
heardleſſe, and betake them to their heeles,
and yet ſhould not eſcape this way neither.

Iere.7.4.

Verſ.4. *Therefore ſaid I, Turne away
from me: I will weepe bitterlie: labour
not to comfort me for the deſtruction of
the daughter of my people.*

TO the end the Prophet might affect the
hearts of the Iewes the more with this ca-
lamitie he takes vpon him the perſon of a
mourner: and not that only, but with bitter
lamentation he bewailes the deſolation of
Gods Church. For this place muſt not be ex-
pounded like the former, wherein he expreſ-
ſed and ſet forth the ſorrow and heauines of
forreine nations: But in regard he ſpeakes
heere of the afflictions of the Church where-
of himſelfe was a member, he hath good cauſe
to mourne in good earneſt, and to call vpon
others to lament with him. That which hap-
pens to the Church then in generall, ought
no leſſe to moue vs, then if each of vs felt the
miſerie vpon himſelfe in particular: other-
wiſe where ſhall this ſentence be verified,
The zeale of thy houſe hath eaten me vp?
Pſal.69.10. Now the Prophet mournes not
apart nor in ſecret without witneſſes, firſt,
1 becauſe he meant (as I ſaid euen now) to pro-
uoke others by his example not onely to
mourne and weepe, but rather to repent,
that ſo they might prevent the iudgement of
God which hung ouer their heads, and might
prouoke him no more for the time to come.
2 Secondlie, to the end that himſelfe who was
as the herald and meſſenger of God, might
publish and declare the wrath that was like
to fall vpon them; ſhewing by this his owne
deed, that it was no vaine thing which he
ſpoke.

We may eaſilie gather from that which is
added, that the Prophet ſpoke that with his

mouth which he felt in his heart when he
ſaith, *I will weepe bitterlie for the daughter of my
people:* for himſelfe being one of *Abrahams*
of-ſpring, he could not but be touched to the
quick with this common calamitie, and there-
fore teſtifies, y he hath juſt cauſe to mourne.
He calles the *daughter* the aſſemble of the
people, according to y vſuall phraſe. Whence
we may note, that when the Church is af-
flicted we ought to be moued with compa-
ſion by the example of the Prophet, vnleſſe
wee be more then yron hearted. For we ac-
viterlie vnworthie to be numbred among the
children of God, or to be accounted among
the communion of Saints; vnleſſe our ſelues,
with all we enjoy, be in ſuch wife conſecrated
vnto her, that nothing can ſeparate vs by any
meanes from her. Therefore in ſeeing the
Church fo many waies, and with ſuch diuers
calamities afflicted at this day, and an infinie
number of ſoules to periſh, whom Ieſus Chriſt
hath redeemed with his precious blood, muſt
we not needs be cruell and barbarous if we
be moued with no ſorrow at all? Eſpeciallie
the Miniſters of the word ought to be thro-
wlie touched with the feeling of this ſor-
row: for as they are held for the watchmen,
and therefore can ſee further off, ſo alſo
ought they to ſigh when they perceiue the
ſignes of a ſcattering of the ſheepe to be at
hand.

We ought to
be thowlie
touched with
ſorrow for
the Church
affliction, vn-
leſſe we will
proue our
ſelues yron-
hearted.

Now the Prophets publike teares ſerued
(as we haue ſaid) to breake the hearts of the
people: for he had to doe with men of ſuch
obſtinacie, as could not eaſilie be brought to
lament. There is a place almoſt like vnto this
in *Ieremias*, where he bewailes the deſtructi-
on and ſcattering of the people, ſaying, that
his ſoule fainted with ſorrow, Iere.4.31. And
in another place, Who will graunt that my
head might be filled with waters, and that
mine eyes might be a fountaine of teares to
weepe day and night for the ſlaine of the
daughter of my people? Iere.9.1. When the
Prophets perceiued they labored in vaine to
breake the hard hearts of this people, ſurely
they could not chuſe but be ouerwhelmed
with griefe and ſorrow, and therefore they
indeuored by all meanes to mollifie y hearts
of the obſtinate, that if it were poſſible they
might be bowed and brought back againe
into the right way.

Iere.9.2.

Verſ.5. *For it is a day of trouble, and
of ruin and of perplexitie by the Lord of
hoſts in the valley of viſion, breaking
downe the Citie: and a crying vnto the
mountaines.*

HE againe ſignifies that the Lord is the Au-
thor of this fearefull iudgement: and to
the end the Iewes might not gaze heere and
there, wondering that the enemies ſhould get
the vpper hand, he tels them plainly that
they fight againſt God himſelfe. Now albeit we
often meeete with this doctrine in the holie
Scriptures, yet notwithstanding it is no way
ſuperfluous, neither can it be fo often repea-
ted but we forget it when we are to praetiſe
it.

Though it be
often told vs
that God is
the author of
our afflictions,
yet we forget
it when we
ſhould put
this know-
ledge in pra-
ctice.

it: thence it is that we humble not our selues before our Iudge, but cast our eyes rather vpon men and externall meanes, then vpon God, who would easlie remedie our euils.

By *day*, he meanes a time prefixed, according to the vsuall prafe of the Scripture; because it seemes that God yeelds ouer his right for a time, when he winkes at mens wickednesse: but he forthwith recouers it againe in that season that himselfe hath appointed. Now it is not for nought that he names the *valley of vision* againe: for the Iewes thought themselves secured from all dangers, because it pleased God to enlighten them by his word. But because they did vnthankfully reject the doctrine thereof, it was but a vaine confidence, to thinke the bare inioying of it should any way profit them: for the Lord not onely punisheth the infidelitie of those that are out of the Church, but that also of the Church it selfe. Nay, rather he begins to manifest his anger against it first; for he will not indure to haue his graces abused, nor that men should boast of his titles in vaine. That which is added touching

The cry of the mountaine, it may be referred to God, to the Caldeans, and to those also which fled; because the vanquishers raised vp a cry to augment the terrour: but the vanquished either cried for mercie and fidelitie, or else testified their sorrow by teares & weepings. The singular number may also be take for the plurall, or else it is meant of that side of the Citie in which the Temple was built. Both expositions agree to the text; and there is no great difference whether we say, That the enemies cried from the mountaine of Zion, to encourage one another: or that their cry was heard of the neighbour mountaines, when they pillaged and destroyed the Citie: or that the citizens themselves made their lamentations found to the mountaines which inuirted the plaine of Iordan.

Verf. 6. *And Elam bare the quier in a mans chariot with horsemen: and Kir vncouered the shield.*

The expositours are of opinion that this is a continued speech, & that the Prophet denounceth the same iudgement against the Iewes, that he had done before. But when I consider all things aduisedly, I am enforced to bee of the contrarie opinion: for I thinke the Prophet vbraides the Iewes with their obstinacie and rebellion, for that they repented not, albeit the Lord had chastised them: and thus he repeats the historie of the time past, to put them in remembrance that God his chastisements had done them no good. Thus should these things bee distinguished from the former. In the other verses he foretold what should happen to the Iewes: but now he shewes that they are iustly punished, and that they haue deserued these violent blowes wherewithall the Lord smites them.

For hee had called them to repentance not onely by his word, but also by most wofull e-

fects: yet had they shewed none amendement at all, notwithstanding that their wealth was wasted, and the Kingdome weakened; but proudly persisted in their rebellion. There remained nothing the but y^e Lord should bring heauie iudgements vpon them, seeing they thus persisted in their obstinacy and rebellion.

Now I haue translated this Hebrew conjunction *Vau*, by way of opposition; it being often taken in this sense. Those who thinke the Prophet threatens in the time to come, retaine the proper sense: as if the Prophet hauing made mention of God, should by and by adde the executioners of his vengeance. But I haue already shewed what exposition I haue approued; and it shall appeare hereafter by the course of the text, that mine opinion is not without good reason. In that hee names the *Elamites*, and the *Kirenians*, it agrees better, as I take it, to the *Assyrians*, then to the *Babylonians*. For although these nations did neuer make war vpon the Iewes by their owne instint; yet is it very likely that they were in wages with the King of Assyria, and occupied a place in his host, when he besieged Ierusalem. Now we haue said already, that by the *Elamites* are meant the *Esterne* people: and vnder the name of *Kir*, it is certaine that the Prophet comprehends the *Kirenians*. And because they bare shields, he saith, they *discouered* them; because they drew them forth of their cases, when they entred into the battell. Whereas some translate, In the chariot of horsemen; I reiect it not: yet had I rather render the words of the Prophet, word for word: for I thinke he meanes a chariot of warre. They vsed then two sorts of chariots; one serued to beare the baggage; and the other to fight in. Now the Prophet speaks of those wherupon the horsemen were mounted.

Verf. 7. *And thy chiefe vallies were full of Chariots: and the horsemen set themselves in array against the gates.* Or, and thus it came to passe, &c.

If this be a threat, it should be expounded in the time to come; to wit, And it shall come to passe. But because the words following are put in the time past, and that it appeares the Prophet speaks of things already fallen out, I haue not been afraid to appropriate this beginning to that which is by and by added.

The *chiefe of the vallies*, is taken for faire and fruitfull. Now he puts the Iewes in mind of these distresses, into which they were brought by *Senachirib* whilst hee besieged them, and whilst the enemies were before the gates of the Citie: for then ought they to haue fled vnto God for succour. But then did these poore Iewes runne so much the further away from him, and the more shamefully did they manifest their rebellion herein, shewing themselves vtterly desperate. Therefore is it that hee vbraides them with this obstinate rebellion.

Verf. 8.

See the exposition of the eleuenth verse, for that giues light to this.

* Or, carried away.

Verſ. 8. *And he diſcovered the covering of Iudab: and thou didſt looke in that day to the armour of the houſe of the forreſt.*

HE ſhewes in what anguiſh the Iewes were when they were thus hardlie beſieged. Some reſerre this ſpeech vnto God, others to the enemies: but I had rather take it indiſtinitie; for *he hath carried away*, is a phraſe of ſpeech uſed of the Hebrewes, that is, the *covering of Iudab* was, carried away. By the word *covering*, all almoſt vnderſtand the Temple, or the name of God it ſelfe, vnder which the Iewes falſlie bragged. But for mine owne part I take it more ſimple for their Armorie, wherein they ſhut vp (as in a moſt ſecret place) their inſtruments and furniture for the warre. For he calles it not a *covering*, as if theſe things were not diſcouered to all, but becauſe they were laid vp in a place put a part or ſeuered. And thus hee ſets that forth which we ſee to happen in great hurlie bulies, for then euery one runnes to his weapon, bringing out the munitions for war which were hidden before.

The latter member is ioined with this, to wit, that they then ſearched diligencie euery place where they might get weapons in ſuch an extreme neceſſitie, becauſe the furniture for warre had been had a long time whileſt they enjoyed peace. Now the holie hitorie witneſſeth that *Sabmon* had built this *houſe of the forreſt*, that all the armor and inſtruments of warre might be laid vp there. The change of the perſon in this word *ſhow*, darkens not the ſenſe, but rather confirms that which I haue ſaid, to wit, that the Prophet recites after what maner the Iewes were letted in making preparations to defend the Citie.

Verſ. 9. *And ye haue ſeene the breaches of the citie of Dauid, for they were many: and ye gathered the waters of the lower poole.*

HE continues forth his diſcourſe, for whilſt matters go well, and that all things are in quiet, men care not greatly neither for munition, nor for warlike furniture: nothing but neceſſitie awakens men, and makes them careful: peace and reſt makes vs become lazie & ſlothfull. As long then as they thought themſelves free from gunshot, they neglected to make vp the breaches of the walles: but when the drum once ſtroke vp, then they gaue themſelves to the care of theſe things, and to take order for letting the enemy fro getting paſſage. By *the Citie of Dauid*, hee means the miſt of the Citie, which was diuided into two parts, which we may ſee in many Cities. Ieruſalem was enuironed with walles, and ditched round about: but this middle place was the ſtrongeſt forreſſe they had, and it was called *the Citie of Dauid*. The Temple alſo was fortified, ſo as the Citie was diuided as it were into three. Now *Iſaiab* meant to ſay that the Iewes had almoſt loſt

all hope of ſauing the Citie when they thus retired into the *middlemoſt*, which was ſtronger then all the reſt. And it appears vey well by the holie hitorie that their caſe was very deſperate. Thus wee may alſo gather, that the propheſies were not gathered in order, ſo as they which put them into one volume did not ſtand much vpon the circumſtance of the time. He addes, *the waters were gathered* for their neceſſitie, that the neceſſities of thoſe which were beſieged might be ſupplied therewith, and thus the *poole* ſerued them for a Ciſterne.

Verſ. 10. *And ye numbred the houſes of Ieruſalem, and the houſes haue ye broken downe to fortifie the wall.*

HIS meaning is, that they viewed the Citie narrowlie and on euery ſide, that no houſe nor building might annoy the defence of it. Others ſay that the houſes were numbred that they might haue watchmen out of them: but the firſt expoſition ſeemes the firſt, for it is confirmed by that which is added after, that there were houſes *broken downe* to repaire the walles of the Citie. We make no reckning of theſe things in the time of peace: and oftentimes men of meane eſtate will build houſes euen vpon the very ramparts, therefore they muſt be pulled downe in time of warre, that from thence they may fight and repulle the enemy; and alſo leſt any ſhould haue any ſecret ſpeech with the enemy, if *houſes* were ſo iuxta the walles.

Verſ. 11. *And haue alſo made a ditch betweene the two walles for the waters of the old poole, and haue not looked to the maker thereof, neither had reſpect vnto him that formed it.**

THE firſt part of this verſe is conioined with that which hath been expounded heretofore; for his meaning is that they were put to their plunges, and ſo ſlighted with imminent danger, that they were driuen to uſe all meanes poſſible to fortifie themſelves againſt the enemy. In the ſecond part of the verſe he taxeth their ſenſeleſnes, in being ſo taken vp with ſeeking after worldlie helps, that they *forgotte* that which was the principall. For whereas they ſhould firſt haue had their recourſe vnto God, they neglected it, in contriuing of *ditches*, ramparts, walles, and other defences of warre, and yet did their chiefe defence all this while reſt in God. Now then it appears that that which I ſaide in the beginning is true, to wit, that he foretels not here the deſtruction of the Iewes, but only puts them in minde of that they had felt in former time: that from thence he might take occaſion to ſhew how iuſtlie the Lord was angie with them, becauſe no chaſtiſement nor correction whatſoeuer could amend them. For their extreme dangers into which they were fallen, ought to haue admoniſhed them of their impiecie and contempt of God, but they became ſo much the more hardened.

1. King. 7. 2.

Neceſſitie is it which commonly awakens vs.

* Or, long 200.

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2

hardened. And yet there is scarcely any man
 1 so obstinate, who in time of aduersitie, and
 2 especially in the midst of great dangers,
 3 but comes to himselfe, and by himselfe alone
 4 considers that he is iustly punished, that hee
 hath offended God, and prouoked his wrath
 against him. But the Prophet saith, that not
 so much as one of the Iewes remembred
 God in these great calamities, and that
 therefore the Lord had good cause to leaue
 them, without thinking anie more vpon
 them.

From hence let vs gather, that it is a signe
 of a desperate impietic, when men amend
 not for the rods and scourges which are laid
 vpon them. First of all wee ought to follow
 1 God cheerefully, and to yeeld him voluntary
 2 obedience: secondly, as soone as he chastiseth
 3 and correcteth vs, we are forthwith to re-
 pent vs. But if his rod doe vs no good, what
 remains but that God must double his
 blowes, and make vs feeble them in such se-
 ueritie, that we at the last be brought to ve-
 ter destruction by them? This doctrine is
 most fitting for this season, wherein God
 calles vs to repentance by so many of his
 scourges and afflictions. But seeing there is
 no repentance, what are wee to looke for,
 but that God should vtterlie cut vs off,
 hauing before vsed all meanes possible?

To him that made it. Hee dolefully cōfesseth by
 these words, y God absolutely condemns not
 y care we haue to resist our enemies, & to a-
 void dangers; but that false confidence which
 wee put in externall means. For our inconsiderate
 hastinesse is iustly condemned of disloyal-
 tie and high treason; when wee forsake
 God, to flie vnto swords and speares, to for-
 tresses and bulwarkes. Let vs learne then to
 flie to him alone when dangers inuiron vs on
 all sides; and let vs runne with all the powers
 of our soule, to the assured fortresse of his
 holy name. This being done, then is it law-
 full to vse those meanes which hee giues vs:
 but all things will worke to our destruction,
 vnlesse we first of all put the hope of our safe-
 tie in his protection.

Hee calles God the *workeman* and *maker* of
 Ierusalem, because hee had his habitation
 there, and would there be called vpon. Now
 seeing this citie was the image of the church,
 this title also belongs to vs: for the Lord is
 called the *Creator* of the Church in a speciall
 regard. For howsoeuer this title appertaines
 to the creation of the whole world; yet this
 second creation whereby he deliues vs from
 death by regenerating and sanctifying vs, is
 a benefit which is peculiar to the elect: others
 haue no part of this. Now this title imports
 not a sudden act; but such a one as is con-
 stant and perpetuall: neither is the Church
 created once, to be left by and by; but the
 Lord defends and conserues it euen vnto the
 end: Thou wilt not despise the worke of thine
 hands, saith the Psalmist: so Paul testifi-
 eth, that hee which hath begunne a good
 worke, will accomplish it vnto the day of
 Christ.

And besides, this title contains in it a
 wonderfull consolation: for if God be the

maker, then neede we not to feare, if so be we
 depend vpon his power and goodnesse. But
 we cannot cast our eyes vpon him, vnlesse we
 be indued with true humilitie & confidence;
 that being dispossest of all haughtinesse,
 and so brought to nothing, we be readie to
 attribute the whole glorie to him alone. Now
 this cannot be done, vnlesse herewithall we
 bee fully perswaded that our saluation is in
 his hand, being assured y we cannot perish;
 no not although a thousand deaths should
 compass vs about. Well, their fault then was
 the greater, in regard the prerogatiue of this
 Citie, which had been approued by so many
 euident signes, could not yet prouoke the
 Iewes to commit themselues vnto Gods pro-
 tection: As if he should say; What folly is it
 for you to thinke to keepe the Citie, when
 you despise the *workeman* that made it?

Loq. agor.] The Hebrew word signifieth as
 well distance of place, as length of time. If we
 referre it to the place, the sense will be, that
 the Iewes are double vnthankfull that they
 looked not vnto God; no not a farre off. Where-
 in we are to note, that we ought not only to
 looke vnto God when hee is neere vnto vs,
 but also when it seemes hee is farre distant
 from vs. Now we thinke him absent when we
 feele not his present helpe, and when he as-
 sists vs not as soone as we stand in neede. To
 be short, he shewes what is the nature of true
 hope; for it is a grosse and carnall kind of
 looking vnto God, when we acknowledge his
 prouidence no further then we can see it before
 our eyes; hope you know must mount about
 the skies. I grant the Lord is alwaies properly
 and truly present; but he is thought absent
 and farre off in regard of the weakenesse of
 our sight. This must be construed then ac-
 cording to our sense, and not as the thing is
 indeed. Wherefore albeit that he seemes to
 be absent in these calamities wherewith the
 Church is now afflicted, yet let vs lift vp our
 mindes vnto him; let vs awaken our hearts,
 and shake off all sloth, that so wee may giue
 our selues to the calling vpon his name. But
 the other sense agreeth better; to wit, that
 they looked not vnto God who created and
 made his Church; nor yesterday, or the day
 before it, but a great while since; as one who
 shewed himselfe the *maker* of it many ages
 off. He is called then the *ancient maker* of his
 Church: because that if the Iewes would but
 haue called to minde the long progresse of
 time; they should haue knowne him to haue
 been a *perpetuall conseruer of his worke*; where-
 in their ingratitude is yet the lesse excu-
 sable.

Verf. 12. *And in that day did the
 Lord God of hostes call vnto weeping and
 mourning, and to baldnesse, and girding
 with sackcloth.*

THE Prophet further amplifies this
 wicked rebellion of the people. For this cir-
 cumstance cuts off all replies: for in the mid-
 dest of such extreme dangers, they had despi-
 sed the holy exhortations of the Prophet,
 and

What course
 we ought to
 keepe in the
 time of peril.

Pror. 18. 10

The first
 creation be-
 longs to all:
 the second
 peculiar to
 the elect
 only.

Psal. 138. 8.
 Phil. 1. 6.

A conso-
 lation.

The nature
 of hope de-
 scribed.

Hope must
 mount a-
 bout the
 skies.

and had reiected the fauour of God, when he was ready to haue healed and reſtored them to their former happines. Here we ſee a ſigne of deſperate malice, when men are ſo beſotted that they proudly deſpiſe inſtruction and correction, kicking obſtinacie againſt the ſpurie: then (I ſay) may we euidentlie perceiue that they are giuen vp into a reprobate ſenſe. Whereas he ſaith *the Lord called them*, we may expound it two waies: for although he ſhould not ſpeake at all, yet he *calls vs* ſufficientlie by his rods and chaſtiſements. Put the caſe we had no Scripture at all, no Prophets nor Teachers, and that there were none to admoniſh vs: yet doth God notwithstanding inſtruct vs by afflictions and calamities, ſo as we may eaſily conclude that euery chaſtiſement is a ſummons to repentance. But doubtleſſe the Prophet meant to expreſſe ſomewhat more, to wit, that in deſpiſing the holie admonitions which were ſent vnto them, they were not aſhamed to riſe vp as it were euen againſt *God himſelfe*, who after a fatherlie manner beckned them vnto him. There is yet greater weight in that he ſaith, it was *in the day* of affliction, wherein the danger preſſed hard vpon them: for they were admoniſhed both by *words* and *blowes*. The ſignes of Gods anger appeared, the Prophets cryed without ceaſing, and yet they became neuer the better.

In that he names *ſackcloth*, and *plucking of their haire*, he notes out repentance by the ſignes of it: for it conſiſts neither in *ſackcloth*, in aſhes, nor in any externall thing, but it conſiſts in the heart. Thoſe who repent in good earneſt, and are diſpleaſed with themſelues, they hate their finnes, and are touched to the quick with ſuch a ſenſe and feeling of ſorrow, that they abhorre and deteſt themſelues and their life paſt: but becauſe this can not be done vnleſſe therewithall they confeſſe the ſame before men, therefore he names the *outward ſignes*, whereby wee giue teſtimonie of our conuerſion: now the lewes vſed ſuch geſtures and cuſtomes. At that time when they meant to ſhew ſignes of repentance, *Iſaiah* meanes then that they were called to repentance, to the end they ſhould fiſt humble themſelues before God, and then that they ſhould therewithall ſhew teſtimonies of that diſpleaſure they had conceiued in themſelues before men. The ſignes indeede before are nothing, ſeing conuerſion begins at the heart: and to this purpoſe *Ioel* ſaith, *Renew your hearts, and not your cloaths*: not that he would haue theſe ſignes neglected; but he ſhewes that they were not ſufficient nor acceptable vnto God of themſelues. Let vs hence gather what is our dutie when in the ſignes of Gods anger appeare vnto vs, namely, that our repentance ought not only to be knowne vnto God, but alſo to men.

The ceremonies indeede are indifferent; neither haue we any commandment to put *ſackcloth* nor to pluck off our haire, but we ought willingly and in good earneſt to put the truth of theſe ſignes in praſtiſe: to wit, an vnſeined diſpleaſure in our ſelues that wee haue ſo diſpleaſed God: a confeſſion of

our offences; a broken heart, and a new life. For if wee iudge not our ſelues worthy of puniſhment, we cannot come into fauour with God. To be ſhort, euen as the poore malefactor bowes downe his face, and clothes himſelfe in vile arayment; to bow the heart of the Iudges, ſo ought we to iunne in all humilitie to Gods mercy in our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, with vnſeined teſtimonies of our inward repentance.

Yet are we by the way, to note the profit of theſe outward ſignes of repentance, to wit, that they ſerue as goades to prick vs forward to the acknowledgement of our guiltineſſe, and to the loathing and deteſting of our ſinne. And thus as they are ſpures to quicken vs to this dutie, they may be called *cauſes* of repentance: and as they are ſignes, they may be called *effects*. For the tokens of our condemnation that wee beare vpon vs, prouoke vs to a more thorow acknowledgement that we are ſinners and guiltie perſons: and they are alſo effects; becauſe if repentance went not before, wee ſhould neuer be brought to viſe them of a ſincere affection.

Verſ. 13. *And behold ioy and gladneſſe, ſlaying oxen, and killing ſheepe, eating fleſh and drinking wine, eating and drinking, for to morrow we ſhall die.*

The Prophet condemnes not *ioy* ſimply: for we ſee that *Saint Paul* himſelfe exhorts the faithfull to *reioyce* with a true *ioy*; to wit, *in the Lord*: Phil. 4. 4. But hee here reproues that *ioy* which is contrarie to that ſorrow which proceedes of repentance; whereof alſo the ſame Apoſtle ſpeakes in the ſeuenth Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians: for indeede, none can be touched with repentance, nor with the true feeling of Gods wrath; but being ſorrowfull, he willingly afflicts himſelfe. The *ioy* then oppoſite to this ſorrow, is naught; becauſe it proceedes from a brutiſh blockiſhneſſe, and is juſtly reproued, becauſe the Lord accuſeth it.

Hence it appeareth then ſufficiently wherefore the Lord vpbraides them with the *killing of oxen, and butchering of ſheepe*: for this is not euill in it ſelfe, neither doth it diſpleaſe God: but becauſe faſting is a ſolemne part of repentance which wee heare before men; it is therefore a ſigne of obſtinacie and contempt of God, to kill beaſts, and to make great merriments when we ought rather to faſt. Thus do men deſpiſe Gods threatnings, and flatter themſelues in their vices: and this is the ſumme of *Iſaiah*'s ſpeech.

But the Papiſts are worthily reputed ridiculous, who thinke this place warrants abſtinenſe *from fleſh*. Why did they not aſwell forbid *wine* alſo, ſeing the Prophet ſpeakes of that *too*? But they are ſo far from abſtaining from wine, that contrariwiſe they caſtly permit men for want of fleſh, to recompence the ſame with taking in of their liquor. But let theſe toyes paſſe. For *Iſaiah* condemnes neither the vſe of fleſh nor wine ſimply, but the abuſe;

How farforth theſe outward teſtimonies are probable.

Euery chaſtiſement a ſummons to repentance.

Repentance conſiſts not in outward Ceremonies, but in the heart.

- 1
- 2
- 3

The outward teſtimonies of repentance are not acceptable vnto God in themſelues.

Wherein the truth of theſe ſignes conſiſts.

- 1
- 2

Luk. 6. 25. Ioh. 8. 14. 2. 13.

Papiſts ridiculous.

Iſaiah condemnes not the vſe of meats and drinks but the abuſe

abuse; the dissolution and pride also whereby men so harden themselves, that with an obstinate heart they reiect all Gods threatnings, and iudge whatioeuer the Prophets say to be but fables.

Wee are to obserue this point diligently: for albeit we put not on sackcloth, nor cover our selues alwaies with ashes; yet if true repentance be wrought in vs, we shall manifest the same by such fruits as it necessarily brings forth in them that haue it. In a word, as hee had described repentance by the signes, so hee now sets forth their inward obstinacie and hardnesse of heart, by the outward testimonies of it. For euen as we witness our sorrow for sinne by abstinence and other exercises; so by our dissolutiōs & superfluities, we shew euident signes of a stiffe neck, by which we prouoke Gods wrath more and more against vs: as we reade they did in the daies of *Noah*, Gen. 6. 5. Luke 17. 27. Therefore after the Prophet had taxed the excesse and intemperancie of the people in generall; he names *eating* and *drinking*, as the speciall: wherein the Iews wholly ouerflowed: as if by this meanes they had been able to giue God the repulse, and to tread his threatnings vnder foote.

For to morrow wee shall die.] This particule sheweth sufficiently why the Prophet so sharply rebuked them for drinking wine, and eating of flesh; to wit, because they scoffed and turned all the Prophets threats into iests and matter of derision. Some thinke that *S. Paul* in alleading almost the very same words in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, Chap. 15. had respect to this place: but I am not of their opinion. For he there recites the phrase of speech which Epicures vsed; who holding it as a principle to spend their time in iollitie whilest it lasted, neuer thought of life eternall; and therefore they said; we must be merry, and take our pleasure whilest life indureth. But *Isaiah* in this place brings in the wicked, who proudly contemned the Prophets menacings; neither could they indure that any should forewarne them of afflictions, banishments, slaughters, and ruines. For in scorne they tooke vp the Prophets words, and at their banquetts would say in derision, Ho, we shall die to morrow: These Prophets foretell a speedie destruction that is ready to ouertake vs: well, let vs yet reioyce and make good cheere one day more.

This obstinate mindes cannot be touched with any remorse at all, but rather lift vp themselves against God & his Prophets, & so much the more ouerflow in all dissolutions and disorders. Truly it was a monstrous furie in them, thus to vomit forth these blasphemies in disdain, indignation, and despight, which ought not onely to haue rent their hearts, but to haue shaken euen heauen and earth also. But it were to be wished, we at this day had not many such examples: for God no sooner threatens, but the most part spew out their poison, or else scoffe at all things which proceed out of Gods sacred and blessed mouth.

Verf. 14. *And it was declared in*

*the eares of the Lord of hostes: * Surely this iniquitie shall not bee purged from you till yee die, saith the Lord of hostes.*

* O, if this iniquitie shall be pardoned.

AS if he should say; Doe you thinke to play the bedlems, and not bee punished for it, seeing God by this meanes seekes to draw you to repentance? But some may imagine that the Prophet onely repeats the same thing he had said before: for doubtlesse all things are naked and manifest in his sight. But hee adds this as an alarm to awaken the blockishnes of y wicked, who neuer durst aduance themselves thus proudly against God, but that they thinke they can beguile him: for whofoeuer knowes he hath God for a witness of his doings, ought of necessitie therewithall to confesse that the same God must be his Iudge. It follows therefore, that the wicked in their cups, doe quite and clean bereaue God of his power. What maruall is it then, if they be summoned to appeare before his tribunall seate, to the end they may know that there they must giue an account.

It is a terrible threatening when hee saith that this *wickednesse shall neuer bee pardoned*. Now the particule conditionall, *If*, contains a negatiue in the Hebrew tongue: as if the Lord should say; Thinke me not to be true, thinke me not to be God, if I be not auenged of so execrable an impietie. The cause why the Hebrewes conceal something in their othes, is to accustom vs to be modest and sober in this behalfe: for we therein craue that God would iudge and be auenged of vs, if we lie. Wee had neede of some bridle therefore to restraine vs from making othes rashly. The summe of the Prophets speech is to teach vs, that nothing is more displeasing vnto God then obstinacy, whereby wee treasure vp wrath against the day of wrath, as the Apostle saith, Rom. 2. 5. and deprive our selues of all hope of perdition.

Othes must be vsed with feare and trembling.

Verf. 15. *Thus saith the Lord God of hostes; Goe get thee to the treasurer, to Shebna the steward of the house, and say.*

THIS prophesie is particularly addressed against one man. For hauing spoken to all the people before, hee now turnes his speech to *Shebna*, whom he will mention againe in the 37. Chapter. The Prophet giues him two titles, to wit, of Scribe, or Chancelour; and *steward of the house*: and whereas hee giues the title of *steward* here, he will call him by the name of Chancelour in the other place. And therefore some are of opinion touching these words, that he was put from his office of Stewardship, and that *Eliakim* was put in his roome. But this is vncertaine: yet we may coniecture by the Prophets words, that *Shebna* was so carried away with enuie, that he endeouored to supplant *Eliakim*. It is no lesse probable that this prophesie was written

written after Ieruſalem was miraculoſly deliuered, and *ſenacherib*s hoſt diſcomfited. In the meane while, many things doubtleſſe happened that are vnknowne to vs: and not vnlike but this perſidious wretch being in ſome credit, did his worſt to ſuppreſſe *Eliakim*. For it appears by the hſtorie of the ſecond booke of Kings, Chap. 19. 2. that *Shebna* was one of the principall Secretaries, whom we now call Chancelour. But there is yet a little more difficultie in the word *Socan*: for ſome thinke it ſignifies a Treafurer, becauſe the verbe *Sacan* ſignifies to locke: but ſeeing he calles him Chancelour in another place, I thinke he was not Treafurer. Beſides, the Prophet doth ſufficiently witneſſe, that this man had ſuch command in his hands, that others in compariſon of him were little eſteemed. Now this authoritie and dignitie could not well agree to a Treafurer: and therefore as I take it, the Prophet meant ſome thing elſe. For ſeeing this verbe ſignifies ſome times to entertaine, and to warne; it ſeemes the foreſaid word is taken for one that ſuſtaineth and vpholdeth, whom we in our common ſpeech call an entertainer.

It is alſo certaine that this *Shebna* had intelligence with the enemy. In a word, he was a treacherous and ſubtle fellow: for he held ſeeret amitie with the Egyptians and Aſſyrians, & comploted miſchicuoſly with them, to the end hee might make ſure on all ſides, for vpholding his owne authoritie. Others thinke it was a name of ſome of his predeceſſours, and that he was called *Soenite*, becauſe of the Citie wherein he was borne: for they ſay he was an Egyptian. I reiect not this opinion, but the other pleaſeth me better; the reaſon is, becauſe he plaid the Ambodexter in pleaſing both parts; thinking by this fetch to hold his owne, whatſoever ſhould fall out.

It may be cleerely diſcerned, that the particule *Haxzeb*, is put for contempt: as if hee ſhould ſay; Goe to that ſame cunning and ſubtle fellow that workes vpon the vantage, holding with the hare, and running with the hounds, as they ſay. This word *Socan*, is taken in that ſenſe which I haue touched before in the firſt booke of the Kingſ, Chap. 1. 2. where there is ſpeech of a young virgin that ſhould bee brought to the King to cheriſh him. Notwithſtanding, if any had rather take it for a man that hurts and wrongs men, I miſlike it not, becauſe the verbe alſo ſignifies to impoueriſh.

The Prophet therefore aſkes to what purpoſe he had prepared himſelfe ſo rich and ſumptuous a ſombe in ſo high a place above others, as thoſe are wont to doe, which meane to eternize their remembrance in this world. Now hee ſeemes to taxe the ambition of a ſtranger, and one vnknowne, for deſiring to be thus honourably buried out of his owne country: and yet in the meane while, complotted with the enemy to deſtroy Iudea. What greater follie could be imagined, then to erect a ſepulchre in that land, whoſe ruine and deſtruction he practiſed? And therefore hee addes,

Verſ. 17. Behold the Lord will carrie thee away With a great captiuitie, and will ſurely couer thee.

*Or, a notable ſhaking.
*Or, thou ſhalt be wholly couered.

As if he ſhould ſay; Thou ſhalt be driuen hence out of this place into a far Country, where thou ſhalt die ignominioſly. It is better to tranſlate the Hebrew word *Gaber*, in the genitiue; namely, thou ſhalt be driuen hence with the caſting out of a man. Now becauſe this word alſo ſignifies a valiant and ſtrong man; ſome expound, Thou ſhalt bee driuen hence with a ſure and ſtrong ſhaking. Others take it in the vocatiue, O man; as if he ſhould ſay to *Shebna* by way of deriſion, O glorious fellow, that braggeſt ſo much of thy greatneſſe, it cannot be but thou takeſt thy ſelſe for ſome petty God! But the firſt reading ſits beſt. And yet the expoſitors conſent not in this behalfe: for beſides mine expoſition, they haue brought another; to wit, That men ſhall be carried away further off, then the women. But I rather thinke he alludes to *Shebna*s pride, who purpoſed to build ſo ſumptuous a ſepulchre, that after his death hee might be thought ſome excellent and worthy perſonage. As if hee ſhould ſay; Thou wilt bee taken for a noble man after thou art dead; but I will canoble thee after another manner: I will carrie thee hence with a notable captiuitie into a farre Country, where thou ſhalt bee ſtrangely buried.

But firſt let vs note in this word, Intertainer, how much a double heart and a deceiver, is diſpleaſing vnto God, who about all things recommends ſimplicitie and plaine dealing vnto vs. *Shebna* was called the Proud, becauſe the glorie of his prosperous eſtate did dazle his eyes, in regard he was aduanced aboue others: which often befaller them, who being proud and puffed vp with their greatneſſe, feare no aduerſitie at all; as if they were exempt out of the common order of men. But the Lord ſhewes vs, that hee will be the Iudge of ſuch fellows.

We muſt alſo conſider that *Iſaiah* could not publiſh this prophecy without incurring gret ill will; eſpecially in regard he directs it to a mā ſo proud, & in ſo high place. Yet durſt he not reſuſe this charge, neither made hee any difficultie to tell this man his owne, and to threaten him as God had bidden him.

As touchiug a ſepulchre, wee know that the

You ſhall finde this verſe further expounded in the 17. verſe.

Verſ. 16. What haſt thou to doe here? and whom haſt thou here, that thou ſhoudeſt here burye thee out a ſepulchre, as he that beueth out a ſepulchre in an high place, or that graueth an habitation for himſelfe in a rocke?

This *Shebna* cauſed a ſepulchre to be built in Ieruſalem, as if there he miſt of neceſſitie alwaies lue; and there bee buried alſo,

A care ought to be had touching our buriall.

care of burying the dead is not vtterly to be condemned: and albeit it be deuiued of buriall, be a matter of no great consequence, as one saith; yet it is an honest thing to be interred, neither ought it to be despised. It was not the Prophets meaning then to reprove Shebna for his care to be honestly buried; but his ambition, in making himselfe so sumptuous a tombe: and herein he taxeth his desire and affectation of vaine glory.

There is yet one thing more to be obserued in Shebna: for in as much as he was minded to deliuer the Citie into the Assyrians hands by treason, hee thought to raigne for euer: hoping by that meanes to receiue the gouernment of the Kingdome of the enemies, as a reward of his treachery; if they became the stronger; and if it happened they had the repulie, he yet notwithstanding looked to continue in his dignitie and authority alwaies.

But thus will be the better vnderstood by the words themselves; *What hast thou so doe here?* For he was a stranger borne, I deny not but he might well haue obtained fellowship with the people of God; yet in regard he was both a traitor and a stranger, he had no part nor portion in this region nor Citie, which God had specially assigned vnto his chosen. The Prophet askes him then; Whence art thou? Thou art linked with the people of God neither by blood nor affinity; and yet thou wilt not onely raigne in this Country whilst thou liuest, but thou art also plotting how to stablish thy seat here, after thy death. Thou wilt deliuer vs into the hands of the Assyrians, and meanest to turne out the true Lords: so as thy selfe, which art but a stranger, mindest to enjoy this land, in which thou hast not right to one pike of dust. Hence we may gather, that this ambition is exceedingly odious vnto God, when men are not content with the honours wherewith they were glutted whilst they liued; but they must build them perpetuall monuments of their name in the world when they are gone. For they couet to be exalted after their death, and to liue againe as it were in the mouthes of men: and albeit things by death are abolished; yet are they besotted notwithstanding with this foolish hope, that their memorie shall indure for euer. But the Lord auengeth himselfe of their pride and presumption, causing that which they erected for a witness and remembrance of their glorie, to turne to their dishonour and ignominie. For their very name is so accursed, that men can neither heare nor see any mention thereof, but it is with detestation. Nay, it sometimes fall's out, that the Lord suffers them not to be buried in their tombes, but sends them to the gallows, and to the raens; of which wee haue many examples in the histories: neither want we some spectacles hercof euen in our owne times.

But as often as I reade this place, a like example vnto this comes to my mind, and is the neerest in affinity to it of all others; to wit, of one *Thomas Moore*, who had such an office as this Shebna had. For (as it is well knowne)

he was Chancellor to the King of England: he was a sworne enemy of the Gospell, and persecuted the faithfull with fire and saggon. This man also meant to get himselfe a name, and to set vp a monument of his crueltie and impietie. To which end he caused the praises of his vertues, to be ingrauen in a faire sepulchre which was built in most stately manner. Then he sent his Epitaph, which himselfe had made, to *Erasmus*, to Basil, to get it printed; and withall, sent him a palfrey for a present. So couetous was he of glory, that hee meant to taste the renoune and the praises in his life-time, which hee thought should haue lasted when hee was dead. Amongst other praises, this was the chiefest; that he had been a great persecutor of the Lutherans; that is to say, of Gods children. But what became of him? He is first of all accused of treason, then condemned, and lastly beheaded: and thus in stead of a tombe, hee had a scaffold. Would we desire a more manifest iudgement of God then these, by which hee punisheth the pride of the wicked; their insatiable desire of vaine glory; their brags that are so full of blasphemies? Truly wee ought no lesse to acknowledge and reuerence the admirable providence of God, in this cruell enemy of his people: then in Shebna, of whom the Prophet heere speaketh. This circumstance also that Shebna was a stranger, is to be obserued: for hence we may see, that all tyrants and enemies of Gods children, would with all their hearts roote out the right heires from off the earth, themselves being but strangers; that so they might raigne as Lords and Kings ouer the whole world. But the Lord in the end will chase them out, and depriue them of all possession: so as they shall not haue one foote of ground to be buried in. An infinite number of such examples are extant euerie where in histories. I grant it fall's not out thus alwaies, but such examples as the Lord sets before vs, ought to draw our thoughts further off; to the end we may consider of his iudgements against tyrants and infidels; who when they thinke to exalt themselves to the highest estate of honour, are made famous by some notable kinde of death, that so their infamie may be admirable to posteritie. He then opposeth as it were vnder hand, that shame which was to follow, to that glory of this sumptuous tombe which Shebna caused to be made.

Verf. 18. Hee will surely roll and turne thee like a ball in a large Country: there shalt thou die; and there the chariots of thy glory shall be the shame of thy Lords house.

Isaiab continnes the verie same spech still, in which he derided the pride of Shebna, who had been at such cost in building his sepulchre. For this verse depends vpon the first member of the verse before going, and as he said ther, *the Lord shall carrie thee hence with a notable shaking*: so also he saith now, *he will cast thee as a stone in a plaine place*. By this similitude

Erasmus.

Moore a great persecutor of the Lutherans.

How God is wont to meet with the proud enemies of his Church.

Shebna's politike plots

Shebna a stranger and a traitor to God and his Church.

Ambition a thing exceedingly odious vnto God.

Hesl. 7. 10.

Thomas Moore Lord Chancellor

ſimilitude his meaning is, that nothing ſhall hinder the Lord to carry Shebna away into a *farre Country*, how ſeadie ſoever he takes his ſtrength to be. And in as much as he had bin ſo careful of his toombe, and had appointed it out, as if hee had been moſt certaine of the manner of his death, *Iſaiah* telleth him, that hee ſhall not die in Ieruſalem, but in a *ſtrange Countrey*, whither hee ſhall bee driuen.

By the word *chariot*, hee comprehends all the glory and dignitie of Shebna: as if hee ſhould ſay; This ignominie ſhall bee famous among ſtrangers. Thus the Lord ſcornes the furious pride of thoſe which thinke onely of the world, judging of their happineſſe according to the glory of things earthly and tranſitorie. Hee alſo calles it *the ſhame of thy Kings houſe*, either becauſe he had polluted that holy place, which was as the ſanctuarie of God; or elſe becauſe *Ezechias* had been vnduſed in promoting him ſo highly. And to the end the outward appearance of his dignitie might not obſcure this prophecie, *Iſaiah* expreſly noteth, that the *place which Shebna occupied*, augmenreth and makes his wickedneſſe the more deteſtable. And therefore Princes had neede to be careful how they eſtablish officers, vnleſſe they meane to make themſelves and their houſes, matter of deriſion and ſcorn.

Princes muſt be wile who they aduance.

Verſ. 19. *And I will drine thee from thy ſtation: and out of thy dwelling will hee deſtroy thee.*

*Or, eſtate.

HE pronounceth no new thing here, but concludes the former prophecie, albeit hee will mention Shebna againe in the laſt verſe: but now hee comprehends that in a briefe ſumme, which he had laid heretofore. Now Shebna thought nothing leſſe, then not to haue a ſure abode in Ieruſalem; euen as if it had been vnpoſſible for him to be driuen thence, whatſoever had happened: but y^e Lord telleth him, that he will thruſt and drue him thence into a *farre Country*. And thus is the Lord wont to ouerthrow the thoughts of the wicked; who thinking to reſt vpon their policies and ſubtile wits, order the Commonwealth at their pleaſures. The change of the perſon, ſhewes that the Prophet ſpeakes ſometimes in the perſon of God, and another while in his owne.

And I will, &c.

Verſ. 20. *And in that day will I call my ſervant Eliakim, the ſonne of Hilkiab.*

Eliakim.

IT is not certainly knowne in what time Eliakim was put into Shebnaes place: for in the 37. Chapter, verſe 2. we ſhall ſee that Eliakim was the ſteward of the Kings houſe, at that time when Shebna was Chancellor. Now it is hard to affirme certainly, whether anie change happened during this time. Yet it is moſt likely, as I haue touched heretofore, that *Eliakim* was depoſed from his eſtate, by the

cunning dealing of this wicked Shebna, whoſe mockings were then diſcloſed and puniſhed when he made his triumphs: and being baniſhed Iudea, he fled to the Allyrians, and there receiued the reward of his treacherie, Which vſually befalls thoſe that are traiterous, who when they are vnable to performe that which they haue promiſed, become hatefull and odious to them whom they haue deceiued. For as they haue been raiſed and bold in promiſing, ſo is it of neceſſitie that they bee found faile and perfidiouſ. The Iewes ſay, that in the end he was quartered for his treason: but this is not approved by any hiſtorie. But to let that hang in ſuſpence, it is certaine notwithstanding, that he was baniſhed & expelled into a *forren Country*, and there died ſhamefully; and not in Ieruſalem. Now it is very likely that after his baniſhment, Eliakim was placed in his roome.

I will call,] It is moſt certaine that all Princes and Magiſtrates are called by the Lord: yea, euen ſuch as are heathen and vnbeleeu- ing; for all power, as Saint *Paul* ſaith, is of God: Rom. 13. 1. But the Prophet ſpeakes here of a particular vocation, whereby the Lord manifeſts his goodneſſe towards his people, when he giues them ſuch governours; as this people might acknowledge that God himſelfe meant to bee ruler ouer them by their miniſterie: who alſo for their parts ought to be well aſſured, that the end wherefore God hath put them in that place, is to execute that office faithfully, which is committed vnto them. Shebna was called indeed for a time, but as he was Gods rod: becauſe he thought nothing leſſe then to ſerue God in that place. But it was farre otherwiſe with Eliakim: for he acknowledged himſelfe the *ſervant* of God, and willingly obeyed his holy calling. So that, *I will call him* then, ſignifies as much as if hee ſhould haue ſaid; I will giue a ſigne to my *ſervant*, whereby hee ſhall know that it is I who haue put him into this eſtate of honor. There is here then a particular relation betwene the Lord and the *ſervant*; which at no hand belongs to the vnbeleeuers, becauſe they ſerue their owne imaginations and wicked luſts: but Eliakim acknowledged the Lord, and ſerued him truly. To be ſhort, this marke puts a difference betwene the true ſervant of God, and the froward and hypocritical, who climbs to honour by euill practices.

All Magiſtrates ordained of God.

Rulers ought to execute the charge which God hath committed vnto them with all faithfullneſſe.

Note this difference.

A particular relation betwene the Lord and the ſervant.

Verſ. 21. *And with thy garments will I clothe him, and with thy girdle will I ſtrengthen him: thy power alſo will I commit into his hand, and he ſhall be a father of the inhabitants of Ieruſalem, and of the houſe of Iudah.*

HEE now more plainly expounds that which hee had ſet downe briefly in the former verſe; to wit, that Shebna ſhall be depoſed by Gods iuſt judgement, to the end *Eliakim* may ſucceede him. Doubtleſſe God by his

V 2 providenced

providence disposeth of all the changes which happen in the world: for as *Iob* saith, he *girdes the loynes of Kings with a girdle, and looses it againe* when it pleaseth him: *Iob* 12. 18. It was pleasantly said in old time of the Emperours of Rome; That it was the tragedie of Kings: for as players that represent some great peronage vpon the stage, hauing ended their part, in stead of Kings become poore Inakes, as they were before: so these being deiected from their high estate, are now and then led to shamefull deaths. And yet is it most certaine, that things were not then thus confused by hap hazard, neither yet by mens deuices onely, nor by the violence of men of warre; but by the counsell of God which ouerruleth all. The Prophet affirms then, that men shal see a special note of Gods iudgement in the banishment of this same Shebna: and on the other side a right forme of gouernement in the restoring of Eliakim.

By the *garments and girdle*, are vnderstood part of that attire which belong to Magistrates. The *girdle* was a kingly ornament: and no doubt but the chiefe gouernours were it by a speciall priuiledge of honour. But in Rome the Pretors vsed such a kinde of ornament ordinarilie. *Iob* also saith (as we alledged before) that God looseth off the girdle from Kings, when they are stripped out of their dignities. Now the Prophet foretold this, to the end euerie one might not onely behold the admirable counsell and prouidence of God in this example; but to the end they might also know, that this wretched fellow, who was thus aduanced by vnlawfull means, was iustly deposed.

Hose. 1. 3. 11

And hee shall be a father. No doubt but heathen Magistrates are established by God; but so, as it is in his wrath; that is to say, when we are vnworthy he himselfe should beare rule ouer vs. For hee giues the raines to Tyrants and Pagans; thereby auenging himselfe vpon our vnthankfulnesse: as if he reiected vs, and regarded not how nor by whom wee are gouerned. Contrariwise when as good Magistrates beare rule, wee therein see God comming neere vnto vs, commanding vs that by them which himselfe hath ordained. This is that which the Prophet meant now to say; to wit, that Eliakim will shew himselfe a *father*, because he shall be indued with the Spirit of God. In the meane while he admonisheth all the faithfull, that it was their duties to sigh earnestly after the aduancement of Eliakim, in regard his preferment should tend to the common good of the Church. By the name of *father*, he teacheth what is the dutie of a good Magistrate: and the verie profane authors haue affirmed as much; to wit, that a good King is in stead of a father. And when they would flatter tyrants which oppressed the Commonwealt, nature it selfe put this title of honour into their mouthes, to call them fathers of the Country. So likewise when the Philosophers say that a familie is an image of a kingdom, they meane that a King ought to be a father to his subiects. The ancient titles also which they gaue kings wit-

nesseth the same: as for example, *Abimelec*: *Gen* 10. 2. that is to say, My father the King: and such other like. Whereby is shewed, that the kingly power cannot be separated from the affection of a father. Let them then which would be esteemed true and lawful Princes, and would be taken for Gods *seruants*, let them, I say, shew themselves *fathers* of the people.

Verf. 2. *And the key of the house of David will I lay vpon his shoulder: so hee shall open, and no man shall shut, and hee shall shut, and no man shall open.*

This is a figuratiue kinde of speech; and therefore we shall not neede to seeke out an allegoricall sense of it, as many do: for this phrase is taken from the vsuall dealings of men. The *keyes of the house* are giuen to such as are appointed the distributors of necessarie things; so as they open and shut at their pleasure. The *house of David*, signifies the kingly house: and this was a common speech among the people, because a promise was made to *David*, that his kingdom should last for euer: this is the reason why it was vsuall called the *house of David*. The word *key* is put in the singular number for many keyes. Now albeit they were wont to beare the keyes in their hands; yet it is said here, that they were *laid vpon his shoulder*; because he was to vndergoe an heauie burthen. And yet he meanes nothing else, but that the tuition and gouernement of the house is committed into Eliakims hands, to order it as he thinkes best. Wee also know, that to giue the keyes, signifies as much as to put one into possession. Some referre this vnto Christ, but with what reason I see not: for the Prophet here compares two men together, namely, Shebna and Eliakim. Shebna was banished, and Eliakim was placed in his roome: wherein doth this concerne Iesus Christ? For Eliakim was no figure of him; neither doth the Prophet describe some hidden myserie here, but borrowes a similitude from the dealings of men; as if one should giue the keyes to some steward placed ouer his house, (as hath beene said.) There is also the same reason to be giuen of it, where Christ calles the office of teaching, The keyes of the Kingdome of heauen: those therefore that weare themselves to finde out some secret and hidden myserie in this place, which is so plaine and manifest, shew themselves but too fortifish and ridiculous, seeing there is no neede at all of any such deuices. Why so? Because the Ministers open heauen by the preaching of the word, and bring men to Christ, who is the onely way. He takes the *keyes* in this place therefore, for the gouernment of the Kings house, in regard the chiefe trust of it was committed to Eliakim in his time.

Mat. 16. 19

Verf. 23. *And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place, and he shall be for*

Good Magistrates ought to be fathers of the Country.

for the throne of glorie to his fathers houſe.

the cups, euen to ^{of} the instruments of muſicke.

WEe must ſupply a particule of ſimilitude here; and therefore I haue put this word *At*, in the text. By *faithfull*, he means a ſure and firme place; for this word is deriued of the word *Truth*, which is alwaies accompanied with ſtedfaſtneſſe and aſſurance. And for that cauſe the Hebrewes take *Truth* for a thing ſure and certaine. The Prophet viſeth an elegant ſimilitude, out of which the faithfull Magiſtrates (who are but a few) ought to gather a ſingular conſolation. For thus they may conclude with themſelues; that they are not onely raiſed by the Lord to this degree of honour, but that they are confirmed and faſtened in it, as if they were fixed thereunto by his immediate hand. And to ſay the truth, looke where the feare of God beares ſway, there muſt needes be ſtedfaſtneſſe. For the power and thrones of Kings, is eſtabliſhed by iuſtice; as *Salomon* ſaith, *Pro. 16. 16.* Neither doth it ſerue to comfort Princes onely, to the end they may be able to paſſe thorow all dangers with a reſolute mind: but alſo that they may execute their office conſtantly, and without diſtraction, ſo as they neede not quail nor faint for anie cauſe, nor to feare any danger.

But alas how few are there that taſte this doctrine truely? All are almoſt like *Ieroboam*, thinking that religion ought to ſtoope to them, which they like and allow of no further then they ſee it to be for their benefit: nay they ſucke not at all to diſguiſe and alter it at their pleaſure: as for God and his true religion, they ſet the care thereof in the laſt place. What wonder is it then that they are alwaies in feare of themſelues in their affaires, being neuer at peace and quiet: for they ſeldome or neuer ſet any time apart to thinke vpon him, from whom proceeds all ſtrength and power. Thence come treaſons, thence ariſe cruelties, avarice, violence, and all manner of fraudes and oppreſſions, wherein Princes now ouerflowe more impudently then anie other.

Yet are there ſome, in whom wee may perceiue that which is ſaid heere touching *Eliakim*: the Lord keepes, maintaines, and bleſſeth the duties of equitie and iuſtice, where-with he hath adorned them. For if he ſuffer the very tyrants to raigne for a time, in regard they obſerue ſome forme of gouernement: how much more will he bleſſe Princes, when with a good and vpright heart they maintaine truth and equitie, and promote Gods true worſhip and ſeruiſe? He that is the perpetuall maintainer of iuſtice, will hee not defend and eſtabliſh ſuch a Prince more and more?

Verſ. 24. *And they ſhall hang vpon him all the glorie of his fathers houſe, euen of the nephewes and poſteritie; of ſmall veſſels, from the veſſels of*

THis is as much as if hee ſaid, that *Eliakim* ſhall diſcharge his dutie in good ſort; ſo as he ſhall not deale negligently in it. Whence we gather, that God aduanceth not Princes vnto honour, to the end they ſhould be idle, and giue the reines to their luſtes and affections. For dominion and authoritie is a burden of great waight and labour, if to be men performe their duties as they ought to doe: farre from the praſtice of theſe dumbe idolles; who thinke God hath liſted them vp into the ſeate of honour, to no other end but to ſare deliciouſly, and to wallow themſelues at their eaſe in all manner of pleaſures. But if a Prince will execute his office aright, hee muſt prepare himſelfe to vndergo much turmoile. Neither muſt we thinke that this ſimilitude of the *naile*, ſhould not ſure well in regard of gouernment: for hereby is ſignified, a burthen full of buſineſſes and troubles. I alſo know well enough, that ſimilitudes agree not alwaies in euery thing, but in the ſpeciall drift whereat they aime.

Now in that hee ſpeakes of the *houſe of his father*; doubtleſſe *Eliakim* was of the royall blood. And therefore by *ſucceſſors*, I not onely vnderſtand his next kinſfolkes; but the whole familie of *Dauid*. He then ſhall haue the charge of all that ſhall be in the Kings houſe. When he addes the *chil. en. chibere*; he therewithall reacheth, that this gouernment ſhall be of long continuance; ſo as it ſhall not laſt one mans life onely, but it ſhall be extended to thoſe that ſhall come a long time after. For good Princes not onely profit the Church and Commonwealthe for their owne time, but thoſe alſo which come after them, to whom they leaue ſuch wholeſome lawes, ordinances, ſtatutes, and markes of good and iuſt gouernment; that the ſucceſſors dare not (albeit they be wicked) breake out into all licenciuouſneſſe at the firſt; yea they are compelled in deſpight of them, to retaine ſomething that is good for modeſties ſake. This hee ſhewes ſhall come to paſſe in *Eliakim*, whoſe gouernment ſhall be ſo vpright, that his very ſucceſſors ſhall feele ſome fruit of it.

From the ſmaleſt veſſels. Vnder a figure he ſhewes that iuſtice ſhall be adminiſtred with equitie, and the right aduanced: and it is as much as if he had ſaid, that *Eliakim* ſhall not onely deale well with the great ones; but that he ſhall haue reſpect to the *meaneſt* alſo. But becauſe this is very rare in a Prince, he is much more worthy of praife, then if he ſhould onely fauour the rich and mightie. For the rich haue meanes enough to keepe themſelues fro hurt; but the weakſt are put to the wall, as they ſay; and the poore are a pray and ſpoile to others; and who is it almoſt that will defend the innocencie of their cauſe? By *veſſels*, the Hebrewes vnderſtand all manner of instruments: and this ſignification extends very far. When he mentio's *instruments* Or, bag-*of muſicke*, he explains that which he had ſaid pipes. in a word: for thus ſerues to the expoſition of

Princes are not aduanced to liue idly. Dominion an heauie burden if men performe their duties.

Gouernment: a burden full of buſineſſe.

Princes ſhould not onely care for the welfare of the Church for their owne times, but for the poſteritie alſo.

The cauſe of treaſons.

If God ſeem to bleſſe tyrants in ſuſtaining them to ſtill for a time, much more ſuch as are nurſing fathers to his Church.

the word *small* or *litle*: as if hee should say, There is nothing so litle or contemptible, which he will not haue care of.

Verf. 25. *And in that day, saith the Lord of hostes, shall the nail that is fastened in the sure place depart, and shall be broken and fall: and the burden that was vpon it shall be cut off; for the Lord hath spoken it.*

This might seeme to contradict that which hath been said heretofore: but he speaks no longer now of Eliakim, but returnes againe to Shebna, who should be put out of his office; as *Isaiah* had foretold. Otherwise what way or meanes were there left for Eliakim to come to this honour, vnlesse Shebna were put out? But he had laid his plot in such exquisite manner, that he neuer imagined any man whatsoeuer should be able to supplant him. Thus when hee tooke himselfe to bee in best case, and furnished with manie meanes, so as it seemed he was furthest out of danger; euen then must hee be turned out of all, and Eliakim must succeed him. In that he calles it a *faithfull* or *sure* place, it must bee vnderstood as in regard of men; who thinke that

things fortified on euerie side, must needs continue alwaies: but God with his onely blast ouerthrowes all these munitions. Hee speaks then by way of granting, when hee saith, that this was a sure and stable place. Whence we are to gather, how fondly such glorie and trust in their greatnesse, who are advanced into high places of honour, seeing they may be stripped out of all, and abased in the twinkling of an eye.

It followeth, *And the burden.* When the wicked begin once to fall, then those who were vpheld by their authoritie, must needs fall together with them. For is it not good reason that such as were brethen in cull with them, and had furthered this wretch as farre as they could, that they should also partake with him in his punishment? Verie hard it is for them then, who throwd themselves vnder the protection of the wicked, and employing all their meanes for their seruice; that such should not also therewithall be guiltie of their wicked courses: and be it they should be guiltlesse, (which yet fallles out very seldome, or rather indeede neuer) yet notwithstanding they are iustly punished, because they haue placed their hopes in the wicked, as in a sure fortress, and haue wholly relied vpon their command and authoritie.

It is not safe to serue such masters as are not Gods seruants.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *The burden of Tyre. Howl ye shippes of Tarshish: for it is destroyed, so that there is none house: none shall come from the land of Chittim: it is reuealed vnto them.*



Tyre was a verie rich Citie, and greatly renowned in regard of the traffique which all nations had with it, as also in regard of the townes of warre and Cities habitable which it built: as Carthage, which imitated the Roman Empire; Vtique, Leptis, Gades, and other Cities, who all sent their presents to Tyre; hereby protesting, that they acknowledged this to be the mother Citie. But *Isaiah* threatens it with destruction, because it wronged the people of God; as we may gather out of *Ezechiel*, 26. 2. For we are chiefly to consider the cause of this destruction, in regard it is the Prophets meaning to reueale Gods fatherly loue to his elect and chosen people, who meant to set himselfe against all their enemies. Some thinke that this should be referred to the siege of *Alexander*, who tooke Tyre with great difficultie. But this supposition is too weake, because *Isaiah* mentions Chittim, vnder which name the Hebrewes not onely comprehend the Macedonians, but other nations also, as the Greekes, and all those which

are beyond the seas. Now King *Nebuchadnezzar* vsed the helpe not onely of the souldiers of his owne Country in this siege, but other strangers also which he had called from among the Greekes and other places. Besides, the Greekes are spoken of for another respect, as we shall see by and by after; namely, because in time to come, they should not bring their ships any more to Tyre, to trade there. Yet the end of this Chapter giues me occasion to be of a contrary opinion, because *Isaiah* speaks there of the restauration of Tyre, which was neuer repaired after *Alexander* the Great tooke it by force. Moreouer, when I conferre *Ezechiel*'s words with these, me thinks they make but one prophetic. He speaks not then of *Alexander*, but of *Nebuchadnezzar*; and so doubtlesse it is to be expounded. Adde hereunto, that in the time of *Ezechiel* and *Isaiah*, this Citie was vnder the command of a king: but when *Alexander* took it, the histories say, it was brought into the forme of a Commonwealth. And if we shall consider the end of the prophetic, we shall be sufficiently confirmed in this opinion: for his purpose was to comfort the Iewes, by threatening an ineuitable punishment to the Tyrians, of whom they had been afflicted. For it had been a thing verie vnreasonable, for the Lord to haue chastised other nations, and that these in the meane while which had been no lesse enemies, should haue escaped scotfree, or should haue bin smitten siue hundred yeeres after. All these coniectures then lead vs to expoid this place of *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Howle.]

The cause of this prophetic.

Alexander.

Howle.] He enricheth the declaration of the ruine of this Citie with diuers figures: and it is his cuſtome ſo to ſpeake, that he might get the more authoritie to his propheete. For to deliuer ſuch a thing in a plaine ſpeech, would haue been but cold; neither would it haue been ſufficiently effectfull to comfort the hearts of thoſe, who a long time had been weake and faint; and therefore he ſets it forth before them, as it were in freſh and luely colours. And firſt he ſhewes that the deſtruction ſhall be very great, in regard that euen the regions farre off ſhall ſeele it; and he commands the ſhips to *howle*, becauſe they ſhall haue no employment when Tyre ſhall be deſtroyed. Now he eſpecially names the ſhips of the Cilicians, becauſe they being neighbours, vſed to traffique much and often with the Tyrians; and the Hebrewes call Cilicia, Taſhith. Neither could it poſſibly be, but the deſtruction of Tyre, muſt bring great detriment to this Countrey; not onely in that the vſuall traffiques ceaſed for a time, but alſo in regard that the Merchants goods, together with their bookes of accounts, were carried away, and ſcattered here and there; as it vſually talles out when the houſes of rich men are riſſed.

Where I haue tranſlated, *they ſhall come no more*; others expound it, There ſhall bee no houſe remaining, by which you may enter: but I take it I haue faithfully rendred the Prophets meaning: not as if he thought that all paſſage ſhould be taken from the Cilicians and Greekes; but he meant rather to ſay, that they ſhall goe no more to Tyre, as they were wont in times paſt, becauſe the mart there ſhould ceaſe. Thoſe who thinke the Prophet ſpeakes of the diſcomſure made by *Alexander*, diuide the claufe of the verſe, *From the land Chittim*, and conioyne it thus, This was reuealed vnto them from the land of Chittim: that is to ſay, that the Greekes might neither goe nor come, as they were wont. For by Chittim, the Hebrewes vnderſtand the Greekes and Eaſterne people: and it is as if hee ſhould haue ſaid; The traffique of the Greekes ſhall ceaſe, ſo as their ſhips ſhall no more arriue there. And vnder it, he alſo comprehends the Egyptians, Cilicians, Italians, and other nations.

When he ſaith; *This was reuealed vnto them*: wee may ſidly vnderſtand it as well of the Greekes, as of the Tyrians. If it be referred to the Greekes, the ſenſe will bee, that as ſoone as newes ſhall come of the deſtruction of Tyre, they ſhall then ſaile no more thither as they were wont: for they ſhall ſce this port with as much feare as if it were a rocke. And this ſenſe I doe more willingly receiue: notwithstanding I reiect not the other, to wit, that the Prophet confirms his propheetie: as when wee ordinarily ſpeake of a thing that ſhall ſurely come to paſſe, wee ſay; Looke to it, for this appertaines to thee.

Verſ. 2. *Be ſtill, yee that dwell in the*

Illes: the Merchants of Zidon, and ſuch as paſſe ouer the ſea, haue replenished thee.

HE ſets forth the ruine of Tyre more at large. Now there is here a change touching the number, in the word *Illes*: for albeit he ſpeakes in the ſingular number, yet he vnderſtands thereby ſeuerall Illes of the Mediterranean ſea, & the people y dwell beyond the ſea; but chiefly the borderers which ſailed often to Tyre, and vſually traded there. He commands them to hold their peace, and to *be ſtill*, becauſe they ſhall no more trauaile thither. His meaning is, that they ſhould *be ſtill*, as men *confounded*; in regard of the great calamity which ſhould befall the, in ſuch wiſe, as they ſhould not dare to vter one word. For it could not bee but thoſe nations which traded there, muſt loſe much, when a Citie ſo replenished with marchandize was ſacked. As for example; if Venice or Antwerp ſhould bee now deſtroyed, would it not redound to the great of many nations?

The Prophet makes ſpecial mention of the *Sidonians*; not onely becauſe they were neighbours, but becauſe theſe two cities had both one beginning. *Zidon* was greatly renowned; but yet it was much leſſe in quantitie then Tyre. It ſtoode vpon the edge of the ſea, and was two hundred ^{stad} ſtades in diſtance from it. Now they ſeemed ſo neere one to another, and ſo linked together in merchandiſe, that the Poets often take the one for the other. Wee need not doubt then but the *Zidonians* gained much more then others, in ſelling and exchanging their commodities: firſt in regard they were neighbours: and ſecondly, becauſe of their continuall trading. For the wealth of the Tyrians ſo flowed in vpon them, that they were caried vpon their wings, after the common prouerbe. Thence is it therefore that their loſſe muſt be much greater then any others, in this deſtruction of Tyre. And that is the cauſe why the Prophet bids *Zidon* to bee aſhamed in the fourth verſe. He addes, *which replenished thee*: ſpeaking either of all in generall, or becauſe it was filled with the glut and multitude of men, in regard that ſtrangers came thither from diuers Countreies ſarre remote from them, or elſe becauſe thoſe which trauailed for gaine, did therewithall enrich the Citie.

Verſ. 3. *The ſeede of Nilus growing by the abundance of waters, and the harneſt of the riuer was her reuenues: and ſhe was a mart of the nations.*

THE Prophets meaning is, that the riches of Tyre ſhall not deliuer it from deſtruction. He therefore ſets forth the rich eſtate thereof ſo highly, to the end euery one might know, firſt Gods iudgement; and ſecondly, that this was no ſmall plague that was light vpon her. And in the third place, the worke of God did appeare to be ſo much the more manifelt,

The cauſe why the Prophet mentions the Sidonians.

* A Stade contains the meſure of ſix ſcore and ſiue paces, which was the length of a race, when they ranne for a price or wager.

manifest, in regard that her destruction came suddenly, when she thought on no such matter. Moreover, he describes the wealthiness of Tyre elegantly: for because *Nilus* furnished her with corne and other necessary provisions, and that great quantitie of wheat was sent thither out of Egypt; the Prophet saith, shee had her fields as it were, and her *seede* growing in the *streame of Nilus*. The Venetians use to say; Their reuenuc is in the sea; because nothing grows vpon the land: but they get all provision of victuals by their trade of merchandise. And the Prophet saith the same of the Tyrians: for it was almost vnpossible they should want food, because *Nilus* furnished them therewith in great abundance. But he takes this prop away from them as a vaine hope; for they shall destitute them vterly. *Isaiah* therefore, as hath been saide, describes these things, that all might the better perceiue the vengeance and wrath of God fallen vpon her.

A prouerbe
of the Ve-
netians.

Verf. 4. *Bee ashamed thou Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, euen the strength of the sea, saying; I haue not tranailed nor brought forth children, neither nourished young men, nor brought vp virgins.*

THis verse is added by way of amplification. We haue told you the cause why he spake of Zidon thus in particular before. Now calles Tyre, *sea*, by way of excellencie, as if she alone raigned in the middest it. That which is by and by added. *I haue not conceived*, is spoken in the person of Tyre: and thus he pleasantly derides Tyre, who bragged of her Townes: for Tyre began or built other Cities very renowned. She was in olde time much spoken of (saith *Plinie*) for the Cities which she built, to wit, *Leptis*, *Vtique*, and this *Carthage*, the imitatrix of the Roman Empire; meaning to rule ouer all the world; and *Gades* also, which was built vpon the sea. Now all her wealth consisted in purple and scarlet. The Prophet then brings in the Citie of Tyre, lamenting her ancient glorie and excellencie: Alas, I am now no longer a mother; and what hath it profited me that I haue nourished so many children, and brought forth so many Cities? For *Carthage* was wont to send presents to Tyre euerie yeere, by way of homage: and therein acknowledged her for her *mother*. Thus it seemes that Tyre surmounted all other Cities in dignitie, seeing *Carthage*, which was the second after the Roman Empire, did in some sort submit it selfe vnto her. But the Lord tooke all these ornaments from her in a moment, in such wise, that she *laments*, as if shee had neuer had children.

Verf. 5. *When the same comes to the Egyptians, they shall be sorie concer-*

ning the rumor of Tyrus.

By this verse hee signifies, that this fall of Tyre shall touch the Egyptians also; and thus the exposition which wee follow, is confirmed; to wit, that these things ought to be referred to the first sacking of it. For those of Tyre were in league with the Egyptians, and both of them had their King: not as in the time of *Alexander*, at what time Tyre was a free Citie, and liued vnder her owne lawes. Now hee could no way better expresse the societie that was betwene them of Tyre and the Egyptians: and the reason why he shewes that the Egyptians shall haue their part in this destruction is, because they had solicited the Lewes to rebel, and had turned them away from trusting in God. Those were open enemies: these vnder pretence of friendship, entertained poisonfull hatreds. Both of them are iustly punished.

God will punish as well the secret as the open enemies of his Church.

Verf. 6. *Goe yee ouer to Tarshish: howie ye that dwell in the Iles.*

He speaks not onely to the Tyrians, but also to the strangers who were in league with them, in regard of their commerce: now hee commands that they get them to some other place, and to seeke out other hauens. And he names *Cilicia*, which was opposite to Tyre: as if hee should say, This port which hath been so much frequented, shall hereafter be so forsaken, that the ships shall faile into an other quarter, quite an other way. For when Merchants see a port broken, or a mart abolished, they are wont to seeke out others. He puts one Ile for many, as we haue expounded before; because the change of the number is a thing common among the Hebrewes: and against these Iles he threatens, that they shall *howie*; because their maintenance depended vpon this trade of merchandise. Besides, their bookes of reckonings and accounts were mingled here and there.

See verf. 2.

Plin. lib. 3. cap. 19.

Carthage.

Verf. 7. *Is not this that your glorious Citie? her antiquitie is of ancient daies: her owne feete shall leade her a far off to be a sojourner.*

THe Prophet aduanceth his stile, and insults yet further against Tyre. Hee disdaines her pride, in that shee gloried in the *antiquitie* of her name: he is bold the we see to confirme his speech, which to any mans reason might seeme incredible. For who doubts but that this prophecie was scorned: first, the power and strength of Tyre was inuincible, and her wealth as a wall of brasse. Well, *Isaiah* is so much the more bold and confident, and denounceth a certaine destruction to befall her: and albeit shee was the most ancient amongst other Cities, and in regard thereof, euerie one applauded her: yet all this should not prevent her certaine ruine and downefall.

No strength able to match the power of the Almighty.

Now profane histories doe fetch the original

ginall of Tyre, from time almoſt out of mind, and that ſo darkely and obſcurely indeede, that a man can ſcarceely vnderſtand their meaning: yer they ſay, that the *Phenicians* built it: ſo as they which glorie of antiquitie, may call themſelues children of the earth. But the Prophet to this *antiquitie* oppoſeth *banishment*; ſhewing that when the Lord is purpoſed to correct this people, they muſt needs ſtoope. For to *goe whither the ſeete leader one*, ſignifies nothing elſe but to wander and runne hither and thither. Although his meaning alſo is, that they ſhall wander thus deſtitute of their riches alſo; and in their exile, ſhall be in want of all things: ſo as they ſhall not haue ſo much as an horſe or wagon to carrie themſelues, or any thing of theirs vpon. Now when *pouertie* is ioyned with *banishment*, it is a very wofull condition: for a man will eaſilie beare his *banishment*, if hee haue wherewith to lue, and maintaine his eſtate: but to dwell in a ſtrange Countrie as vnknowne, with *pouertie*, is a miſerie of miſeries. And that hee may heape vp her afflictions to the full, hee adds, that ſhee muſt goe into a *farre Countrie*: now the further one is exiled, the harder the *banishment* is.

Phenicians.

Pouerty ioyned with banishment, muſt needs be dolorous.

Queſt.

*Or, crowning.
*Or, whoſe factors.

Verſ. 8. *Who hath decreed this againſt Tyrus, (that crownes men) whoſe Merchants are Princes, whoſe Chapmen are the noble of the world?*

THE Prophet adorneſ this Citie with this title, who enriched many; as we may eaſilie gather from the drift of the text. For when he calles her *Merchants Kings*, he ſufficiently ſhewes, that by the word *crowning*, vnder a ſimilitude he means *the magnificence of Kings*. And thus their opinion is refuted, who refer this prophecie to other Citieſ. The ſumme is, that Tyrus enriched her Citizens, as if he created euerie one of them *Kings* and *Princes*. Some thinke this verſe is to be added thus; as if the Prophet ſhould represent the perſon of a man aſtoniſhed with the deſtruction of Tyre, to make others afraid: as if he ſhould ſay; Is it poſſible that Tyre ſhould be ſo ſoone brought low, where there is ſuch abundance of riches, ſuch might, meanes, munitions; yea where there is ſo great glorie and maieltie? And that he ſhould then at an inſtant pauſe a while, as men are wont to doe in things vnlooked for. But it is better to ioyn the verſe following to this, which takes away all difficultie; ſeeing the Prophet himſelfe forthwith answers this queſtion, by which he meant to ſtirre vp his auditors to the better attention. For he might plainly haue ſaid; Theſe things are done by the counſell of the Lord: but in regard wee are drowie, ſecure, and ſenſeleſſe hearts would eaſilie haue ouerſlipped this without obſeruation: therefore hee awakens their ſpirits by this *interrogation*; to the end all might know that hee ſpeakes of no common thing, that therewithall they might take the matter the more to heart. And indeed, by how much

the more the iudgements of God are aboue the reach of common ſenſe, ſo much the more are they worthy to be admired.

He ſpake to Egypt before, Chap. 19. in the ſame termes, ſhewing that her deſtruction ſhould not be forced with common and ordinarie changes. Now becauſe it was incredible that Tyre could bee ruined by men; See verſ. 9. therefore the Prophet well concludes, that *God himſelfe* ſhall bee the author of it. And therefore hee calles it the *mother and nurſe of Kings*; that he might cauſe Gods iudgement to thinke ſo much the more cleerely: for had it beene a Citie vnrenowned, fewer words would haue ſufficed touching the deſtruction of it: but being adorned with ſo high titles, who could imagine that this could otherwiſe come to paſſe, but by the *counſell* and decree of God? Hee calles the *Merchants Princes*: as at this day the Merchants of Venice thinke themſelues to ſurmount Princes in dignitie, Kings onely excepted: yea, and the *ſailors* alſo take themſelues for no leſſe then good Gentlemen. I haue heard alſo that there are *ſailors* at Antwerpe, who feare not to ſpend more then the richeſt Gentlemens ſubſtance can beare. Now we are wont to *ask* queſtions, when nothing can be answered, but what we pleaſe: which alſo is a ſigne of courage and boldneſſe.

Merchants of Venice.

Factors of Antwerpe.

Verſ. 9. *The Lord of hoſtes hath decreed this, to ſtaine the pride of all glory, and to bring to contempt, all them that be glorious in the earth.*

Ant.
*Or, profane

[The pride.] Or, the haughtineſſe: for we may reade it both waies, becauſe haughtineſſe begets pride; for it is very rare to finde humilitie of ſpirit in a haughtie minde. Notwithſtanding it is better to reade it *pride*, which is enough of it ſelfe to prouoke God to take vengeance, when men vnder pretence of their excellencie, aduance themſelues aboue meature. *To profane*, and diſhonour, are rakin for one and the ſame thing: becauſe thoſe who are exalted to honour, ſeeme to bee as men conſecrate and ſet apart, conceiuing I wor not what greatneſſe of themſelues; as if they were now quite exempt out of the common ranke of men. But God no ſooner ſtrips ſuch of their dignity, and brings them down, but hee forthwith makes them vile and contemptible. Let vs therefore learne from this place, ſo to conſider of Gods providence, that we giue that praife to his infinite power, which belongs vnto it for his ſo iuſt a gouernement. So then, albeit the iuſtice whereby it pleaſeth God to moderate his actions alwaies appeares not vnto vs; yet ought wee not therefore to ſeparate his power from his iuſtice. In the meane while, for as much as the Scriptures plainly ſhew, and often ſet before vs the end why God doth this or that; we ought to bee wiſe in obſeruing the cauſes of his works.

A rare thing to finde a humble heart in an haughtie minde.

Note.

Now this inuention of Gods abſolute power, which the Schoolemen haue forged, is a moſt execrable blaſphemie: for it is all one as

Gods abſolute power.

if

if they should say, that God were a Tyrant, doing and appointing to bee done what himselfe likech; and not that which is according to right and equitie. Their schooles are full of such blasphemies, and therein they imitate the Pagans, who say, that God sports himselfe in turning things vpside downe here below. But in the schoole of Christ wee are taught, that Gods iustice shines in all his workes, of what kind fouer they be; that so all mouthes may be stopped, and glory may be giuen to him alone. The Prophet shewes then that the causes of such an horrible desolation shall be most iust; to the end wee should not thinke that God doth any thing without reason: for those of Tyre were proud, haughtie, couetous, vnclane in life, and dissolute. Riches and abundance of all things, vsually brings in these vices with them: and the Cities which stand vpo the trade of merchandise, are easily stained herewith. Therefore he teacheth, that God was so prouoked by these finnes; that all others might learne by this example to look about them betimes, and not to abuse the blessings of God in excessive and riot. And this is the fruit indeede which we are to gather of this; that so we may not imagine the Prophet sets a naked and bare historie here before vs. But will one say, Doth God hate the greatnes of Princes and Lords? Why he himselfe aduanceth them to that dignitie: by him great Lords and Nobles beare rule; and it is he that establisheth all the orders of Magistrates and superiours: how then can it be said he should hate them? I answer, that the dignitie whereunto Princes and great men are aduanced, is not hated of God, but accidentally, as they say; to wit, because being thus aduanced, they despise others, & thinke themselves to be no longer men, but some petty gods as it were. And thus pride alwaies for the most part, accompanies greatness; and that is it which God detests: meet hee not then confound and ouerthrow that, whereof he professeth himselfe to be an vtter enemy?

Verf. 10. *Passé thorowe thy land like a flood to the daughter of Tarshish: there is no more strength.*

*Or, girdle.

Some translate the word *Mezsch*, Girdle; others, Strength. Those which turne it, Girdle, say; that Tyre shall be so spoiled, that there shall not be left so much as a girdle: and thus hee should allude to the great heape of merchandise: for the basest of them sold of these girdles. But I thinke rather the Prophet had respect to the situation of the citie, which was fenced on all sides, and inuironed with ditches, ramparts, walles, & with the sea also.

Verf. 11. *He stretched out his hand vpon the sea: hee spooke the Kingdomes: the Lord hath giuen a commandement concerning the place of merchandise, to destroy the power thereof.*

Some thinke this prophetic of *Isaiah* touching the destruction of Tyre, should now

be confirmed by examples, to wit, that the Lord hath shewed so many testimonies of his power in ouerthrowing great kingdomes, that it is no wonder if he now vtterlie roote out this Citie of Tyre, how flourishing or rich fouer it be. And this maner of teaching is often found in the Scriptures, because men acknowledge not the power of God, vnlesse it appears by manifest examples and by the effects. Thus they thinke then that the Prophet heere calles to minde the deliuerance out of Egypt, when the Lord diuided the sea, and afterward hauing driuen out seuen Kings, he caused his people to enter into the land of Canaan. But viewing the Prophets words with mature iudgement, I had rather expound them as an appendance of that which went before; and that because hee speakes of Tyre heere (a coast towne) whose riches occupied all the sea.

Exod. 14. 21.

Hee adds the *kingdomes*, in regard that it could not perish alone, but therewithall must needs pull ruin vpon many kingdomes besides. And thus this change was as it were the change of the whole world, as it appeeres by histories. Last of all, the Prophet concludes that it is God himselfe who hath giuen commandement touching the marring of these markets, as they say. The word *Chanaan* hath caused the expositors to thinke that the Prophet speakes heere of the Canaanites, as if hee alledged the example of Gods vengeance against them. But this their supposition is too weak; for this word is often taken appellatiuely, as was the word *Factors* in the eighth verse. For the riches of Tyre consisting in traffique and merchandise, *Isaiah* calles it by the name which it chiefly deserued. Now by the verb *to decree*, he sets out the prouidence of God, to the end the Iewes might know that what fouer seemes of some continuance in this world, yet stands or falls at Gods pleasure, so as he needs no great engines of warre to ouerthrow any strong place, for the least signe he makes with his finger will suffice.

Verf. 12. *And he said, *Thou shalt no more reioyce when thou art oppressed, o virgin daughter of Zidon: rise vp, goe ouer to Chittim: yet there thou shalt haue no rest.*

*Or, he shall come no more at thee to make thee glad.

All these things tend to one and the same end: for if the Prophet had seene it fit to haue concluded the matter with a bare description, he would not haue confirmed this prophetic with so many words. It was a thing almost incredible that so rich and strong a Citie, so well appointed and fortified, and confederate with so many nations, could haue cuer been ouerthrowne and ruined. When he saith *he shall come no more at thee*, his meaning is not to forestall them of the hope of restauration which he giues them hereafter, verf. 18. for this threatening ought to be restrained to the destruction of Tyre, as if he should say, I thou shalt not be such a wanton hereafter as thou wast wont to be in times past.

He

He calles her a *virgin* by way of ſimilitude, becauſe none had meddled with the riches of Tyrus before this time; neither had ſhe yet ſuſtained any loſſe. He praiſeth not her chaſtite then but he eloquently ſhewes, that the riches which had been hid to cloſe, ſhould be digged vp: as if he ſhould ſay; Thou reioicedſt heretofore as *young virgins* in the flower of their youth; but thy ioy ſhall come to an end when thou haſt been once deflowed. It is all one therefore for the ſenſe, as one ſhould call Venice a virgin Citie, becauſe it was neuer taken by force ſince it was built.

Daughter of Zidon. He ſpe. kes ſtill of Tyre; but he calles it ſo, becauſe the *Zidoniens* had built it, albeit now the daughter was waxen richer then the mother, as it often fallies out in worldly things. Now the commoditie and ſituation of the place, was the cauſe that the Tyrians grew the ſtronger: ſo as Zidon now depended vpon them. It appears ſufficiently by the holy hiſtorie, that the Monarchy of Tyrus was very famous: but the Prophet in this place onely reſpects her beginning. In that he afterwards commands them to *paſſe ouer to Chittim*. he not onely driues them into Cilicia, but into the Countries further off: for vnder this word, he comprehends Greece, Italy, and other regions: as if he ſhould haue ſaid; When by baniſhment thou ſhalt be torced to change thy habitation, thou ſhalt *finde no reſt* among thy neighbours neere hand, but thou muſt wander vp & downe thorough the world; thou ſhalt bee brought into places vnknowne, neither yet ſhalt thou finde reſt there. To be ſhort, his meaning is, that this deſtruction ſhall bee ſo fearefull and miſerable, that they ſhall finde reſt neither amongſt neighbours, nor yet amongſt ſtrangers, when they ſhall haue paſſed the ſeas.

Verſ. 13. Behold the land of the Caldeans: this was no people: Aſhur founded it by the inhabitants of the wildeſſe: they ſet vp the towres thereof: they raiſed the palices thereof, and hee brought it to ruine.

Now hee confirms that which hee hath prophecied againſt Tyre by an example. For it could hardly ſinke into any mans head, (eſpecially into the Tyrians) that their Citie could bee ſurpriſed, they being ſecure and dreamp't of no ſuch matter. I know this place is expounded diuerſly: but I will not now ſtand to confute other mens opinions: it ſhall ſuffice mee to lay forth the Prophets meaning, ſo farre forth as I can diſcerne. *The people of the Caldeans were nor.* That is to ſay, had no name: for if wee ſearch for the original, they deſcended from the Aſſyrians, as we may iudge by the 10 Chapter of Geneſis, verſe 11. Hee truly affirms then that it was no people in the beginning; becauſe it was couered vnder the name of another: ſo as it was not a bodie at all of any Commonweale.

Whereas we haue translated, *The inhabi-*

tants of the wildeſſe; others tranſlate Ships: but he thinks this expoſition is conſtrained. The fiſt which I haue ſet downe, agrees better; to wit, that the Aſſyrians had eſtabliſhed and ſet vp a certaine eſtate among the Caldeans, who before wandred thorow the deſerts vnder tents of ſkinnes: but the Aſſyrians gathered them into Cities, and brought them to a better ſorme and manner of humane ſocietie. This he ſhewes by the verbe *Uru*, to wit, that they edified and built Cities: for wheteas ſome tranſlate, They threw downe: it cannot ſtand. What beſell then? *They brought Aſhur vnto deſolation;* as the common proouerbe is, the daughter deuoured the mother: for the Caldeans deſtroyed the Monarchy of the Aſſyrians, albeit it was the moſt flouriſhing and the moſt mightie of all others. But what of all this? What doe theſe things appertaine to Tyre, will ſome ſay? Much; becauſe it ſhould be deſtroyed by the Aſſyrians and Caldeans. Seeing then that the Caldeans, which were nothing in times paſt, were able to bring downe and ſubdue the Aſſyrians; is it any wonder if theſe two nations being ioynd together, ſhould ſubdue Tyre? If the Lord hath ſhewed ſuch an example of his power in the Aſſyrians; why ſhould Tyre truſt in her riches? Doubtleſſe ſhe alſo ſhall feele the hand of the Lord, and her power ſhall no way bee able to reſiſt.

Verſ. 14. Howle yee ſhips of Tarſiſh, for your ſtrength is deſtroyed.

Hee repeats that which hee ſaid before; *Verſ. 1.* for the Cilicians ordinarily vſed traffique with the Tyrians, becauſe they were borderers. He commands their *ſhips to howle*, becauſe when this haven was ſhut vp, the Merchants ſhould ſtand amaſed, in regard they ſhould neither goe nor come any more as they were wont. Now hee calles this port to which they vſually came, *their ſtrength*; not onely becauſe the harbour and abode there was ſafe, but alſo becauſe the voyages by ſea could bring no profite vnto them without it.

Verſ. 15. And in that day ſhall Tyrus be forgotten ſeuentie yeeres, (according to the yeeres of one King) at the end of ſeuentie yeeres ſhall Tyrus ſing as an harlot.

The Prophet hauing ſpoken of the ſurpriſing of Tyre, now therewithall ſhewes how long their calamitie ſhould indure. For it may come to paſſe, that ruined Cities may be ſoone repaired and brought to their fiſt eſtate: but the Prophet teſtifies that this Citie ſhall remaine deſolate without inhabitant, the ſpace of *ſeuentie yeeres*. When hee ſaith, it *ſhall be forgotten*; his meaning is, that traffique ſhall ceaſe, and that Merchants ſhall haue no ordinarie concurſe to and fro, as they were wont. Now, whereas ſome referre

In what ſenſe this word Virgin is here to be taken.

1. King. 5. 1.

Obiect.

Anſ.

the dayes of a king to David, it is too frivolous, for he takes it for the age of a man, as the Psalmist shewes: The age of a man, saith he, is often limited to threescore yeares and ten, Psal. 90. 10. But why mentions he a king rather then some other man? It is because Tyre had a king, and therefore he counts the yeres by his life. This serued much therefore to confirme the certentie of this prophesie, for the Prophet could not know these things by any humane coniectures. By the *song of the harlot*, he vnder a fit similitude meanes merchandize, not that merchandizing is to be condemned in it selfe, for it is profitable and necessarie for a Common wealth: but he taxeth the deccits and guile wherewith it aboundeth, so as it may very well be compared to the art of harlotrie.

Verf. 16. *Take an harp, and goe about the Citie (thou harlot that hast been forgotten) make sweet melodie, sing no songs that thou mayst be remembered.*

HE compares Tyre to an harlot, who hauing passed all her youth in whoredomes and filchines, at last becoming old (by reason wherof all forsake and despise her) yet can she not forget her first gaine, nor her wicked pranks, but desires to reuiue and refresh her old spirits. And that she may the better draw men out of all parts of the Citie vnto her, she goes singing, and playing upon Instruments, to delight her companions. For such whores become mad as it were when they see themselves despised because of their age: we see also that the Poet Horace flouts an harlot called *Lydia* for the same cause. So Tyre, being destroyed and as it were buried in oblivion, shall againe pluck vp her courage, vsing all her wits and deuises to recouer her first estate.

By the *harp and the sweet melodie* he vnderstands the deccits, craft, entisements and flatteries which are vsed in merchandise, by which Merchants serue their turnes to inueigle men, and to snare them in their nets. In a word, he shewes by what meanes the Citie which consist of merchandise become rich, to wit, by craftie and vnlawfull shifts. For this cause it is that the Prophet saith, Tyre shall tickle mens eares with her sweete melodie.

He further bids her to *double her songs*, as if he should say, adde deceit to deceit, and flatterie to flatterie, till thou hast drawne euery one vnto thee: steale into mens minds againe, and recouer thy first fame. To be short, euen as an old harlot deuiseith meanes how she may get into fauour againe with men by painting, trimming, and decking her selfe in fine apparrell; also with muscfull Instruments and loue-songs: so Tyre shall rise and enrich her selfe againe by the same meanes wherewith she gat wealth before: not that he counsels or giues Tyre licēce by these words to enrich her selfe this way, but continues on his prophesie.

Verf. 17. *And at the end of seuentie*

*yeares shall the Lord visit Tyre, * and she shall returne to her wages, and shall commit fornication With all the kingdoms of the earth that are in the World.*

ALTHOUGH Tyre shall seeme to be vtterlie destroyed when God shall afflict her, yet the Prophet shewes that she shall obtaine mercie, for after her calamities she shall be restored to her first glorie. But it is rightlie said that such a restitution shall be brought to passe by the works of the Lord, for otherwise Tyre must of necessitie seele that which Malachie pronounceth against the Idumeans, to wit, that the Lord would ouerthrow and cast downe all that which they built and set vp, Mala. 1. 4. They had neuer recovered their first estate then vnlesse the Lord himselfe had been the author of it.

Now fro hence we may gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, y albeit God be a iust & seuerer Iudge against y wicked, yet he giues place to his mercie, and is neuer so sharpe in making the wound, but he is as gentle in aswaging y smart of it, and in the end takes it cleane away. Now if he be such a one towards the godlesse & reprobates, what a one will he be to those whom he hath adopted in Christ Iesus for his children, vp6 whom he wil poure out his goodnes? When Kingdomes then are restored, when Citiees are peopled afresh, and that men recouer their liberties, all comes to passe by the only prouidence of God, who casts downe the highest things when it pleaseth him, and on a sudden sets vp and plants that which he had cast downe.

That which follows, to wit, *and she shall returne*, should be read, *But she shall returne*: for the meaning is, that Tyre shall not become the better nor the wiser by such a tedious chastisement, but shall by and by returne to her old bias againe, for in these words he taxeth her ingratitude. We euery day behold such examples, for there is almost no corner in the world in which the Lord hath not set the print of his iudgements. Sometimes he giues those whom he hath corrected a breathing time; but doe they become euer the better? No, the Prophet saith then that Tyre shall be such a one, she shall be neuer awhit reformed, but shall rather *returne* to her vomit againe; she shall play the harlot as she was wont to doe. It is not to be doubted but he speaks of her merchandizing, but he continues on his similitude which he had taken vp before, not meaning thereby vtterlie to cōdemne the trade of Merchants, as we haue said, but because amongst so many corruptions as men haue mingled therewith, it very fidlie resembles the pranks of harlots, for it is replenished with so much cunning, secret packing, and such suble conueyances (as we may now see in the world) that it seems it was only deuised to snare and beguile the simple. How many new and vnknowne practises doe they inuent euery day to gaine and take vp vniūric? which yet none can perceiue vnlesse of long time he hath frequented the Schooles of the Merchants. Wee neede not maruell then if the Prophet

Horace.
Lydia, an
harlot.

Suble con-
ueiances a-
mong Mer-
chants.

vniūric.

Prophet

Prophet hath taken vp ſuch a ſimilitude; whereby he meant to ſhew, that Tyrus ſhould be no leſſe deceitful in the trade of merchandiſe, then ſhe was before.

*Or, but in the end.

Verſ. 18. *Yet her occupying and her wages ſhall be holy vnto the Lord: it ſhall not be laid vp nor kept in ſtore; but her merchandiſe ſhall be for them that dwell before the Lord, to eaſe ſufficiently, and to haue durable clothing.*

THis was an other ſauour of God towards Tyre. After ſhe was reſtored, ſhe yet conuerted not to the Lord, but went on in her ſubtile dealings: for which ſhee deſerued vterly to periſh. And indeed ſhe was miſerably puniſhed when *Alexander* tooke her by force: yet notwithstanding the kingdome of Ieſus Chriſt was ſet vp there, as *S. Luke* witneſſeth, Acts 21.4. This verſe then muſt bee oppoſed to the former: as if he ſhould ſay, Yet ſhall the merchandiſe of Tyre be conſecrated to the Lord. Here we haue a wonderfull example of Gods goodneſſe, which ſhined euen into this vile brothelhouſe, and as you would ſay, euen into hell. This reſtauration of Tyre then muſt be attributed to the bountie of the Lord: but this firſt benefit was nothing in compariſon of the ſecond, when the Lord ſanctified and ſet it a part for himſelfe. But will ſome ſay, might that bee offered vnto God in ſacrifice, which the Tyrians had ſcraped together by polling and vnlawfull ſhifts? For the Lord deteſts ſuch offerings; becauſe hee requires a pure conſcience, and innocent hands: *Pſal. 24.4.* Now in regard of this queſtion, many trouble themſelues about the expoſition of this place, but to ſmall purpoſe: for it is not the Prophets meaning that the merchandiſe of Tyre ſhall be conſecrated vnto God whileſt ſhe continues in her whoredoms, but notes: *ſhe ſhall come*; namely, after her repentance and conuerſion. Shee ſhall not then gather treaſures, and heape vp wealth by hooke and by crooke; but ſhall employ them in the ſeruice of God, and lay out the profit of her trading, for the comfort of the faithfull in their neede. Now albeit hee hath vſed an vnſeemly word, it is in regard of the time: ſignifying that ſhe ſhall forget her wicked practiſes, and ſhall change her old cuſtomes.

They ſhall not be laid vp. Thus in few words hee deſcribes the repentance of Tyre, which although in times paſt, was addicted to couetouſneſſe; yet being conuerted to Chriſt, ſhe ſhall not ſtude to hoord vp riches, but ſhall employ them for the reliefe of the poore and other good vſes. This ought to be the fruit of repentance, as *S. Paul* admoniſheth; Let him that ſtole, ſteale no more; but let him rather labour with his hands the thing that is good, that he may be able to giue to him that needeth: *Eph. 4.28.* Whereas the Tyrians then in times paſt deuoured riches on all ſides, with an inſatiable deſire: *Iſaiab* ſaith, that now they ſhall bee readie to giue as faſt out, be-

cauſe their inordinate deſire of gaine ſhall ceaſe. This is then a note of charitie to be in our poore brethren: contraiwife, of cruelty; we ſuffer them to want; eſpecially when God lades vs with plentie.

He addes the right way of doing good, to wit, they ſhall beſtow *their gods* vpon the ſeruants of God. Now albeit he comprehends all the faithfull, yet hath he a ſpeciall reſpect to the Priests and Leuites, of whom, ſome ſacrificed, ſome made readie the beaſts that were to be ſacrificed, & others watched: in a word, all were readie to doe their office; and for that cauſe it is ſaid, that they dwell before the Lord. The like, by as good right, is to be ſaid of all the Miniſters of the Church. Moreouer, in as much as all the faithfull, of what condition ſoever they be, belong vnto the ſanctuarie of the Lord, and are made one royall Prieſthood by Chriſt, to dwell before him: I willingly referre theſe words to all the houſhold of faith, of whom wee ought to be moſt careful: for *S. Paul* giues vs fo in charge, and would haue them relieued before any other: *Gal. 6.10.* For if the common bond of nature ought to moue vs to hold an eſtimation of our owne fleſh, how much more ſhould the vnion of Chriſts members which is much more holy and ſtraight, then all the bonds of nature, moue and prouoke vs thereunto?

Chap. 38.7.

We ought alſo to obſerue in this phraſe of ſpeech, *to dwell before the Lord*, another point; for albeit we haue not now the Arke of the couenant, yet by the benefit of Chriſt, we approach neerer vnto God then the Leuites in old time did. And therefore we are commanded to walke before him no otherwiſe then if he looked vpon vs; to the end we may in all good conſcience giue our ſelues to holineſſe and righteouſneſſe; for we are charged to walke alwaies as in his ſight, and to behold him as one that viewes all our waies, that ſo we may keepe iuſtice and iudgement.

That they may eaſe their fill. The Prophet meanes, that wee ought to ſuſtaine our brethren much more largely and liberally then men are wont to doe: becauſe we are wonderfull niggards and pinch pennies, when we are moued to relieue the poore. There are verie few that will venture their almes for nothing, and giue with a franke and willing heart: for they thinke that that which they giue to others, is loſt, and is but a leſſening of their ſtocke. The Lord therefore greatly commends a cheerefull heart; *Rom. 12. 8.* rather to correct this vice of niggardlineſſe; and albeit the place in the Romans be chiefly directed to the Deacons, yet it ought to be applied to all. An other ſentence alſo muſt be kept in minde, which reſpecteth that God loues a cheerefull giuer: *2. Cor. 9.7.* Let vs alſo note that the Prophet affirms, that whatſoever is giuen to the poore, is conſecrated vnto God: which the holy Ghoſt alſo in an other place teacheth; With ſuch ſacrifices God is pleaſed: *Heb. 13.10.* For he neuer commanded men to offer ſacrifices, as if they benefit him; no, hee needed them not; but he only appointed them theſe exerciſes of pietie vnder the

Obiect.

Gm. 17.1.

Anſ.

law, now, vnder the Gospell he commands vs distribute something to our neighbours of that we possesse; testifying that whatsoeuer wee employ for the reliefe of our brethren, is to him a sacrifice of a sweete smell.

And it ought greatlie to kindle the loue of bountie and liberalitie in vs, when we heare that our almes are so highlie commended, and that our hands together with our gifts are consecrated vnto God.

THE XXIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and he maketh it waste: he turneth it upside downe, and scatereth the Inhabitants thereof.



His prophesie as I take it, is as it were shutting vp of all those things which haue bin described in the thirteenth Chapter vnto this, wherem *Isaiah* hath not onely foretold the ruine of the

Jewes and Israelites, but also of the Moabites, Assyrians, Egyptians, and others. In a word, he heere comprehends all in a short summe, as if he had viewed all the neighbour countries that were knowne to the Jewes. Some referre this to the Israelites, others to the Jewes, thinking the Prophet speaks of their destruction: but seeing he makes mention of the world, I can not be drawne to take this place in any other sense, but that he now in a few words comprehends all that which he hath said of many particulars, and those belonging to diuers times. Whereas he in the next verse makes mention of the Priest, it contradicts this that I say nothing at all, although it might thereby seeme that these things should only appertaine vnto the people of God: for albeit he speaks of all nations, yet the Jewes alwaies deferring to be preferred in the first place, *Isaiah* was to regard them chieflie and principallie, because it was theirs by right. For he speaks of others accidentallie as you would say: no maruell then if hauing touched them, he mentions his owne people in a particular maner.

Others vnderstand this place of the whole world in generall; yet so as they referre it to the last day: which me thinks is too strict: for the Prophet hauing threatned the Jewes and other nations, in the end addes a consolation, to wit, that the Lord will once againe raise vp his Church, making her to flourish more then euer it did: now how can this agree to the last Iudgement? By the word *earth*, I thinke the Prophet means not the whole world, but those regions which were well knowne to the Jewes: as for example, if we at this day should speake of things which happen in the world, we should hardly passe beyond Europe, much lesse should we thinke of that which is done in India, because the parts on this side is our world as it were. In the same sense *Isaiah* speaks of the *earth*, and of the Inhabitants of the Countries adioyning, which he, and those to whom he spake,

knew. To conclude, we may limit this world whereof the Prophet speaks in this place, within the confines or bounds of the Assyrians, Egyptians, Moabites, and other nations, as if he should say, Hitherto I haue spoken of diuers calamities which then were like to fall vpon many people, and do yet threaten many others in particular: but now behold the conclusion, The Lord will spoile and ouerthrow the face of the earth, with all the beautie of it.

Others expound the verb *Bolkah*, he opens the earth, that the enemies may the more easily enter into it: but I had rather expound it, He vncouers the earth, because they vse to say, The earth is couered or clothed all the while great multitudes of people inhabit it; as also whē it abounds with beasts and fruits: contrarywise, it is said to be vncouered and made bare when it hath lost her inhabitants, for so she is stripped of her garment, euen as if a man should be stripped out of his coates and other apparell. Now this was to happen to the Assyrians, Egyptians, and other nations which he mentioned before, as well as to the Jewes, and therefore he wraps them vp altogether in one iudgement.

*Verf. 2. * And there shall be like people, like priest, and like seruant, like master, like maid, like mistris, like buyer, like seller, like lender, like borrower, * like giuer, like taker to vsurie.*

* Or, and the priest shalbe like the people, &c.

* Or, he borrower, like the lender.

And there shall be like priest.] By these words he signifies an vtter ruine, wherē all order, government, and policie shall cease: for whilest any Commonwealth flourisheth, there is alwaies a certaine difference betweene the people and the priests: well then, he notes an horrible confusion. Now vnder this word *priest*, he puts the particular for the generall, taking a part for the whole, which is a thing very visuall in the Scriptures: although we may take the word *Cohenim* for those which are placed in any dignitie whatsoever: because the Hebrues sometimes giue this name to Princes, but speciallie to such as are of the blood Royall: notwithstanding I willinglie receiue the figure Synecdoche before mentioned. Now sihence the Prophet puts this confusion of estates among the catalogue of Gods curses, shewing that when they be thus turned topsie turuic, it proceeds from his fearefull indignation: we ought on the contrary to gather how well-pleasing policie, and the well ordering of all things is vnto God; as also what a great fauour we receiue from him when such good order is preferred

Good order in a Commonwealth, a singular testimonie of Gods fauour,

and

and continued amongst vs, for it being gone, our life differs nothing from that of brute beaſts. Wee are therefore not onely to acknowledge it to be an heauie hand of God vpon vs, but alſo to confeſſe our owne finnes to be the cauſe, when hee confounds eſtates, deprives vs of the word, and of iudgement ſeates: which being once put downe, the comfort of our life therewithall is fallen to the ground.

We may alſo obſerue hence, that the Lord in executing his iudgements, ſpares not mens perſons, of what calling ſoever they be. What an holy calling was the *priesthood* which the Lord had conſecrated to himſelfe, and adorned after a glorious manner? How much did the people alſo glorie in it; as if the continuance thereof had been vnchangeable, and to haue indured for euer? Yet notwithstanding euen this honourable order of men, is wrapped in amongst the iudgements of God, becauſe he reſpects no perſons. Nay, the more fauours wee haue receiued from him, and the greater our advancement is, the more ſeuerely will hee correct vs, if wee proue vnthankfull, and abuſe his benefits.

To this appertaines that which is here added touching *maſters* and *ſervants*, *buyers* and *ſellers*: for wee know that theſe callings are lawfull, and are notumbled together, vnleſſe it bee when God ſmites his people in iuſtice; as we haue ſaid before: for in a State well managed, men put a difference betwene the *maſter* and the *ſervant*. Neither can a Commonwealth long ſtand without *buying* and *ſelling*: now to make the poore equall with the rich, what is it elſe but to ouerthrow all humane ſocietie? We haue the Prophets meaning then, as if he ſhould ſay; All policie ſhall bee aboliſhed, becauſe in theſe ruines, the *rich* ſhould be brought into extreme povertie. To conclude, he here ſets forth an horrible deſtruction, after which ſhall enſue a wonderfull change.

Verſ. 3. *The earth ſhall bee cleane emptied, and utterly ſpoiled: for the Lord hath ſpoken this word.*

HE confirms that which hee ſaid before: and withall admoniſteth them, that theſe changes ſhall not fall out by haphazard, as they ſay; but that it ſhall come to paſſe by the providence and worke of the Lord. He ſaid expreſly in the firſt verſe, that the Lord was determined to *emptie the earth*: now he tels the, that it ſhall ſo come to paſſe, adding a reaſon of it; to wit, becauſe *God had ſpoken the word*: and therefore it could not be called backe againe.

Verſ. 4. *The earth lamenteth and fadeth away, the world is feebled and decayed; the proud people of the world are weakened.*

THE Prophet holds on his ſpeech ſtill: for all theſe words ſerue to lay forth the ma-

ner of the ruine of the whole earth; that is to ſay, ſo much as was knowne to the Iewes. Now hee ſets out this iudgement of God, vnder borrowed ſpeeches more familiarly, that he might awaken the drowfie; as hee is wont to doe.

By the *high people*, we may vnderſtand thoſe which were more excellent then others: for that was a matter of greater wonder, then if ſome people of a baſe condition had been deſtroyed. Notwithſtanding, if any be pleaſed to expound it particularly of the Iewes, I will not gainsay them: for albeit the Aſſyrians and Egyptianes exceeded them in riches and power; yet notwithstanding the Iewes were higher then they, in regard that God had adopted them for his owne. Yet the other expoſition pleaſeth mee better: for ſo his meaning is; that God will not onely puniſh them of meane eſtate, but thoſe alſo that are advanced to honour and dignitie aboue others.

Verſ. 5. *The earth alſo deceiveth, becauſe of the inhabitants thereof: for they tranſgreſſed the lawes, they changed the ordinances, and brake the everlaſting covenant.*

Others tranſlate, The earth is polluted; becauſe the verbe *deceiveth*, ſignifies to be wicked: both ſenſes may agree, but the verſe following requires that wee expound it, *The earth deceiveth*. For hee ſeemes to amplifie it further by and by after, when hee ſaith, that the curſe hath deuoured the earth. There is no great hardneſſe in the word *Tarath*, whether we tranſlate it vnder, or, Becauſe of her inhabitants. Now there is a mutual traffique, as it were, betwene the earth, and thoſe that labour in it: ſo ſhe ought to render the that which ſhe hath receiued into her bowels, with viſtne; for otherwiſe ſhee deceives them: but ſhe yeelds a reaſon why ſhe deceiues, when ſhee laies the blame vpon the inhabitants: for theſe felues haue made her barren by their wickedneſſe. Our ſinne is the cauſe why the earth ſuſtains vs not, nor brings forth her increaſe as God hath ordained by the courſe of nature. His will is, that ſhee ſhould be a mother vnto vs, to the end ſhe may yeeld vs food: now if ſhe change her nature and courſe, or degenerates from her fruitfulneſſe; let vs impute that to our owne wickedneſſes, becauſe we our ſelues ouerthrow that order which God hath ſet: for otherwiſe the earth would neuer deceiue, but would alwaies render vs that which ſhe ought. The cauſe is by and by added, why the earth is become vnfaithfull and deceiues her inhabitants: for is it not good reaſon they ſhould be defrauded of their promiſion of food, that will defraud God, their Father and ſuſtainer of his honour? Now hee taxeth the reuolt of his nation heere in a particular manner: for their fault was much more heinous, and leſſe excuſable, then all the finnes of thoſe which were neuer taught in God his ſchoole.

Verſ. 6.

Mens finnes the cauſe of the earths barrenneſſe.

The confuſion of eſtate in a kingdom, a ſeruant of very Range alterations.

*Or, high.

1 The word *Thorah* is transferred to the law, because it signifies doctrine: but it is heere put in the plurall number, and signifies all the doctrine that is comprehended in the law. Now because the Law consists as well in Commandements as promises, the Prophet adds two other words or parts of it, to make his meaning the more plaine.

2 The word *Chok*, signifies an Ordinance, and by it some vnderstand the Ceremonies, others Maners. Wee may translate it Instructions: for I take it not only for Ceremonies, but for all things that be put to the rules of good life. Thirdly, he puts the word *Berith*, which

3 signifies a bargain or covenant. This word is to be restrained to the covenants whereby the Lord adopting his people, promised to be their God. He reprocheth their vnthankfulness then, because that albeit the Lord had manifested himselfe vnto them diuers waies, and had giuen them singular testimonies of his loue, yet were they rebellious and wanton, *transgressing his lawes, and violating his holy covenant.*

But why direct he his speech to the Iewes? Because he knew that he was sent vnto them as their Prophet to teach them. Hence wee

1 may gather what the role of a well ordered life is: for it is contained in the Law, which we must precisely follow if we will approue our doings vnto God, if we turne from it to the right hand or to the left, we are guiltie of

2 *transgression.* Wee may also obserue that God would not only haue vs to thinke vpon his Lawes and Commandements in his word, but also vpon his *Covenant*: for the principall part of the word consists in the promises by which hee adopts and receiues vs for his people. Now it is not to be doubted but in these varietie of words the Prophet meant to amplify the matter: as if he should say, You are whollie corrupt, nothing remains found amongst you.

He calles it the *euertlasting cōuenant*, because it ought to be perpetuall, inuiolable, and to indure for euer, for it ought to continue alwaies from the father to the sonne, that the memorie of it might neuer be lost, but might be preferred stedfast in all ages. He laies forth their disloyaltie then and malice, in that they durst violate the *Covenant* made betweene God and them, and ouerthrow the things which the Lord would haue kept sure and stedfast. This was odious: no maruell then if the *earth* auenge her selfe of such an impietie, by denying men their sustentance.

Verf. 6. *Therefore hath the curse deuoured the earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are desolate: Wherefore the Inhabitants thereof are burned vp, and few men are left.*

Others translate Forswearing: but because this word also signifieth to curse, I doubt not but it is taken here for *curfing*, the Prophet hauing an eye to those *curfes* which Moses denounceth in the Law against the wicked that transgress it: *Isaiab* testifies then

that all the calamities which should come to passe, proceeded from the curse of God. We know that the earth was cursed because of the transgression of the first man, so as it brought forth thistles and briars in stead of good fruites, Gen. 3. 17. 18. and yet notwithstanding the Lord hath so moderated this curse, that it ceaseth not to yeeld men foode, although in regard of their vnthankfulness they be vnworthy of it. If we then cease not to offend God, adding sinne vnto sinne; is it not good reason that wee should feele this *curse* to prick vs to the quick, and that the earth should waxe barren and vnfruitfull?

The cause why the earth is cursed.

I thinke the verb *Asham*, should rather be taken to *desolate*, then to transgresse; and the scope of *ŷ* text also leades vs vnto it, therefore I haue translated, *they are desolate*: vntill any had rather take the coniunction for a particle of shewing the cause, in this sense, The earth being cursed of God, is withered, because the inhabitants thereof are wicked. The verb *Charu* may be takeŷ by way of similitude, which I approue best of, to wit, that those whom the wrath of God hath deuoured, were *burned*, for destruction is often compared to the burning of fire.

Now whereas in the end he adds, that *a few men shall be left*, thence we may perceiue, that this prophesie can not be expounded of the last Iudgement: for the Prophet rather foretels and confirms the certentie of those calamities which he had threatned to befall sundrie nations, that by this meanes the faithfull being now readie to indure many afflictions, might feare, and be drawne to repentance.

Verf. 7. *The Wine faileth, the vine hath no might: all that were of merry heart, do mourne.*

8. *The mirth of tabrets ceaseth: the noyse of them that reioyce endeth: the ioy of the harp ceaseth.*

HE continues on the same matter still, but in a more particular maner, foretelling the desolation that should happen to the land of Iudea. Now he vseth a large description, that he might touch them the nearer to the quick, and wound them with the sense of Gods iudgement. He also taxeth their excess, intemperancie, and wantonnes, because that in so great abundance of all things they rebelled against God.

But this ingratitude is not the sinne of the Iewes only, nor of that age alone, but it may be scene euery where, that the more men are gluttered with the blessings of God, the more proudlie they aduance themselves against him, and giue themselves the raines too much: For this cause the Prophet reproues theŷ, as if he should say, Hither vnto you haue plunged your selues in *delights and pleasures*, but the Lord is determined to cut you short. Now *Isaiab* speaks of the thing to come, as if it were already present, the better to paint it out as it were before their eyes.

Wofull effects proceeding from so gracious a cause.

Verf.

Quest. Anf.

1 The rule of a well ordered life described.

2 The principall part of the word consists in the promises.

Why he calls it an euertlasting cōuenant.

Verſ. 9. *They ſhall not drinke Wine With mirth: ſtrong drinke ſhall be bitter to them that drinke it.*

*Or, with ſongs.

IT is not a thing euill in it ſelfe to *drinke wine*; for God hath ordained it for mans vſe: but the Prophet here deſcribes the banquetts of drunkards, in which nothing is to be ſeene but exceſſe, diſſolutions, and dihoneſt ſongs. Moreouer, becauſe they had abuſed their abundance, hee threatens them with want; which men draw into their houſes, when they abuſe Gods bountie by their riot. He addes further, that if they ſhall *drinke ſtrong drinke*, it ſhall be *bitter vnto them*: for ſorrow makes vs feele no taſte either in meate or drinke. The ſumme is, that God will deſprieue them of the vſe of wine, norwithſtanding they haue plenty; becauſe the ſorrow wherewith they ſhall be overwhelmed, will cauſe them to loſe all taſte and ſauiour therein. Strong drinke ſhall be *bitter*: that is to ſay, you ſhall not inioy theſe pleaſures and delights, in which you haue ſoaked your ſelues, any longer.

Abuſe of Gods benefiſes pulles want into our houſes.

Sorrow cauſeth ſweet things to become bitter to our taſte.

Verſ. 10. *The Citie of vanitie is broken downe; euery houſe is ſhut vp.*

I Willingly agree, that this be particularly referred to the deſtruction of Ieruſalem; although from the ſcope of the text wee may gather, that it alſo extends it ſelfe to other Cities; becauſe he will by and by ſummon the nations in the plural number, to appeare before the iudgement ſeate of God. But in regard that *Iſaiab* principally reſpected his Citizens; wee may well take it, that this *Citie of vanitie is Ieruſalem*: either becauſe there was no true vertue in it, or becauſe it was deſtroyed.

Wee may referre the word *Tobu*, to the deſtruction it ſelfe, or to the ſinnes by which they had prouoked the wrath of God againſt them. If we referre it to their iniquities; his meaning is, a *Citie* wherein there is nothing but diſorder: & this ſenſe pleaſeth me beſt, albeit it may alſo be referre to the deſtruction. For as I take it, he ſhewes the cauſe of the ruine wherewith he threatens the Citie; to wit, becauſe iuſtice and equitie were baniſhed out of it. *The houſes ſhut vp*, ſignifie that there ſhall be great ſolitarineſſe: for this is added onely to exemplifie the deſolation of this Citie.

Verſ. 11. *There is a crying for wine in the ſtreets: all ioy is darkened; the mirth of the world is gone away.*

HIS meaning is, there ſhall be great ſcarcity of wine. Now where want and famine is, there are innumerable complaints; not onely in corners, but in publique places alſo. He expreſſeth theſe complaints and lamentations then; but withall he taxeth their exceſſe and intemperancie, in that they con-

terred not themſelues with things neceſſarie, but ſoked themſelues in an ouer flowing of drunkenneſſe and all voluptuouſneſſe. For wee ſhould ſupply an antithetiſ that is wanting here; to wit, You hitherunto abounded in wine and good cheere, through which you haue taken occaſion to waxe wanton and proud againſt God: you ſhall therefore bee juſtly deſprieued of them, ſo that in ſtead of your *ioying*, ſhall bee heard *cries* and *ſighings*.

Wee muſt alſo note a ſimilitude in this ſecond member: for as we are wont to ſay, Ioy A prouebts. then ſhineth in her brighteſt colours, when we haue matter of ioy: the Prophet therefore ſaith, that it is *darkened*; becauſe ſorrow is as a cloud put betweene. To reioyce, is a thing lawfull in it ſelfe, as alſo to drinke: neither doth the Prophet reprove it; onely that immoderate and inordinate ioy: for men ſeldome keepe compaſſe, by reaſon of that lawleſſe which is in them. For as much as the Iewes then had proudly giuen vp themſelues to all diſſoluteneſſe of life, he ſets Gods juſt iudgement before them: for ioy is then juſtly cut off from vs, when we know not how to entertaine the benefiſts of God with thankfulneſſe, nor know not how to reioyce in him. Hee is enforced then to take our delights and pleaſures from vs, and then to compell vs to mourne and ſigh.

When ioy is juſtly cut off from vs.

Verſ. 12. *In the citie is left deſolation, and the gate is ſmitten with deſtruction.*

BY an elegant manner of ſpeech hee deſcribeth the deſtruction of Ieruſalem, or of many other Cities together. The beautie and perfection of Cities, conſiſts in the multitude of inhabitants: they are therefore called *deſerts*, when none are left to dwell in them. Now the Prophet tauntingly ſaith, that deſtruction ſhall dwell in the Citie. True it is that ſome tranſlate the word *Shammah*, Deſolation: but both the words come all to one ſenſe. He makes mention of the *gates*, becauſe a man might perceiue by them, whether the Citie were full of people or no; for thither they all came, and there iuſtice was adminiſtred. Firſt then he ſpeakes of the whole Citie in generally, and then notes one particular for amplifications ſake: for albeit Cities be deſtitute of inhabitants, yet ſome may be ſeene at the *gates*: but if they be empty, the deſolation muſt needs be great thoroughout the Citie.

The beautie of Cities.

Verſ. 13. *Surely thus ſhall it bee in the middeſt of the earth among the people, as the ſhaking of an Olive tree, and as the grapes when the vintage is ended.*

IN as much as this ſentence comes in betweene the threatenings and the conſolation, it ſeemes hee ſhould onely ſpeake to the elect, and not to all the people indifferently:

vntlesse we will say that he describes that scattering whereby the Iewes were diuided as it were into many nations. But because this should be too strict and harsh, I expound it simple, that some hope is left to the other forelorne nations. And trulie this prophesie doth indeede properlie belong to Christ, through whom it is no maruel if the Gentiles haue some part of the promise of saluation. The Prophet hath already vsed this similitude, Chapter 17.6. but there he only mentioned the church of the Iewes, telling them that a small remnant should still remaine of the holy seed, lest the faithfull might thinke the Church vtterlie rooted out. For as when an *olive tree* is shaken there will alwaies be some left heere and there, and likewise *grapes* vpon the vine, so should there remaine after gathering as it were of the faithfull in that great destruction wherewith the Church should be oppressed. But in this place he extends this promise vnto other parts of the world, according as they should partake in the same grace, by the meanes of Christ. Yet he therewithall adds a menace or threatening, as if he should say, the earth shall be *left bare of her Inhabitants*, euen as trees and vines are of their fruit.

Vers. 14. They shall lift up their voice: they shall shout for the magnificence of the Lord: they shall reioyce from the sea.

HE now goes on and amplifies the consolation which he touched before: for as he said in the tenth Chapter, vers. 22. that of this great multitude there should remaine a litle handfull which should couer the whole earth; so now he shewes that this small number of the faithfull which shall be left of this great vintage, shall *reioyce* notwithstanding, and *sound* the same so loude, that it should be heard vnto the furthest regions. This is done by the preaching of the Gospell: for as touching the estate of Iudea, it seemed to be ouerthrowne, in regard that the politrique government was abolished: warres without, and seditions within, had so wasted it, that it was vnpossible euer to be recouered. The rest of the world also was no lesse dumb in vttring these praises of God, then deafe in hearing the sound thereof. Now because the Iewes were the first fruits of *y* beleeners, I willingly grant that they be placed in the first rank.

Hence we gather a singular Consolation, to wit, that the Lord in a moment can restore his Church vnto a most flourishing estate, yea and create it of nothing; for out of death he drawes life euen as often as it pleaseth him. But is it not a wonder and aboue the order of nature that so small a remnant in *lifting up their voice*, should be heard so farre off? for where few are, there is silence; and great noise is wont to be where great multitudes are gathered together. This then is the worke of God which farre surmounts nature, and whatsoever facultie else is in man: otherwise it seemes the Prophet should contradict himselfe; to wit, that all Iudea should be wasted, and all the world brought to nothing;

and yet that their *crie* should be heard euerie where. This in it selfe is incredible, or rather ridiculous, if we measure the thing by carnall sense: it is therefore, as we haue said, to be ascribed wholly to the admirable power and worke of God.

By their *crie* he not only meanes the voyce of gladnes which is expressed by mirth and reioycing, but he also comprehends vnder it trust and confidence, because they shall freely, boldly, and with a leud voyce publish the praises of the Lord. Now herewithall he admonisheth the faithfull that it is their dutie to cause Gods graces in them to be magnified, and not their owne. By the *Sea*, it is well enough knowne that the Iewes meane the regions farre off, which lie beyond the same.

Vers. 15. Wherefore praise ye the Lord in the valleys, euen the name of the Lord God of Israel, in the yles of the sea.

GODS benefits ought to prouoke vs to giue him thanks, which we then testify, when we vtter forth his *praises*. What thanks shall I render vnto the Lord, saith *David*, for all the benefits he hath bestowed vpon me: I will euen take the cup of thankiuing for his saluation, and call vpon his name. This order the Prophet keeps in this place: for hauing spoken of the restauration of the Church, he forthwith exhorts vs to offer the sacrifice of praye. By the *valleys*, he meanes those Countreies that are scattered and diuided as it were from the rest: for those which are inuironed with mountaines, are distinct and seuerall naturalle. Thence it is that the inhabitants of the *valleys* are rude and barbarous, because they seldome conuerse with others. It is then, as if the Prophet should haue said, There is no corner of the world be it neuer so obscure and intangled, but the *praises of God shall be heard there*.

He hath expressed the God of *Israel*, to signifye that all nations should call vpon the name of the true God. For though all men haue a certaine knowledge of God, and that some seede of religion be rooted in their hearts, yet when the question is of worshipping the true God in a right maner, it euiler vanisheth to nothing, or else they easilie fall to Idolatrie and superstitions. Now the Prophet here speaks of the true religion which should be spread thorow the world: whence yet againe it appeares, that he prophesieth of the kingdome of Christ, vnder whose reigne the sincere truth was reuealed to forreine and profane nations.

Vers. 16. From the vttermost part of the earth we haue heard praises, euen glory to the iust. And I said, My leauee, my leauesse, Woe is me: the transgressors haue offended: yea, the transgressors haue grieuonslie offended.

THIS verse contains two sentences, which in appearance seeme to crosse one another: for the first containes a ioyfull argu-

God in wrath remembers mercie.

Gods mercies must not be concealed.

Psal. 116.

A Consolation, fitting the times of the Churches desolation.

See vers. 16.

ment

ment of Gods praifes; & preſently he breaks out into lamentations: wherein he bewailes the diſloyall behaviour of the wicked, who made ſhipwracke of all religion and godlineſſe. As touching the praifes of God, wee haue already ſaid, that hee can neither bee praifed nor called vpon, till hee haue made himſelſe knowne vnto vs by giuing vs ſome taſte of his goodneſſe, whereby we may conceiue good hope and aſſurance of ſaluation. From thence come theſe ſentences of *Dauid*, Lord, who ſhall praife thee in the graue? In death who ſhall confeſſe thee? For as long as we onely feele the wrath of God, we cannot vtter his praifes; and therefore when the Prophet ſaith, they ſhall be heard; he giues vs to vnderſtand, that the Goſpell ſhall be publiſhed thorowout the world, to the end men may acknowledge God for their Father, and wholly giue ouer themſelues to ſet forth his praifes.

It is to be noted that he ſaith from *the ends of the earth*; becauſe the praifes of God were then bounded within Iudea, and were not heard farre off: but afterward, they ſounded euerie where. When he adds, *glorie to the iuſt*: ſome take it as belonging to the perſon of all the faithfull in general; as if the meaning were, that God ſhall be glorified, becauſe of his iuſtice. Others reade it together thus; We haue heard glory giuen to the iuſt God. Thoſe who thinke the Heralds of theſe praifes are called *iuſt*, doe gather a good ſenſe; but they conſider not the word *glorie*: or at the leaſt they are conſtrained to put the word Reioycing, in the ſtead of it. Whereas he puts the verbe, *we haue heard*, in the preterpericte tence, and not in the future; I make no doubt but he meant to reuiue the hearts of the faithfull by this conſolation; to wit, We ſhall againe heare the praifes of God: for it imports more then if he had ſaid, The praifes of God ſhall be heard. He alſo ſpeakes in the firſt perſon, that hee might comprehend the whole body of the Church, and ſo draws the faithfull to a more diligent attention. We often finde the epithete *iuſt*, in the Scripture, which he here applies vnto God: but it belongs vnto him after another ſort then it doth vnto men; who are called *iuſt*, in regard of that righteouſneſſe which is communicated vnto them: for God is called *iuſt*, by the effects; becauſe he is the fountaine of it. Let vs now ſee then the ſubſtance of this congratulation and thankſgiuing; to wit, we praife this iuſt God, becauſe we haue life and ſaluation, by the imputation of this iuſtice vnto vs. Where the iuſtice of God is felt then, there muſt praifes and thankes needes follow.

But how incredible did theſe things ſeeme when the Prophet foretold them? for the Lord was onely knowne and praifed in Iudea. Their deſtruction is denounced, and then follows the publiſhing of Gods word and praifes, which ſhould ſound thorowout the world. Now how could theſe things come to paſſe, when the people of God were deſtroyed? Surely we may well conclude, that few at that time belieued theſe prophecies. But now

that theſe things are come to paſſe, is it not our duties to admire ſo great a miracle? The Iewes were not onely ſcattered, but almoſt brought to nothing, yet notwithstanding one ſmall ſparkle hath been ſufficient to giue light to the whole world: ſo as whoſoeuer hath been truly enlightned therewith, hath made bold and conſtant profeſſion of the truth.

My bowels.] This place is diuerſly expounded: for ſome tranſlate the word *Razi*, Secret, others tranſlate, Leanneſſe. Thoſe who turne it, Secret, thinke the Prophet meant that a double ſecret was reuealed to him; to wit, that the Lord was purpoſed to reward the good, and to be auenged on the wicked. For whileſt men looke to the outward appearance, and ſee the wicked haue all they can with, and the godly ouerwhelmed with miſeries; they are troubled and doubt in themſelues, whether the matters of this preſent life are governed by the hand of God, or whether all things are guided by Fortune. But ſuch thoughts are nothing but the ſeedes of impietic; as *Salomon* ſhewes, Eccleſ. 8. 11. This therefore made the *Pſalmiſt* enter in the ſanctuarie of God, to conſider of this thing, rather then to conſult with fleſh and blood about it: *Pſal. 73. 17.* Now if we follow this interpretation, the ſenſe will bee; Although the iuſt ſeeme to haue loſt all their labour: yet this ſecret doe I retaine in my breaſt, that it ſhal be well with them notwithstanding in the latter end: and albeit the wicked thinke to eſcape; yet am I aſſured they ſhall not goe ſcotfree. But in regard this ſubtiltie ſeemes farre fetched, I had rather expound it more ſimply: and ſeeing the particle of expreſſing anguiſh, is alſo by and by added; who ſhould let me to thinke, but that *Iſaiah* ſpeakes here of the iuſt, or of their reward?

Others expound it Leanneſſe; as if hee ſhould ſay; I languish and am euen dried vp with ſorrow: for as the proſperitie and flouriſhing eſtate of the people, did as it were baton him; ſo their miſerable and woſull eſtate was his *leanneſſe*. For the Prophet here ſuſtains & repreſents the perſon of the whole ſtocke of the Iewes: and becauſe the Lord had cut it off, hee had iuſt cauſe to bewaile the *leanneſſe* of it. This interpretation hath ſome probabilitie, as I haue ſaid; becauſe *Iſaiah* had good cauſe to lament the diminiſhing of his people, which he ſaw was at hand. And wee know, that when the grace of God beganne to be publiſhed in all places, then the Iewes decreaſed; yea the ſucceſſors of *Abraham* were as good as extinguiſhed.

But let vs ſee whether the Prophet hath not a further drift then to the reiection of his owne nation, ſo as he rather bewailes the inward euils wherewith hee foreſaw Churche ſhould be afflicted. For we may well affirme that the Hebrew word which others haue tranſlated Secret, ſignifies alſo whatſoeuer is within the bodie. And thus it is an exclamation, to wit, my inward parts, or my *bowels* paine me: neither is it any abſurditie to ſupplie a verbe, in a paſſionate and vehement

Eſa. 6. 6.

Where the imputation of Chriffs righteouſneſſe is felt, there muſt the praifes of God needes ſound forth.

speech. When the Lord plants his Church it seems to flourish and to be out of all perill: but when her owne bowels, that is to say, her children trouble her, then is she the most grieved: hypocrites aduance themselves, which toucheth her neerer then all the malice of those that are without. To this appertaines these complaints, Alas, Alas! for that doubtlesse was the Prophets meaning, to the end the faithfull might not thinke their felicitie consisted in the things of this life, but might rather know that they were to susteine continuall combates: yea euen then when they imagined nothing could hinder them from inioying most sweet peace and tranquillitie. His meaning is then to expresse an extreme passion of sorrow wherwith the Church should be inwardlie touched, that is to say, euen in her bowels: and so much the more cause had she to lament, because she could not auoid it. For as one saith, The Church can not flee from her home enemies, neither can the riot her selfe of them. This is the cause why the Prophet wants words to expresse his miserie.

When he speaks in the next place of the *disloyall*, it is a sufficient confirmation of this exposition. We haue too much experience, and shall feele more and more euery day how great and wofull this calamitie is. Whence came Poperie and all the filthie puddle, but from this inward plague? It is an impostume bred in the bowels of the Church, which at length hath broken forth and annoyed vs with the corruption and stinch of it. Whence is it also in these beginnings of the Church, which is but now in the swaddling clouts as it were, we see the true doctrine corrupted, the discipline adulterated, not only by the common people, but by them also which from their good example ought to be guides vnto others? Is it not because the Church hath alwaies been subiect to this euill?

Verf. 17. *Feare, and the pit, and the snare are vpon thee, o Inhabitant of the earth.*

18. *And he that fleeth from the noyse of the feare shall fall into the pit, and he that commeth vp out of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windowes from an high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake.*

The Prophet heere expostulates with the people because of their sinnes. Before he said, that not one, but many nations farre remote, should haue cause to sing; now he comes to doctrine: for I thinke this should be secured from the former, because *Isaiab* threatens the wicked againe, to the end they might know that in the greatest felicitie of the Church they should continue to be accused. For such are wont falsely to challenge vnto themselves the promises of God, when as they appertaine nothing at all vnto them: this is the cause why the Prophets are wont to mingle threatnings with consolations. It

may be for ought we know that the Prophet made this sermon apart, vpon some other occasion. For neither did the Prophets themselves, nor other learned men for them distinguish the Chapters: we haue diuers times seene fundrie sentences ioined together which should be separate; & many separated which should be ioined. What was the cause thereof but ignorance? Be it as you will; the Prophet directeth his speech againe to the wicked, and threatens them with an horrible iudgement.

Now this description of *feare, pit, and snare*, is set before them to worke vpon their affections: for had he in one word told them that destruction was at hand, they would haue bin little moued with it. But the doubt is whether he speaks to the Iewes only, or no: for mine owne part, I meane not to contend much about it; and yet it is most likely vnto me, that it appertaines also to other nations, yea euen to the whole earth, whereof he had

See verf. 1. 4.

propheesied before. By the earth, we vnderstand those regions which were knowne to the Iewes, as we touched in another place. Verse 1. The sense then is, Thou shalt be pressed with so many miseries, that thou shalt not know this place.

which way to turne thee: as also it is written in *Amos*, He which flies for feare of the Lion, shall meete a Beare, *Amos* 5. 19. And if he go into his house, when he leanes against the wall, a serpent shall bite him. And in the 15. Chapter of this booke *Isaiab* told vs, that Lions should be sent against those Moabites that escaped the warre. For God hath a storehouse of infinite plagues wherewith to punish the wicked. It is as much therefore as if the Prophet had said, Be it knowne vnto you, that you can no way winde your selues out of Gods hands: for he hath mo wayes then one to auenge himselfe vpon you for your iniquities; and hath skill enough to snare them that thinke by subtletie to steale away in the darke from him. He that escapes the sword shall be vexed with famine, and if he die not of that, he shall be pressed with some other, euen as if nets were euery where spread to catch you.

God hath a storehouse of infinite plagues wherewith to punish the wicked.

The reason which is added in the latter end of the 18. verse confirms this exposition, to wit, that they can no way preuent Gods vengeance. Why so? for all things are at his beck from the highest heauens, to the lowest depths of the earth. Some are of opinion that the Prophet alludes to the deluge; but as I thinke the very meaning is, that Gods wrath shall be reuealed both from aboue, and below; as if he should say, The Lord will arme heauen and earth on his side to execute his wrath vpon the sonnes of men, that which way soeuer they turne their eyes, they may see nothing but ruine and destruction.

Verf. 19. *The earth is vtterlie broken downe: the earth is cleane dissolved: the earth is moued exceedinglie.*

20. *The earth shall reele to and fro like a drunken man, and shall be remoued as a tent, and the iniquitie thereof shall be heauie*

A true saying.

The bane of the Church bred within her owne bowels.

Discipline.

See verse 14. 15. 16.

heavie vpon it; ſo that it ſhall fall, and riſe no more.

1 **H**E amplifies theſe puniſhments by diuers
 2 phraſes of ſpeech. Now in the 20 verſe he
 will ſhew the cauſe of this calamitie; to wit,
 that men haue pulled it vpon their owne
 3 heads by their finnes: in all the reſt of the
 words he ſhewes, that the miſchiefe is deſpe-
 rate and incurable. We haue ſaid before, that
 the Prophet vters one and the ſame thing
 in diuers manners of ſpeech, to the end hee
 might awaken and wound the hearts of the
 people, which naturally were too ſecure. For
 there is a careleſneſſe in our fleſh, which be-
 gets a contempt of God; and of this, euerie
 one of vs hath too wofull experience, both in
 himſelfe and in others. That the Prophet
 then might rowſe vp thoſe that were drowie
 and rocked aſleepe in their finnes, he garni-
 ſheth his words, (not as one affecting elo-
 quence, to procure credit vnto himſelfe) but
 to gaine attention of his hearers, & to cauſe
 the ſame to ſink the deeper into their hearts.
 Thence proceeds all theſe alluſions where-
 1 with theſe verſes are replenished: thence
 2 flowes this decking of his ſpeech with figures:
 3 thence is it that theſe threatnings and ter-
 rours are ſet forth in ſuch varietie of words,
 namely, euen to awaken the dull and dead
 hearts of his auditors.

A careleſneſſe
 rooted in
 our fleſh,
 which begets
 a contempt
 of God.

Now this doctrine ought to be reſtrained
 to the wicked; not that the faithfull were ex-
 empt from theſe calamities, for they often
 ſuffer with others: but hauing their recourſe
 vnto God, and reſting themſelues wholly vp-
 on him, they are not ſo appalled, but they get
 the victorie ouer all aſſaults whatſoever. But
 the wicked, which deſpiſe the iudgements of
 God, and take a raging libertie of ſinning to
 themſelues, ſhall alwaies be vexed and terri-
 fied without any eaſe or reſt.

Where he ſaith, the earth *ſhall be ſhaken*; it
 is not meant, as though it ſhould be carried
 out of one place into ſome other: but this, as
 we haue ſaid, is to be referred vnto men: and
 it is as if he had ſaid; There ſhall be neither
 kingdome nor gouernement. In a word, his
 meaning is, to ſet forth thoſe changes where-
 of he ſpake in the tenth Chapter.

Now it is not without cauſe that he ſaith,
 the earth is *laden with iniquitie*; for thereby we
 perceiue, that God is neuer diſpleaſed with
 men, but wee our ſelues are the authors and
 cauſes of all the euill we indure. God is natu-
 1 rally inclined to pitie and compaſſion, and
 2 loues vs with a fatherly affection: our finnes
 are the cauſe why hee deales roughly with vs,
 and we haue no reaſon at all to accuſe him
 that ſmites vs. The Prophet againe tels them
 that there is *no recouerie*: and ſome are of opi-
 nion, that this was ſpoken to the Iewes,
 whoſe commonwealth was vtterly aboliſhed;
 ſo as being ſcattered here and there, they
 were ſcately reputed or held for men of like
 condition with others. But I extend it fur-
 ther; to wit, that the calamities ſhall be ſo
 great in the world, that it ſhould neuer bee
 reſtored to his firſt beautie: for men labour
 tooth and naile to reſiſt aduerſities, and are

Our ſelues
 the authors
 of our owne
 euils.

foolehardy vpon a falſe confidence. When
 they haue indured ſome corrections, they
 thinke leaue ſhall bee giuen them to take
 breath; feeding themſelues with a *vaine*
 aſſurance, which the Prophet labours to de-
 priue them of; to the end their fond hopes
 might not beguile them. It is alſo to be no-
 ted, that this generall ſentence takes not a-
 way the exception which *Iſaiah* ſpake of be-
 fore, verſ. 13.

Men are rea-
 die enough
 to feede
 themſelues
 with vaine
 hopes.

Verſ. 21. *And in that day ſhall the
 Lord viſit the hoſte aboue, that is on
 high; euen the Kings of the world that are
 vpon the earth.*

THis place hath troubled many mens
 heads; ſo as euerie one hath deſcanted
 vpon it diuerſly. Some thinke it to be meant
 of the Sunne and ſtarres: others, of the di-
 uels, which ſhould be puniſhed with the wicked:
 others referre it to the Iewes, whom
 God had beautified with a ſpecial priuiledge:
 but I can receiue none of theſe interpretations.
 The true and naturall ſenſe as I take it
 is, that there are no powers ſo high, that ſhall
 be able to free themſelues from theſe ſcour-
 ges of God; for let them ſoare aboue the
 cloudes, yet euen there ſhall the hand of God
 reach them, as it is ſaid in the Pſalme; *Whi-
 ther ſhall I goe from thy preſence? whether
 ſhall I flee from thy Spirit? if I goe vp into
 heauen thou art there: if I take the wings of
 the morning, and flie to the vttermoſt
 parts of the ſea, yet thither wilt thou purſue
 mee.*

1
 2
 3

Pſal. 139.

For *Iſaiah* calles Kings and Princes, the *hoſt
 ſion aboue*, by way of ſimilitude; and himſelfe
 ſo expounds it cleerely, when he addes, *Vpon
 the Kings of the earth*; for I am not of the mind
 that the words ſhould bee ſcuered, as if hee
 ſpake of diuers things; but it is rather the re-
 petition of the ſame thing againe, ſo as the
 latter expounds the former: vnleſſe any had
 rather expound it thus; He will come in viſi-
 tation vpon the kingdomes of the earth; yea,
 euen vpon them which ſeeme the higheſt ex-
 alted about the common condition of men.
 Some are ſo aduanced about others, that
 they ſeeme petty Gods rather than men.
 Now the word *viſit*, muſt bee referred to
 the puniſhment, as it appears ſufficiently by
 the text.

Verſ. 22. *And they ſhall be gathe-
 red together as the priſoners in the pit:
 and they ſhall bee ſhut vp in the priſon;
 and after many daies ſhall they bee vi-
 ſited.*

Hee continues on his purpoſe in the be-
 ginning of the verſe, vſing a phraſe of
 ſpeech by way of ſimilitude; for all were not
 priſoners: but the Lord brought them all into
 ſeruitude, as if one ſhould keepe his enemies
 in ſafe cuſtodie which he had ſubdued. The
 Prophet brings in the *Lord* then like a Con-
 quetour, which holds his enemies in priſon.

For

For men are wont to lay them fast, whom they haue taken. We know that men flee the presence of God, & despise him all y while he spares, or giues the any truce: for this cause *Isaiah* saith, that they shall be *sius up in prison by heapes*, that so their reioycing in their multitudes might cease.

Where he saith, they shall be *visited after many dayes*, we are not to take it simple as a promise, but as a threatening also included vnder it; and that in this sense, O ye Jewes you haue a long time dallied with your God by your rebellion, and haue prolonged your trading in sinne too long; so, God will now prolong his chastisements till he haue in the end brought you (though very late) to a fight of your misdeeds. And this course we see the Iudges of the earth often take with malefactors with whom they are displeas'd: they admit the nor to their presence the first day, but humble them first by throwing them into stinking dungeons, and into miserie, that they may thereby breake the pride of their hearts.

But God is said to visit the world two waies, first, in punishing the wicked, secondly, when after some chastisements he shewes his elect some tokens of his fatherlie kindnes. The word *visit* in this place is taken, To behold: and thus the Prophet mitigates the rigor of his menace or threatening. For the hearts of the faithfull in these causes haue need of courage, lest they should quale, and be discouraged: in regard of them therefore it is that the Prophets are wont to mingle consolations after their denunciations of iudgements. Seeing these things serued then to cheere vp the faithfull, no doubt but they were specially directed to the Jewes, among whom faith had her speciall residence, in regard that it appeared in none but them. But yet we are once againe to obserue these words, *after many dayes*, for this is added to exercise the faith of Gods children: we often run headlong in our desires, and would haue God accomplish his promises by and by: we grudge that he delays so long, and wax so impatient that we can no longer indure. But we must learne in humilitie to wait and looke long for the saluation and merie of our God, and not be discontented how long soeuer he defertes, for certainly he will come, and he will not tarric. But herewithall wee must note, that God speaks not heere of all, for as we haue seene in the 13. verse, he was determined to saue but a few: and this ought so much the more to whet our appetites; to the end after we haue been long exercised vnder fundrie calamities, we may meete the Lord that smites vs by vnseiu'd repentance.

Verf. 23. *Then the Moone shall be as-
hished, and the Sunne ashamed, When the
Lord of hosts shall reigne in mount Zion,
and in Ierusalem: and glorie shall be* be-
fore his ancient men.*

* Or, euen in
the presence
of his &c.

Many thinke that the Prophet vseth this vehemencie against the Jewes, as if he said, The Sunne, Moone, and Starres are ashamed of your incredulitie, so that you are

a detestation not to men only, but euen to the insensible creatures: but this seemes vtterlie wide fro the Prophets purpose. I make no doubt but he continues on that consolation which he touched in the former verse; as if he should say, When the Lord shall visit his people, and purge his Church, he will establish such a glorious kingdome, that it shall darken the light of the *Sunne* and *Starres*. And this manner of speech is very vsuall among the Prophets, we also haue seene it before in this prophesie. Now *Isaiah* speaks not here alone of the head, but also of the whole bodie of the Church: when the Lord then shall settle his kingdome vpon *mount Zion*, his glorie in the restoration of the people shall be so great, that that which seemes bright and glorious in mens eyes, being compar'd with this, shall be but darkenes. And the better to expresse it, he names the greatest lights in the firmament.

Some impropertie draw the verb *To reigne*, to Gods vengeance: for albeit God reignes when he iudgeth the world, yet this manner of speech linked thus together, God shall reigne in *Mount Zion*, alwayes notes merie and saluation. For he speaks of the restoration of the Church: whence we gather, that these things are not accomplished but in Christ.

In mentioning of the *Ancients* he vseth a figure called *Synecdoche*, a figure often vsed in scripture, taking the chiefe part of the Church for the whole bodie, and yet not without a speciall cause. The *ancient men*, are heere taken then not only for the Priests, and for those gouernors which haue the oversight of maners and discipline, to wit, such as ought with wisdom and discretion to gouerne others. And vnder these names he comprehends all the people, not only because they represent the whole bodie, the common people being hid as it were vnder the shadow of their wings: but also that the faithfull might haue good hope of a future restoring, otherwise it were to little purpose that a scattered multitude should be left like a crased bodie, or a confused lump.

It is not without cause that the particle, *euen before his auncient men*, is added, to the end the Jewes might know that Gods power should be glorious: not that it can be comprehended with the eyes of flesh, but by faith: for he so reignes, that we effectually feele his strength in our weakenes. And if we apprehend not this, we shall neuer receiue any comfort.

In stead of *glorie*, some reade *gloriously*, others *glorious*: I had rather take it in the substantiue, although it be not much materiall as touching the sense. For he shewes how great Gods glorie and magnificence should be when Christs kingdome shall be set vp: all glorie then must be turned into darknes, that his glorie alone may shine and surmount all things. Whence it follows, that God then inioyes that which belongs vnto him in y middelt of vs, and that honor which none ought to depriue him of, when all creatures are brought within compaie, and that he alone *shines*, and is the light of our eyes.

Simile.

God is said
to visit the
world two
waies.

The cause
why the Pro-
phets are
wont to of-
fer to mingle
consolations
with their
denunciations.

Priests, and
gouerning
Elders.

THE XXV. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. O Lord, thou art my God: I will exalt thee, I will praife thy name: for thou haſt done wonderfull things, according to the counſels of olds, With a ſtable truth.



Herunto *Viſiah* hath prophesied of Gods iudgements, which hung not ouer the head of one people alone, but almost of the whole world. Now it was impossible that the consideration of ſo many calamities which hee foresaw would fall vpon them, should not worke great sorrow and trouble of mind in him. For those that are of an vpright heart, desire that all the world might bee saued. And as they thirst after Gods glory, so they cannot but loue all the works of his hands: by how much the more then a man is possessed with the true feare of God, the more neerely is hee touched to the quicke with the feeling of his iudgements. In the meane while, the wicked are beset when he manifests the same, and will not be moued for any terrors whatsoever: the godly on the contrary quake at the least signe of his displeasure. If wee haue experience of this, what thinke we the Prophet felt, who saw all these calamities which hee foretold, before his eyes as in a glasse? For the Ministers of the word must needs be much more effectually affected with the sight of such things, then the common sort, that the same may be as it were a seale vnto them of the truth of their doctrine.

The Lord then hauing set these horrible desolations before the Prophet as in a table, it was necessarie, that being moued with sorrow and griefe, he should turne his eyes vnto the Lord; for otherwise hee might haue been intangled with confused passions, and great disquietnesse of minde. And therefore being assured that the Lord would prouide for his Church in the midst of these tempests, and that hee would gather in those vnder the wings of his power, which before were scattered farre off, hee takes courage vnto him. Wee see then that *Iſaiah* continues constant in his vocation, without being daunted or any way discouraged: but rather relying alwaies vpon the assurance of obtaining mercy; and therefore hee continues to celebrate the praises of the Lord his God.

By this we may see, that this thanksgiving depends vpon the former prophesies; and that *Iſaiah* respects not that which hee hath foretold alone, but also what end the Lord aimed at, in this execution: that is to say, why he afflicted so many nations with such diuercities of punishments; namely, that he might

bring vnder those which were before vnto, and ouerflowed in a brutish sensualitye, who as they had no feare of God before their eyes; so had they no sense of religion or godlinesse at all.

Thou art my God. Being perplexed and confounded in himselfe, he suddenly turnes his thoughts vnto God, as we haue said. Whence we may gather a very profitable doctrine; to wit, that when our mindes are tossed to and fro with diuers cogitations, in regard of the many miseries and calamities which daily happen; that we by and by flee vnto God, resting our selues vpon his onely prouidence: for we shall be at our wits end euen for the wagging of a straw, if wee haue not this doctrine for our refuge, by sustaining our hearts therewith. But the better to see the Prophets meaning, wee may well adde a particule aduerſatiue here, in this sense; Although I be now oppressed with many temptations on euery side, yet will I still acknowledge thee to be my God. And thus he voweth to giue vnto God that praife, which vnto him appertaineth; which none of vs can doe, vnlesse an assured perswasion of Gods grace doe raigne and beare sway in our hearts: from whence springs that ioy, which affords vs exceeding ample matter of praises, when being certaine of our saluation, we are assured that the Lord is our God: For all those that are not caried with an affection to magnifie Gods goodnes in the midst of their sorrowes, know not what faith is; neither yet did they euer taste the sweetnesse of his mercy: for if wee haue a sure confidence in God, we must of necessitie extoll his name with ioy and gladnesse of heart.

A wonderfull thing. The singular number is put for the plurall. Now the Prophet rests not in the contemplation of present things, but rather lookes to the end of them: for you shall haue euen profane men that will be affected at the wonderfull euents of things which fall out in the gouernement of the world, and will stand amazed therat; as no doubt the Tyrrians, Sidonians, Babylonians, and Moabites did. But none could benefit themselves by this sight, but such as therewithall had a taste and feeling of Gods wisdom and goodnesse: for without that, men doe rather scorne and despise such workes, then apprehend the excellencie of them: because they looke not to the end that God aimeth at; to wit, that by drawing light out of darknesse, he is wont after a wonderfull manner, to raise vp and reuue his Church in the midst of death, orders and disposeth rightly and to good vse, those things which the wit of man conceiues to be exceedingly confused.

But the better to set forth the commendation of Gods prouidence, he addes, *The counsels ordained of olds*; as if he should say, Nothing falls

What ought to be our refuge in time of deep distresses.

The assurance of Gods fauour giues vs ample matter of ioy and reioicing, euen in the greatest troubles.

The faithfull may bee daunted for a time, but faith gets the victorie.

Who they are that profit by the view of Gods workes.

2. Cor. 4 5.

How God is wont to deale with his Church.

faller out suddenly, or at randome, in respect of God. And indeede, albeit to vs it often seemes he doth things vtterlie at vnwares, yet is it most certaine that he hath foreseene and appointed all of the so to come to passe before the creation of the world. By these words then the Prophet meant to say, that all the *wonders*, which happen beyond the expectation of men, flow from the order of this moderation which God keeps in the government and disposition of all things from the beginning, vnto the end.

Now because we are not able to attaine to his secret counsels, and that our wits can not mount so high, we must be brought to the manifestation of that which for the present is hidden from vs, and is aboue our reach, till such time as the Lord discouer the same vnto vs by his word: by which he applies himselfe to our weakenes, because his secret counsell is incomprehensible. *Isaiah* therefore descends by and by from these hidden ordinances of God to the doctrine of the word and the promises therein contained, which doubtlesse he comprehends vnder the word *Truth*. For this repetition should be to little purpose vnlesse he had had some relation in this word: for after God hath by it reuealed his counsell vnto vs, then he properlie appears to be *true* if we beleue and credit his sayings. Thus then the Prophet commends the stableness and certentie of the word when he calles it a *stable truth*, as if he should say, All things which God pronounceth, and proceed from him, is stable and immoueable.

Verf. 2. For thou hast made of a Citie an heape, of a strong Citie a ruine: euen the palace of strangers of a Citie, it shall neuer be built.

SOME referre this to Ierusalem: but I rather thinke it to be a change of the number only, which is a thing very vsuall among the Prophets: for *Isaiah* spaketh not of one Citie alone, but of many, which he foretels should be laid vpon *heapes*. Whereas others take it, that Ierusalem serued for a palace to the Romans, they come nothing nigh the Prophets meaning; which will plainly appeere if we call to mind what hath been said before, to wit, that the Prophet busies not himselfe in thinking of the scourges wherwith God hath afflicted diuers nations, but rather aims at the end and issue of them. For by them the Lord purposed to subdue and tame the pride and rebellion of men, whom he could neuer haue subdued vnto himselfe, vnlesse they had been smitten with diuers calamities. Moreover, *Isaiah* saith not only that strangers shall inhabit the surprized Cities, out of which they were driuen that dwell in them: for so that which he by and by addes would not agree, to wit, that the *palace shall be no more a Citie*: but his meaning is, that vagabonds who should haue no place of abode at all, shall find sufficient roome there, because the inhabitants shall betake them to their heeles. Now because *Armon* signifies goodly houses,

he saith by way of derision, that the eues shall dwell there as in Palaces, in regard of the great space which should lie waste like vnto a desert.

Verf. 3. Therefore shall the mightie people giue glorie vnto thee: the Citie of the strong nations shall feare thee.

SEE heere the end, whercof I haue spoken in the first verse: for if the Lord should destroy the world, no fruit would come of it, such a desolation could ingender nothing but horror; neither would it euer bring vs neerer vnto God to praise him: nay contrariwise we must needs remaine as blocks whē we only feele his wrath: for praises proceed from the feeling of his fauor and goodnes. It is all one then as if he had said, Lord, thou wilt not only smite and afflict, but wilt also effect, that thy wounds which thou makest shall not be without fruit. For by them thou wilt beat downe the pride of men, to the end that those which in times past were strangers frō thee, may now stoope vnder thine obedience. Hence we learne how necessarie chastisements be, for by them we are taught to glorifie God; whereas prosperitie puffs vs vp in such wise that we dishonor him, and thinke we may doe what we list: we also runne out and range ouer all the fields whē God deales louinglie with vs.

The Prophet addes the word *feare*, to shew, that this praise consists neither in words nor outward gestures, but in the sound and sincere affection of the heart. Whence wee gather, that he heere speakes of the whole worship of God. Now because many thinke themselves well discharged when they haue made confession with their lips only, *Isaiah* the better to expound his owne meaning addes, *The nations shall feare thee*. Now in calling them *strong* and *mightie*, by such epithites he meanes the pride and losines of those who are puffed vp with their prosperitie: for they exalt themselves against God, so as they can not possible be humbled and brought downe, vnlesse they be quite stripped of all things. You see now whether our thoughts are to retire in thy calamities which we see to fall out dayly: mens pride must needs be repressed and abated, that they may be prepared to imbrace holy doctrine, and to walke in sound obedience. Whilest they are besotted with their riches and vaine hopes, they feare not to contemne the iudgements of God, and hold him out at the stauces end, as they say.

Verf. 4. For thou hast been a strength to the poore, euen a strength to the needie in his trouble, a refuge against the tempest, a shadow against the heate: for the blast of the mightie is like a storme against the wall.

BEhold here the fruit of conuersion. How? The Lord raise vs from death, deliue vs from the graue, by stretching out his hand from heauen to pluck vs out of the iawes of hell,

Isaiah descends from Gods secret will to his reuealed will.

The necessitie of afflictions.

We must reioyce in trembling. Pal. 2. 11. & 5. 7.

Our firſt
entrance
vnto God.

hell. This is the firſt entrance he giues vs, for hee findes nothing but our miſerie for his mercy to worke vpon. Wee muſt therefore feele our ſelues poore and helpeleſſe, before we can ſee what needs we haue of his power: yea, it is neceſſary that we be ſtripped of all confidence and ſelte truſt, before he will re-ueale his ſtrength in vs. For this cauſe he fits and frames vs by rods and chaſtiſements, as by inſtructions, to come to the feeling of his fauour and aſſiſtance. It is not without good cauſe then that *Iſaiah* deekes this deſcription with ſo many ſimilitudes: for hee thereby meeets with many and great temptations, vnder which weak man would neuer be able to ſtand, were he not fortified and ſuſtained with ſuch propp.

And therefore hee ſaith, that God will bee *ſtrength to the poore*, a refuge againſt the tempeſt, and a ſhadow againſt the heate: for what dangers ſoener befall vs, the Lord wil defend his owne againſt them, and will arme vs with all kinds of armour to reſiſt them. The *Spirit* in this place, as in many others, ſignifies winde, and it is taken for a violent ſtorme wherewith the wicked are carried to ruſh againſt the children of God: for they not onely threaten and terrifie, but alſo ſpit out fire it ſelfe, as to conſume them all. Hercunto appertaines that which is added of the *tempeſt*, or, *ouerflowing againſt the wall*: by which figure his meaning is, that the wicked runne with ſuch force, when they haue libertie to doe euill, that they ouerthrow whatſoever ſtands in their way: for it is a greater matter to breake downe and ouerthrow walles, then if water ſhould onely ſpread it ſelfe ouer the earth.

Verſ. 5. *Thou ſhalt bring downe the noiſe of the ſtrangers, as the beate in a dry place: he will bring downe the ſong of the mightie, as the beate in the ſhadow in a cloud.*

IF the Lord were not on our ſide, when violent men ſet themſelues againſt vs, wee ſhould be vterly ſwallowed vp: for wee ſee how great the rage of the wicked is. Alas, if they be able to ouerturne *ſtone walles*, how can a poore man bee able to ſtand againſt them? This is added then to ſet forth the goodneſſe of almighty God, that we might know in what an ill caſe wee ſhould be in, if God did not ſuccour vs. The expoſitours take the ſimilitude two waies: ſome thinke that as the vehement heat burnes vp the fields, which of themſelues are dry and barren; ſo the wrath of God ſhall conſume and burne vp the wicked: others tranſlate, *As the beate*; and then the ſenſe is; Howſoever the wicked relie vpon their power, and therefore are thus boiſterous, the Lord notwithstanding will bring them downe in a moment, as if they were ſurpriſed with *heat* in a dry place.

But I take the ſenſe to be otherwiſe: for hauing ſhewed how great the rage of the wicked is againſt the faithfull, he addes Lord thou wilt humble them. But how: He alludes

vnto the deluge; which ſimilitude he vſed before, Chap. 24. 18. Thou wilt bring downe their heat, ſaith hee, which otherwiſe muſt needes conſume vs: euen as the raine falling from heauen, cooles the heate which would burne vp the fields for want of moiſture. And thus the text hangs well together; whereas the other expoſition is conſtrained, and offers violence to the very letter, as they ſay.

The latter part of the verſe is expounded diuers waies: ſome tranſlate the word *Zemir*, Seede: others, a Roote: as if the Prophee had ſaid, The Lord will not onely cut off the wicked, but will plucke them vp by the verie rootes. This were probable, if the ſimilitude of heat would beare it: and therefore thoſe who turne it ſong, cry, or, waſte; in my iudgement, doe come neereſt the Prophets meaning, albeit they touch it not fully. Well, he confirms the former ſenſe; to wit, that the violence or cry of the wicked, who proudly exalt themſelues, ſhall ſuddenly fall, euen as the heat of the Sunne when anie raine followes: which is ſignified by the *ſhadow of the cloud*.

Verſ. 6. *And in this mountaine ſhall the Lord of hoſtes make vnto all the people a feaſt of fat things, euen a feaſt of fined wines and of fat things full of marrow, of wines fined and purified.*

THEY alſo diuerſly interpret this place: for ſome thinke the Prophet threatens the Iewes, and that in ſuch ſort, as if he called diuers nations to the feaſt: which phraſe of ſpeech is often found in other places; becauſe it is ſaid, that the Lord feedes the wicked fat againſt the day of ſlaughter. They thinke then that the Gentiles are called to the banquet, the Iewes being made their pray: as if the Lord ſhould ſay; I haue prepared a goodly banquet for the Gentiles; to wit, the Romans ſhall ſacke and ſpoile the Iewes. But as I thinke, this ſenſe cannot ſtand, neither ſhall there neede any long refutation, when I ſhall haue acquainted you with the true meaning. Others expound it, as if *Iſaiah* ſhould ſpeake of Gods wrath thus; The Lord will make a feaſt to all people, he will make them drinke the cup of his wrath till they be drunken therewith. But the Prophet meant nothing leſſe: for he goes on ſtill to ſet forth the grace of God, which ſhould be maniſteſted at the comming of Chriſt. Vſing the verie ſame ſimilitude with that in the 22. Pſalme, verſ. 26, where *Dauid* deſcribes the Kingdome of Chriſt, ſaying; that the poore as well as the rich, ſhall partake of this banquet, and ſhall eate their fill: by which, hee ſignifies that no nation ſhall be exempt from hauing part in this benefit. At the firſt, it ſeemed that the Lord onely feaſted the Iewes, becauſe they alone were his adopted people, and entertained at this banquet as thoſe of his owne houſhold: but now

The Iewes
were firſt
feſted
alone.

But now the Gentiles are partakers thereof with them.

he accepts of the Gentiles also, and sheds forth his graces vpon all nations. There is here then a close opposition when he saith to all people, for formerlie he was knowne but to one nation.

The feast of *fat things* is to be vnderstood of fat beasts. Some translate the word *She-mannim*, lees, or dregs, but very improperlie: for by this word he means old wines, which we commonlie call old store, which are better then ordinarie, but speciallie in y^e East, where they beare their age best. He calles the liquors wherein no lees appeere, neate and *finced wines*. To be short, it appears sufficientlie that neither Iewes nor Gentiles are threatned in this place, but that both of them rather are inuited to a goodly banquet. This may the better be vnderstood by the words of Christ himselfe, where he compares the kingdome of heauen to a Marriage feast which the King prepared for his sonne, vnto which all were indifferentlie called, because they which were bidden before would not come. For mine owne part, I make no question but *Isaiah* speaks here of the preaching of the Gospell. Therefore in as much as the doctrine thereof came from the *mountaine of Zion*, he saith, that *all nations* shall come to feast there: for when God offered the heavenly food wherewith mens soules are fed, vnto all the world; it was as if he had erected a table for all commers.

The Lord now dayly inuirteth vs to fill and intrich our soules with all good things: and to that end he raiseth vp faithfull teachers, by whose ministrie he prepares his dainties for vs, and withall giues force and power to his word, that we might be replenished and satisfied. As touching the word *Mountaine*, albeit Gods messengers come not from Mount Zion to giue vs food, yet by this word we are to vnderstand the Church, out of which none can partake of these benefits; for such dainties are not to be found in the streets nor hie waies; this table is not spread euery where, neither doth euery place afford vs this banquet. The Church is the place then where we must come to keepe this feast. Now the Prophet notes this mountaine especiallie, in regard God was there worshipped, & no where else; yea both these reuelations, as also the Gospell came from thence. Whereas he saith this banquet shall be sumptuous and royallie furnished, it appertaines to the praise of the doctrine of the Gospell; for it is a spirituall food to nourish and refresh our soules, yea, so wholesome and excellent, that we neede seeke no further.

Verf. 7. *And he will destroy in this mountaine the couering that couereth all people, and the vaile that is spread ouer all nations.*

The interpreters also varie vpon this place, for some by the word *couering* vnderstand the shame wherewith the faithfull are so couered in this world, that the glorie of God seemes not to shine in them; as if he should

say, Albeit the faithfull be ouerwhelmed with many disgraces, yet the Lord will deliuer them from them all, and make their estate glorious. I let passe other expositions: but the true meaning as I thinke is, that the Lord here promiseth to take away that vaile which held them in ignorance and blindnes. These obscurities then were scattered and driuen away by the light of the Gospell. Now he saith that this shall be done in the mountaine of Zion, whence the light of the word in very deepe shined thorowout the world, as wee haue seene heretofore.

This text then must be referred to the kingdome of Christ: for the light shined not vpon all men till Christ the sunne of righteousness arose, who tooke away all vailles, couerings and wrappings. Here we haue then another commendation or praise of the Gospell, to wit, that all darknes shall be dispersed by the light thereof, yea and all vailles of error shall be taken from our eyes. Whence it follows that we are wrapped and blinded with darknes of ignorance till we be enlightened with the doctrine of the Gospell, which only is offorce to giue both light and life, and perfectlie to frame vs new. This place also confirmes the calling of vs Gentiles: for the Iewes are not only bidden to this banquet, but all nations, who before were ouerwhelmed as it were in all maner of errors and superstitions.

Verf. 8. *He will destroy death for ever: and the Lord will wipe away the teares from all faces, and the rebuke of his people will he take away out of the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.*

The Prophet goes on still with the matter in hand, for in summe, he promiseth that there shall be perfect felicitie vnder the kingdome of Christ. And the better to expresse it, he vseth many figures very fitting and agreeable for his present purpose. True felicitie stands not in earthlie nor transitorie things, but in that which can not be taken from vs by death: for in the chiefest delights the pleasure thereof is much diminished, because they can not last alwayes. He ioines two things together then which make happines full and compleate: first, that a man may *live euer* (for it is a miserable thing for them to die which otherwise were once happie for a time) secondly, that this life be ioined with ioy; for without that death seemes better then a life full of trouble & calamities. Further heads; that all rebuke being taken away, this life shall be *glorious*: for otherwise the wofull oppression of the people which they endured might haue seemed to contradict this prophesie. But some may aske to what time these promises should be referred: for whilst we are in this world we must fight against many assaults, and that without any intermission: so as we are not destinate to die once only, but euery day. To which purpose *S. Paul* complaines, that he and the chiefest pillars of the Church in his time were gazing-stocks vnto

The light of the Gospell scatters the darknes of ignorance.

Chap. 2. 3.

Mal. 4. 2. Christ the Sunne of righteousness.

We remaine in darknes and in the shadow of death till the light of the Gospell shines vpon vs.

Wherein true happines consisteth.

Quest.

all the world ſuſtaining all ſorts of reproches, being eſteemed no better then the oſcuring and reſuſe of the ſame. In what time, or when are theſe things fulfilled then? No doubt they are to bee referred to the whole Kingdome of Chriſt: and I doe expreſly ſay to his whole Kingdome becauſe we muſt not onely conſider the beginnings of it, but alſo the end and full accompliſhment thereof. So that we are to ſtretch theſe promiſes vnto the ſecond coming of Chriſt; which for this cauſe is called the day of redemption, and of reſtoration; in regard that thoſe things which as now ſeeme conſuſed, ſhall then bee reſtored to full perfection, and ſhall put on a new forme.

Anſ.

Thſe and the like promiſes muſt be applied not onely to the beginnings, but to the whole progrefſe of Chriſts Kingdome. Luk. 21. 28. Rom. 8. 23. Acts 3. 21. Eph. 4. 10. Pſ. 126. 5.

As we haue taſted the beginnings of this hope, ſo muſt our hope hold out till we ſee the accompliſhment thereof to the laſt day.

The word of the Lord a ſolid foundation for our faith to reſt vpon.

I gnat that it appertained alſo to the deliuerance from Babylon; but in as much as that was but the beginning and entrance into this, it is certaine that this promiſe muſt be prolonged till the laſt day. Let vs bend all our ſenſes and hopes vnto that then, and we may be well aſſured that the Lord in the end will perfect all things in vs, after we haue finiſhed our courſe. Be it that we now ſowe in teares, we ſhall then doubtleſſe reape with ioy and gladneſſe. Let vs not feare the ſcornes nor threats of the mightie ones; for God vſeth this as a meanes by which in the end he will bring vs vnto eternall glory. And ſeeing we haue here already taſted the beginnings of this felicitie and happineſſe, as ſoone as God adoppeth vs, and that we begin to beare the image of Chriſt, let vs with conſtancy and patience wait the accompliſhment thereof till the laſt day.

But in regard the matter might ſeeme incredible after ſo many horrible calamities, Iſaiab tells them that this proceeded not from man, but from God. For after the Temple was rased to the ground, Ierusalem deſtroyed, the ſervice of God aboliſhed, and the ſmall remnant of the people that remained were oppreſſed vnder tyrannie; who would euer haue beleued that theſe things could haue been reſtored to their firſt perfection? Hee prevents this incredulitie therefore, vnto which men are ouermuch inclined, and confirms, yea and ſeales vp theſe promiſes with this concluſion; Know ye for certaine, that the Lord is the author of this my meſſage: in him therefore reſt all your thoughts, & not vpon me: reſt your faith on him, who neuer was, nor neuer will bee ſouled falſe of his word: Tit. 1. 2.

Verſ. 9. *And in that day ſhall men ſay; Loe, this is our God: wee haue waited for him, and hee will ſaue vs: This is the Lord, wee haue waited for him: wee will reioyce and bee glad in his ſaluation.*

And they ſhall ſay.] The verbe is indefinite, and ſhould be tranſlated, *He ſhall ſay*: but becauſe he ſpeakes of that which All, and not one or two, ſhould ſay; I had rather turne it, *Men ſhall ſay*. This is a very good concluſion,

ſeeing thereby they ſhew that theſe benefits of God are not ſlanted nor ſeanted to a few; but that men both receiue and ſeele them by eſſe. His meaning is then, that God prepares not this banquet (mentioned verſ. 6.) in vaine; in regard men are ſatisfied therewith, and reioyce with an eternall ioy. For this gladſome voyce which he foretells ſhould be publike, is a recall ſigne and teſtimonie (as you would ſay) of Gods grace. This place ought to be diligently obſerued of vs; for the Prophet therein ſhewes, that there ſhall bee ſuch a manifeſtation, that it ſhall retaine mens mindes in the word of God, ſo as they ſhall wholly reſt in it, without any doubting at all.

But if theſe things appertaine to Chriſts Kingdome, as they doe indeed, wee receiue great fruit thereby. What? Chriſtians haue now that certaine truth, in which they may boldly reſt; vnleſſe they forget themſelues, and reieſt the grace of God. For it is manifeſted vnto all, & hath taken from them all occaſion of doubting; ſo as they may ſafely boaſt, that they truly know what his will is: yea, we may ſay, and that truly, as Ieſus Chriſt ſaid to the woman of Samaria, We worſhip that which we know: Iohn 4. 22. Therefore, in as much as we are aſſured by the Goſpell, of that grace which is offered vs in Ieſus Chriſt, we wander not any more in vncertaine conſtitutions, as many doe; but we embrace Gods and his pure ſeruiſes; ſo as we boldly bid adieu to all humane intentions.

The oppoſition alſo is to bee noted betwene the little and obſcure knowledge which the Fathers had vnder the Law, and that fulneſſe of knowledge which ſhineth now in the Goſpell: for albeir God vouchſafed the people of old, the light of his heavenly truth; yet it did appeare more familiarly by Chriſt, as it is ſaid in the firſt of S. Iohn, verſ. 14. 18. The Prophet therefore now extols and ſets forth that aſſured confidence which the onely Sonne of God reuealing his Father, hath brought vnto vs at his coming. Beſides, as in this behalfe we haue a much greater prerogatiue then the ancient people had, in regard that the reconciliation made by Chriſt, ſets the Lord more at one with vs: ſo God cannot bee otherwiſe knowne but in Chriſt, who is his liuely image, and the ingrauen forme of his ſubſtance: Heb. 1. 3. Hee that knows not the Sonne, the ſame knows not the Father. Howſoever the Turkes, Iewes, and other infidels boaſt, that they worſhippe God the Creator of heauen and earth; yet in ſo doing, they worſhip nought but the deuiſe of their owne braine. And albeir they be obſtinate, yet they follow nothing but vncertaine and falſe opinions, in ſtead of the truth: they grope in darkeneſſe, and worſhip their owne imaginations in ſtead of God. In a word, all religion out of Chriſt is falſe and deceitfull; all ſeruiſes are deteſtable, & ought boldly to be condemned.

But it is not without cauſe that the Prophet vſeth theſe two wordes, *Behold, this is, &c.* For therein he teſtifies, that God is ſurely preſent: and a little after, in mentioning

What vs we are to make of this certentie of truth, now reuealed vnto vs in the Goſpell.

God cannot be knowne but in Chriſt

Iob. 14. 7.

Turkes and Iewes not acknowledging God in Chriſt, worſhip their owne imaginations in ſtead of God.

All religions out of Chriſt deteſtable.

Note also, that the Prophet doubles his speech, This is our God, This is the Lord.

faith, and assurance, he sets forth the constancie of those who worship God in Christ. It is certaine that we can not comprehend the Lord in his Maiestie, for he dwels in light which no man can attaine vnto, the which would certainly ouerwhelme vs, if we should presume to aspire therunto. And therefore he applies himselfe to out weaknes, communicating himselfe vnto vs in Iesus Christ, by whom he makes vs partakers of his wildome, righteousness, and all other his benefits.

This is also an excellent point, for in calling Christ the *God of the faithfull*, he giues him the title of The eternall: whence we gather, that the true eternitie of God is comprehended in his person. Moreover, seeing Christ is thus manifested by the Gospell, it reproches the wicked vnthankfulnes of those who being discontented with this perfect manifestation of him, haue dared to adde vaine speculations of their owne, as we may see in the Papacie.

Wee haue waied for him.] Now hee expresseth that constancie and perseuerance which those should haue that haue once embraced God in Christ: for this was not to be a temporarie knowledge, but such, as wherein we must stedfastlie perseuere vnto the end. Now *Isaiah* speaks in the person of the auncient Church which then had her proper seate only among the Iewes. And therefore containing all other gods which were worshipped in other places, he confidently affirms that he only which was manifested vnto *Abraham*, and published in the Law by the ministrie of *Moses*, is the true God: for other nations which were plunged in darknes and ignorance *waited* not for him: in regard that this *waiting* proceeds from faith, which is accompanied with patience; and faith is neuer separate from the word. He admonisheth the faithfull then that their saluation hangs vpon expectation and *hope*, because the promises of God were somewhat deferred till Christes comming. Furthermore we haue also to consider what the condition of these times were, for it seemed that Gods promise was either disannulled; or that he had reiected the posteritie of *Abraham*. Truly, howeouer they beheld the promise a farre off, yet God did in no sort reueale himselfe vnto them at that time: it was needfull therefore that they should be ended with a wonderful patience, to sustaine so heauie afflictions and temptations. This is the cause why he commands them to *wait* patientlie for the comming of Christ, for then they should perfectly feele how neere the Lord is to thē that serue him.

Now this very doctrine ought to quiet and calme our troubled spirits at this day, to the end we may wait for the Lord with a sure and inuincible hope; although our saluation be yet hidden, and that we say of him when he seemes to be far off, *Behold him*. Let vs learne also in the midst of the greatest confusions, to discern him by this marke, *This is the Lord*. For the words theselues, although he speaks in the time past, to wit, We haue reioiced, and are glad, yet the words import a continuall act: and a little before he spake in the time

to come, He will saue vs. The summe is, that Christ will neuer disappoint those that are his, of their hope, provided that they call vpon him with calme and quiet affections.

Christ neuer disappoints his of their hope, if with calme affections they call vpon him.

Verf. 10. For in this mountaine shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be threshed vnder him, euen as *Syrax* is threshed in *Madmenah*.

* Or, in the dunghill.

I Doubt not but the Prophets intent in the beginning of this verse is to comfort the Iewes: who wanting this, might haue thought that God had vtterlie forsaken and cast them off. For whereas some expound it of the affliction which the Lord would bring vpon the Iewes, I see no reason of it at all. But it is rather as if the Prophet should say, The Lord will alwaies assist his Church. I know well that the *hand of the Lord* is also said to rest vpon the reprobate, when without ceasing he continues to presse them with his vengeance till he haue vtterlie ouerthrowne them: but *hand* in this place is rather taken for succor, then for corrections: for the verb, *shall rest*, signifies a perpetuall watch and defence.

Hence wee gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, that albeit God do shed forth insult store of his benefits ouer all the earth, so as the vnbelecuers themselves haue their part of them, yet notwithstanding his *hand* helps not continually, neither doth it rest any where but vpon his holy *Mountaine*, that is to say, vpon his Church where he is serued and worshipped. We are also to obserue, that *Ierusalem* was brought vnder the rod before she felt these graces: for before he denounced the iudgements of God against her; and now he adde a consolation therunto.

A doctrine of singular fruit.

Gods continually help proper only to his Church.

The Prophets mingle consolations with denuntiatioes.

In the second part of the verse he redoubles this mercie of God as it were. Why? Because in correcting the enemies of his Church he testifies how deere and precious the saluation thereof is vnto him. The Iewes had scarcely any greater enemies vnto them then the *Moabites*, as may be seene throw-out the bookes of the Prophets; notwithstanding there was some alliance betweene them. Now vnder the name of the *Moabites* he cōprehends all the enemies of y Church, but speciallie those with whom they had any affinity, which commonlie proue the worst of all. He shewes then, that albeit for a time they plaid rex, and oppressed the Church by tyrannie, yet themselves at last should be brought downe. His purpose in this is to prevent the worst, lest the faithfull should be discouraged in aduersitie, thinking their case miserable whilest the wicked euery way triumphed ouer them: for the *threshing* whereof he heere speaks, shall follow soone after. If we therefore at this day see the Church of God afflicted and troubled by those that in shew haue some acquaintance and league with vs, yea such as take vpon them the name and title of the Church, yet let vs susteine and comfort our hearts by this promise.

Whereas we haue turned the Hebrew word *Madmena*, a Dunghill; some take it to be the

name

Gen. 15. 1.
Exod. 20.

name of a Citie; whereof *Ieremiah* makes mention, Chap. 48. 2. But what if wee ſay, that the Prophet alludes to this Citie, which ſtood (as it is verie likely, in a fat and fertile ſoile, and that hee thus gaules and preſteth the Moabites the more? as if hee ſhould ſay; *Euen as ſtraw is thrashed in their fields, ſo the Lord will thrash the Moabites.* I rieiect not the other interpretations; yet I ſee no inconuenience if we ſay, that he had reſpect to the fruitfullneſſe of the land in which this Citie ſtood. And in reading it ſo, I haue not feared to follow the common conſent.

Verſ. 11. *And hee ſhall ſtretch out his hand in the middeſt of them, (as hee that ſwimmeth ſtretcheth them out ſo ſwimme) and with the ſtrength of his handes ſhall hee bring downe their pride.*

NOW the Prophet both expounds and confirms the former ſentence; yet it is by way of another ſimilitude: whereby hee giues them to vnderſtand, that the Lord will ſtretch out his hand into the verie middeſt of *Moab* Country, and will not lightly touch ſome corners or out places thereof. Some expound this ſimilitude thus; Euen as men ſtretch forth their armes in ſwimming, ſo the Lord will chaſtiſe the Moabites on this ſide and on that.

Others thinke he ſpeakes of inſlicting manifold puniſhments vpon them: as if hee ſhould ſay; The Lord will not correct the Moabites once onely, but will be reuenged on them the ſecond, yea the third time, for the crueltie which they exerciſed vpon his children. But we may expound this ſimilitude another way; They that ſwimme we know vſe not to caſt themſelues in violently, but they goe gently to worke, and ſpread out their armes very ſoftly; and yet in the meane while, they cut and paſſe thorow the water: So the Lord will not often vſe his greateſt forces to confound the wicked, but wil eaſilie, without weapō or great tumults, bring the deſtruction, how valiant or well furniſhed ſocuer they ſeemed to be. This expoſition of the ſimilitude pleaſeth me beſt, becauſe it doth in nothing depraue the former ſenſe, & giues vs

to vnderſtand, that God oftentimes brings the wicked to nothing by his power, although he doe not euer and anon thunder from heauen in the ſight of all the world. Whereas he ſaith, he will doe this in the middeſt of it; he ſhewes that there is no corner ſo cloſe, into which this vengeance of God ſhall not pierce.

Verſ. 12. *The defence alſo of the height of thy walles ſhall he bring downe and lay low, and caſt them to the ground, euen to the duſt.*

NOW hee directeth his ſpeech againſt the Country of *Moab*. *Moab* was well fortified and ſwelled with pride, in regard of their walles and bulwarkes: therefore he ſaith, that the high towers, and other ſtrong and impregnable places ſhould ſerue them to no purpoſe. They of old vſed another kinde of fortification then we doe now at this day, as is well knowne. It is not without cauſe that he here vſeth three words for the better expreſſing of his owne meaning; to wit, I will bring downe, lay low, and caſt to the ground: for it was needfull that this pride of the Moabites wherewith they were puffed vp, ſhould be beaten downe, becauſe they were become intollerable; as we haue ſeene in the 15. Chapter, verſ. 6. The Prophet then derides them; as if he ſhould ſay; Oh, it ſeemes the Lord cannot bring downe this height of yours, in which you ſo much glory. The particle, *To the duſt*, is as much as if he had ſaid; He will not onely race to the ground, but will bring it to duſt, that there ſhall not remaine ſo much as any mention of the old ruines. This place contains in it therefore an excellent and verie apt conſolation: for our enemies at this day are ſo bold, that they deſpiſe not men alone, but euen God himſelfe: they are ſo proud, and ſo puffed vp in regard of their power, that they thinke themſelues inuincible. But it is our parts to oppoſe this ſentence of the Prophet againſt them and all their forces and munitions; to wit, the Lord will eaſilie bring all theſe things to nought. In the meane while, wee muſt patiently beare the hurt that comes vnto vs by reaſon of their power and ſtrength, untill the certaine and prefixed time of their ruine approacheth.

A conſolation

Let Patience haue her perfect works,

THE XXVI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *In that day ſhall this ſong be ſung in the land of Iudab: Wee haue a ſtrong Citie, ſaluation ſhall God ſet for the walles and bulwarkes.*



HE Prophet begins againe in this place to ſhew, that God will hold the people in his protection, after their returne out of captiuitie, and that *Ieruſalem* ſhall be in ſafetie vnder his cuſtodie, no leſſe then if it were co-

passed about with fortrefſes, ramparts, ditches, & double wals; ſo as the enemies ſhould enter no waies to hurt it. But the time is to be noted when this ſong was publiſhed. The Prophet had foretold what calamities ſhould fall vpon the Church, which as yet were nothing neere, but came to paſſe after his death. Doubtleſſe the people might haue deſpaired in their captiuitie, if theſe promiſes had not vpheld them. To the end the Iewes then might haue ſome aſſurance of their deliuerance, and in the middeſt of death might

espie life approaching: the Prophet composed this song before the troubles happened: why? that they might learne betimes to beare their miseries patiently, and to hope for better things. For it was not penned onely (as I thinke) for a thanksgiving which the Iewes should sing after their deliuerance; but also that in their captiuitie it selfe, they might confirme their hearts with confidence of future comfort, and might teach their children to hope for it, leauing these promises as it were from hand to hand, to their posteritie, although for the present they seemed but dead men.

We haue told you in the 5. Chapter, why the Prophet composed these and the like songs in verse; to wit, that euery one might the better remember them by daily recording of them. Although they wept then in Babylon, and were almost ouerwhelmed with sorrow, as these words shew, How shall wee

Psal. 137. 4.

sing the Lords song in a strange land? yet they were to hope, that after their returne into Iudea, they should giue thanks to the Lord, and sing forth his praises. The Prophet therefore shewes them their deliuerance a farre off, that they might cheerefully wait for it.

[A Strong Citie.] By these words the Prophet promisseth an ample and full restauration of Ierusalem, and of the people. How so? God will not onely redeeme the captiues, and gather together the disperfed, but he will also keepe them safe and sound, after hee hath brought them home. But the faithfull notwithstanding forthwith saw the destruction both of the Citie and Temple: and being come home, they could perceiue nothing but those fearefull ruines which *Isaiah* had foretold. It was needfull then that they should behold this restauration of Ierusalem by the eye of faith, as from an high beacon or turret.

Now after these things, the Prophet shewes what the strength of this Citie shall bee; namely, *The protection of God* shall be in stead of walles, towers, ditches, and forts: as if hee should say; Let other Cities trust in their defences; God onely shall be the best defence that we can imagine. I reiect not their aduice who say we should reade; Hee hath set walles and bulwarkes for saluation: but in regard the Prophets wordes being simply vnderstood, containe in them a more ample and stable doctrine, what neede is there to wrest in a constrained exposition, when the true and naturall sense runnes very well; to wit, that Gods protection is more sufficient then all defences? according as it is said, *Psal. 63.* Thy goodnesse, Lord, is better then life: for as *Dauid* there confesseth, that he rests in greater securitie vnder the shadow of Gods wings, then if hee were furnished with all the succours the world could afford him: so in like manner *Isaiah* saith in this place, that there shall bee iust occasion of securitie, when God shall vndertake the *safeguard* of his people.

Now in as much as this promise extends it selfe to the whole course of our redemption,

we must here obserue also, that hee is at this day the protector of his Church: and that his defence therefore who keeps it, is stronger then if it were compassed about with humane helpes. If we therefore meane to rest safely, let vs dwell in the Church. And albeit we be destitute of outward munitions, yet lets content our selues with the Lord and his vndoubted saluation, which is farre more excellent then all worldly fortresses.

Gods sole protection of his Church, stronger then all humane helpes.

Verf. 2. Open yee the gates, that the righteous nation that keepeth the truth, may enter in.

NO doubt but many despised this song when *Isaiah* first published it: for in his time Ierusalem was full of bad companions, and the number of the godly were very few. But after the Prophets death, they were chastised for their impietie; for then they had some inkling that the Prophet had not foretold these things in vaine. For whilest the wicked ate in prosperitie, they feare nothing, and beate themselves in hand, that they cannot be tamed. And thus the Iewes thought they could neuer be driuen out of Iudea, nor led captiues: nay, they imagined they should dwell there euer. It was needfull therefore that all occasion of swelling pride should be taken away from them: hercunto tend the Prophets words, when he saith, that the inhabitants of the new Citie shall be vnlike the first: for they shall bee faithfull and iust.

Moreouer, this promise might haue seemed ridiculous; because those which were banished and led into captiuitie, had no matter at all to reioyce of. Therefore after the destruction of the Temple and the Citie, and the overthrow of all estates, they might object, where are those gates which he commands vs to open? or where are those people that should enter in at them? And yet notwithstanding, we see these things came to passe; neither was there any thing foretold, which the Lord did not performe and accomplish. Wee ought therefore to set these ancient histories before our eyes, to arme our selues with the examples contained in them, and in the midst of this confused estate in which we now see the Church to be, to hope notwithstanding that the Lord will restore it.

God is alwaies as good as his word, howsoeuer our passions boile within vs. What course we are to take when the Church is in a confused state. *Chap. 25. 1.*

When the Prophet mentions the *iust nation* that keepeth the truth; hee not onely shewes (as I haue said heerebefore) who they are to whom this promise appertaines; but therewithall, the fruit of that should come by this chastisement: for the Church being once purged from her filthinesse, her *righteousnesse* and holinesse should shine so much the more right. For when the Prophet wrote this song, the wicked reigned, and the good were verie thin sown, and those also were mingled amongst the multitude, as the wheat in the chaffe. It was needfull therefore that this great troope, who had neither religion nor any feare of God should bee cut off: to the end the Lord might gather in the remnant of his

his

his Church. See now how the Lord recom-
penced this ruine of Ierusalem. For whereas
her citizens were before defiled with impie-
tie, now they were consecrated anew vnto
God; else it had been to little purpose for
them to haue recouered a flourishing outward
estate, if newnes of life, pietie and vprightnes
had not also flourished amongst them. Now as
the Prophet in these words sets forth the
grace of God, so he also exhorts these redeemed
people therewithall to giue themselves
to integritie of life. In a word, he testifies that
these promises shall stand hypocrites in no
stead, for the gates shall not be set open for
them, but only for the *just* and holy.

I grant the Church hath alwaies been like
the corne-floore, wherein there is chaffe
mingled amongst the good corne, or rather
the wheat is couered with chaffe: yet it is not
to be doubted but the Church was purged in
better measure then it was before, when the
Iewes returned home out of captiuitie. For it
could not be but those which came back a-
gaine were led with a good and zealous af-
fection in regard the iorney was long and te-
dious, as also, that they were subiect to many
inconueniencies and dangers in the way: In
the meane while many of their nation chose
rather to continue in bondage then to goe
home, thinking their estate who remained in
Babylon much more quiet and peaceable
then theirs who returned into Iudea. It must
needs be some seed of godlines then which
forced them to come and take the inioying
of those promises that were made to their fa-
thers. But albeit the Church was then stain-
ed with many imperfections, yet this which
the Prophet here affirms was true in part:
for the most of the of-scouring, which were
mingled with them before, came not back a-
gaine; and those that remained had some-
what profited vnder Gods corrections.

Some distinguish this sentence thus, The
just nation before God, and the vpright be-
fore men. But I take it more simple, to wit;
After the Prophet hath mentioned the *righte-
ous nation*, he by and by shewes that this ius-
tice consists in the integritie of that heart
which is without fraud or guile: for nothing
is more contrarie to iustice then hypocrisie.
Now albeit the man can not be found who
hath so well profited as to keepe iustice in e-
uery respect perfectlie, yet we may say that
Gods children, who aspire vnto this vpright-
nes with their whole hearts, are notwithstanding
keepers of it. Vnlesse any had rather vn-
derstand it thus, that true iustice is here set
forth vnder one of the parts by the figure *Sy-
nechdoche*, to wit, when men walke simple
and plainlie one with another, hauing first
of all abandoned all naughtie and wicked
practises.

But if any vpon this place should go about
to stablish the doctrine of merits, we shall ea-
sily answere them: for the Prophet speaks
not here of the cause of saluation, neither
yet what men are by nature, but what God
makes them to be by grace, and what *Citizens*
he meant to haue in his Church; for of
wolves he can make lambs, as we haue scene

in the 11. Chapter. But whilest we liue in this
world, we are alwaies farre off from that per-
fection which God requires, and therefore
we ought dayly to aime still vnto it: but the
Lord esteems vs only according to that good
worke which he hath begun in vs, and ac-
counts vs iust after he hath once brought vs
into the paths of iustice. For when he hath
begun to correct and change our hypocrisie,
he doth therewithall call vs faithfull and
vpright.

The Lord
accounts of
vs according
to that which
himselfe hath
wrought
in vs.

Verf. 3. * *By an assured purpose thou
wilt preserve persei peace, because they
trusted in thee.*

* Or, It is an
assured
thought: thou
wilt keepe
peace, peace
I say, for they
trusted in
thee.

Because the Hebrew word *Ieser* signifies a
thing made, created, or a thought, some
translate thus, Thou wilt keepe peace with
an assured foundation: as if the Prophet
meant, that those who continue constant in
the tempests of this world, because they rest
vpon God, shall alwaies continue in safetie.
Others turne it, Thou wilt keepe peace by
an assured purpose, which comes almost to
the same sense, to wit, that those who haue
fixed their hearts vpon God alone shall be
happie and blessed at the last. For God prom-
iseth not to be the protector of his Saints
further then they quietlie rest vpon his good
pleasure, without waunting. But because the
Prophet in one word saith, It is a stable or
stedfast decree, let the readers consider, if
this be not more sidie applied vnto God: so
as the sense will be, The peace of the Church
is buile vpon the eternall and immutable
counsell of God. For the very principall point
is, that the faithfull stay themselves vpon this
heauenlie decree, lest they should be shaken
by so many changes as dayly fall out in the
world.

It is sure that wee ought alwaies to hope
stedfastlie in God, to the end wee may euer-
more feele his faithfulness in keeping vs: it is
requisite also that the faithfull be neuer turned
aside for any doubtfull or perplexed ac-
cident, but ought to stick close to God only:
notwithstanding the fittest sense, and that
which agrees best with the Prophets words
is, that God hath purposed by an assured and
immutable decree that all those which hope
in him shall enioy euertlasting peace. For if
this stedfast purpose should be taken for the
setled constancie of the faithfull, it were in
vaine for the Prophet to adde that reason to
his speech which followeth, *for they trusted in
thee*. Again, both kinds of speech would be
improper, to say that a continuall peace should
be forethought of in the conceit. But this a-
grees very well, that God will neuer deceiue
vs our hope when we trust in him: Why?
Because he hath decreed to keepe vs for euer.
Wence it followes, that seeing the Church
depends not vpon the brittle estate of the
world, it is not therefore shaken nor tossed vp
and downe by the sundrie changes which
fall out euery day; but is stayed vpon a rock
firme and immouable: to wit, the constant
decree of God; so as it can neuer be moued.

The Church
hath alwaies
been like the
corne floore,
Math. 3. 12.

1
2
3

They that
aspire to
vprightnes
of heart are
keepers of
iustice.

Obic.
Ans.

A close opposition betweene Gods setled purpose, and our wauering thoughts;

And thus, as I take it, here is a close opposition betweene the setled purpose of God, and our vnsetled and wauering thoughts: for it happens euer and anon, that any new assault driues our thoughts hither and thither; yea there is not the least change which brings not his doubtings with it. It is good therefore wee should hold this principle; to wit, that we doe amisse to measure Gods immutable counsell by our tottering deuices: for it is said, as we shall see Chap. 55. That as farre as the heauens are higher then the earth, so much higher are my thoughts from yours, O yee house of Israel, faith the Lord.

Our saluatiō not subiect to change, because the counsell of God remains fure.

By peace, is meant both inward and outward felicitie.

First then, let vs hold this for certaine, that our saluation is not subiect to change; because the counsell of God remaineth fure. Therefore it is the Prophet repeates it, *Thou wilt keepe peace, peace I say*; thereby shewing, that it shall continue and last for euer. Now by the word *peace*, he not onely meanes peace of conscience, but all kinde of felicitie: as if hee should say; Gods grace alone shall suffice to maintaine you in all happinesse and prosperitie.

Verf. 4. Trust in the Lord for euer: for in the Lord God is strength for euermore.

Some reade the second member of the verse; *Hope in the strong God, Lord of the worlds*; but in regard the word *Trust*, is not alwaies put for an epithite, but signifies Strength, I reiect that exposition, because it is constrained; neither suites it to the matter in hand, as we shall see anon. There is also a little stedfastnesse in their curiositie, who from hence would proue the Diuinitie of Christ: as if the Prophet should say; The Lord Ichouah is in the Lord Iah. For *Isaiah* hath put the name of God twice, onely to amplifie his power. He therefore exhorts the people to repose themselues vpon God: first then he laid downe doctrine; and in this verse hee comes to exhortation. For it were in vaine to tell vs our peace is in the hand of God, and that he will faithfully keepe it, vnlesse after such instructions & doctrines, we were stirred vp and prouoked to haue our parts therein by exhortations.

Now he not onely wils vs to hope, but to perseuere in it: this sentence therefore belongs properly to the faithfull, who haue alreadie learned what it is to hope in God. And yet they haue neede to be daily confirmed, because they are weak, and readie oftentimes to slip, according to the sundrie occasions of distrust with which they haue to fight.

He commands vs not barely to trust in the Lord then, but that we perseuere constantly in hope and assurance for euer. The reason which he addes likewise is to be noted; to wit, that as Gods power, which is the object of faith, indures for euer; so our faith should still looke to this perpetuitie. For when the Prophet speaks of the power and strength of God, he meanes not any idle power, but such

as is effectual and operative: shewing and manifesting it selfe really in vs, following and bringing to a good end that which it hath begun. And yet this doctrine hath a further scope; to wit, it teacheth vs at all times to consider the nature of God. For as soone as wee doe but turne our eyes in the least measure aside, we can see nothing but that which is earthly and vanishing; and must wee not then be forth with out of heart? Faith therefore ought to surmount the world with continuall increase: why? because the trueth, iustice, and goodnesse of God is not temporall and vanishing, but God alwaies continues like himselfe.

We must alwaies fixe the eyes of our faith vpon Gods nature.

Verf. 5. For hee will bring downe them that dwell on high: the high Citie will hee abase; euen vnto the ground will hee cast it downe, and bring it vnto dust.

6. The foote shall treade it downe, euen the feete of the poore, and the steps of the needie.

Now he more fully shewes what this power of God is, whereof hee spake; to wit, euen that whereof we shall haue experience, and that for our good. These two sentences then depend one vpon another thus; to wit, That the proud are cast downe by the power of God, who stablisheth the humble and those that are despised, in their stead. For whereas in the first place hee teacheth that the proud shall be brought downe; it would not suffice for giuing a full and perfect consolation, vnlesse he had also added, that the poore and humble should bee exalted to haue the dominion ouer them. This we know by experience, that God is wont to worke powerfully for our saluation; and this giues vs matter and occasion of good hope.

Verf. 5.
Verf. 6.

By the *high places*, he meanes all manner of munitions & defences, (for in old time they were wont to build Cities in high places) as also their glorie and riches. His meaning is then, that there shal be no fortresse so strong, which shall let God to abase and bring downe the wicked. Towers and Castles are not displeasing vnto God in themselues; but because it often fallles out, that the strong and mightie brag and glory in them: therefore this dwelling on high, is often taken for pride it selfe. Now it is not to bee doubted but hee speaks here of the wicked, who with their forces, wealth, and treasures, thinke themselues able to make their partie good against God. He also comforts the lewes (as wee haue said) in regard they might bee terrified and despair in themselues, by seeing Babylons power to bee inuincible, vnlesse God had vpheld them by this particular promise. As if hee should haue saide; You neede not feare eyther the greatnesse or power of the Babylonians: why? for it shall easilie bee brought downe, and shall not bee able to resist the power of the most high.

Chap. 13. 1.

Doctrine laid downe in the 3. verf. in this he comes to exhortation. Doctrine & exhortation must goe together.

We must not onely trust, but it must continue for euer. Our faith ought to answere Gods power.

Verf. 6.

*Or, vpright-
neſſes are the
path of the
iuſt.

Verſ. 7. * *The way of the iuſt is righteous: thou wilt make equall the righteous path of the iuſt.*

HE praifeſh not the iuſtice of the faithfull here, as ſome haue falſtie imagined: but only teacheth that God by his ſingular bleſſing will giue them an happie and prosperous ſucceſſe thorowout the whole courſe of their liues. But becauſe in the beginning of the verſe he had ſaid only in a word, That the way of the iuſt is plaine and equall: in the ſecond part hee expounds himſelſe more clearly; attributing it vnto the grace of God that they perſeuere thus in their good courſe vnto the end, euen as it were thorow a ſmooth and plaine field. For in the verb, *to make equall*, there is a ſimilitude; namely, that God will poize as with iuſt and equall weights and ballance thoſe things which in themſelues were very vnequall.

There is ſome ambiguitie in the Hebrue word *Iaſhar*, becauſe it may be attributede as well to God, as to the way. Some therefore tranſlate, *Thou which art iuſt wilt make the way of the righteous equall*: and God is thus called in the other places. The alluſion alſo would be very fitting to ſay, that the vprightneſſes of which he ſpeakes proceed from God, in regard that he only is vpright or iuſt: notwithstanding the other reading ſeemes leſſe conſtrained.

Dim. 32.4.
Pſal. 25.8.9.

In ſumme, the Prophet promiſeth that God will haue care of the iuſt, and that in ſuch wiſe, as he will *lead them* by the hand. For we often thinke that all things run conſuſedlic together here below whileſt the vngodlie are at their eaſe, and the good in the meane time are oppreſſed. Yea and albeit the holy Scripture teacheth, and ſo often confirms it vnto vs that God hath care of his Church, yet notwithstanding it is an hard matter to keepe our thoughts ſteadie, but we by and by wauer whē we ſee all things which the wicked take in hand to prosper. And yet it is moſt certaine that God by his ballance poiſeth the waies of the iuſt how vncuen or ragged ſocuer the ſame ſeeme to be: yea, he hath giuen his Angels charge to keepe thoſe that are his, that they ſhould not ſtumble or hurt their foot againſt a ſtone, Pſal. 91.11. otherwiſe there is not the leaſt offence which would not eaſily ouerthrow them and make them quail: much leſſe ſhould they be able to paſſe thorow ſo many briars and thornes; ſuch crooked by-waies; dangerous gulphs, and ſtreit paſſages, vneleſſe the Lord ſhould draw them out, and in the end deliuer them.

Let vs therefore learne to commend our ſaferie into the hands of God, and to follow him ſoc our guide: and in thus doing we ſhall be well directed; yea we ſhall alwaies eſcape, although we were inuironed on euery ſide with ambuſhes, the cunning deuices and the innumerable dangerous plots either of Satan, or the wicked which are his instruments. And haue not wee ſufficient prooue of that which the Prophet here ſaith? Are not our waies made plaine and ſmooth in the miſt of the deepeſt gulphs, ſo as our courſe can

not be ſtopped nor ſlacked by any hindrances whatſoever? Truly experience it ſelſe teacheth, that if we were not conducted and gouerned by Gods hand, it were but in vaine for vs to attempt to walke thorow ſuch vnkowne paſſages: for alas ſuch is our weakenes, that we would ſtumble at the leaſt ſtone we ſhould meet withall in the way. Satan and the wicked on the other ſide would not only intangle and intrap vs in many of their nets; neither would they thinke it ſufficient to caſt ſome ſmall ſtumbling-blocks in our way: but one while they would driue vs vpo the rocks, another while into bottomles depths of miſeries, out of which the whole world with all the power it hath could by no means eſcape.

Let vs acknowledge then how neceſſarie it is for vs to looke for our direction from heauen: yea, let vs confeſſe with *Ieremiab*, O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himſelſe: and that it is not in man to walke, nor direct his owne ſteps, Iere. 10. 23. Let vs not be puſted vp then with vaine confidences as if we had the euents of things at our beck. Neither let vs boaſt that we will do this or that, like thoſe rath heads who thinke themſelues able to accompliſh all their luſts: for if we haue not ſo much power as to moue our tongues to giue an anſwere; much leſſe can we of our ſelues bring greater enterpriſes to paſſe. It is in vaine for men then to purpoſe, determine, and to diſpoſe of their waies, vneleſſe God guide them by his hand.

Our help
ſtands only
in the name
of God.

Iam. 4. 13.
Prom. 16. 1.

But this his hand he reacheth forth *to the iuſt*, and of them he hath a ſpeciall care. For if ſo be the prouidence of God extends it ſelſe generallie ouer all creatures; and that he prouides for the neceſſities of the yong Ravens, Sparrowes, and the leaſt worme that creeper vpon the ground: much more hath he a fatherlie care of the faithfull to deliuer them out of the dangers and ſtreits into which they are planged.

To whom
God reacheth
his directing
hand.

Verſ. 8. *Alſo We O Lord haue Waited for thee in the Way of thy iudgements: the deſire of our ſoule is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.*

THIS verſe containes a moſt excellent doctrine, without which the former things might ſeeme to haue been ſpoken in vaine: for the Prophet hauing ſaid that God will be our leader all our liues long, ſo as we ſhall neuer erre nor ſtumble; and yet in the meane while we ſee our ſelues brought into ſo many extremities, that in our iudgements all theſe promiſes are merely vaine: when (I ſay) he thus exerciſeth our patience, it ſtands vs vpon to waſtle manfullie, and yet to hope in him notwithstanding. Of this the Prophet here giues vs warning, namely, that although we alwaies ſee not this ſmooth and goodly plaine; and that the way is not made ſo euen vnder our ſete: but that we muſt preſſe thorow many ſtreits, yet muſt wee ſtill giue place vnto hope and patience.

By the way of the iudgements, he meanes aduerſities: for ſo this word is often taken in the

Though
Gods promiſed
aſſiſtance
comes not
when we
would, yet
muſt we ſtill
giue way vnto
hope and
patience.

A note to
discerne true
Christians
from hypo-
crites.

the Scriptures. This is the mark then where-
by true Christians are discerned from the false: for whilest hypocrites inioy all things at
their desire, they blesse God, and highly ex-
toll him; but in aduersitie, they murmure and
blaspheme him; thereby plainly shewing,
that they neuer trusted in him at all; and
therefore they serue God no longer then he
serues their turnes in all things. Contrariwise,
when the faithfull are exercised vnder diuers
crosses and calamities, they are prouoked
thereby to draw nere vnto God, and to trust
in his helpe. The particle *Also*, therefore hath
great weight in it; for it is as much as if the
Prophet had said, The faithfull serue God
cheerfully, not onely when hee vscth them
gently, but euen then *also*, when hee deales
roughly with them: neither faint they vtter-
ly, because they are sustained by hope.
Wherein consists the true triall of sound godli-
nes then? Truly in this, that we trust in God,
not onely when hee fillles vs abundantly with
his benefits, but then also when hee with-
drawes the light of his countenance; yea,
when he afflicteth vs, and shewes vs nothing
but the signes of his wrath and heauie dis-
pleasure.

A triall of a
sound heart.

Let vs learne therefore to apply this do-
ctrine to our vse, as often as the calamities of
this present life doe presse vs: and let vs not
cease to hope in him, although all things
seeme vtterly desperate. If he should kill me
(saith Iob) yet would I trust in him: Iob 13.17.
And David protests, that hee will not feare,
though he should walke thorow the valley of
the shadow of death. Why so? because hee
knew that God was with him: Psal. 23.4.

In thy name.] In these words the Prophet
meant to shew from whence this magnani-
mitie of minde in the faithfull procedes;
which suffers them neither to faint nor to
fall vnder the greatest assaults: surely it is in
respect that being loosed from those profane
desires, wherein the wicked are intangled,
they euen in their greatest distresses where-
with they are compassed about, haue free-
dome and libertie of spirit to send forth their
groanes and cries, boldly into the presence of
God. Naturally I confesse our desires are dis-
ordered, and the cares of this life doe as it
were glew vs to the earth; our thoughts float
vp and downe, or else are so besotted, that
they cannot freely aspire vnto God. The es-
sence of God in like manner is hidden from
vs, whereby wee wax the more slow and dull
in seeking of him. For these respects there-
fore the Prophet brings vs backe from this
hidden & incomprehensible essence of God,
to his name. As if he should say; Content your
selues with that manifestation of him which
you find in his word: for there he sets before
vs as much as is expedient; to wit, his iustice,
wisdome, and goodnesse; yea and his very
selfe also.

It is not without cause also that he addes
this word *remembrance*: for thereby he shewes,
that the first apprehension or thought of
Gods name sufficeth not; but that wee ought
to meditate thereon continually; because
without this helpe, all light of doctrine would

Meditation a
speciall helpe
to maintaine

by and by vanish. For the truth is, the right
and sound knowledge of God must needs
inflame our hearts with a desire after him:
yea, more then that, it prouokes vs to an in-
satiabie thirst after profiting, euen as oft as
we remember him. The knowledge of God
then goes before; and in the second place we
ought to exercise our selues much in the
meditation of it: for it is not enough once to
haue had some little taste thereof, vnlesse
therewithall a loue and desire after the same
bee increased by a continuall meditation.
Hence wee may learne then, that the know-
ledge of God is no idle nor dead imagi-
nation.

the light of
true doctrin.

Knowledge &
meditation
must goe
together.

1

2

*Vers. 9. With my soule haue I desi-
red thee in the night, and with my spi-
rit within mee will I seeke thee in the
morning: for seeing thy iudgements are
in the earth, the inhabitants of the world
shall learne righteousness.*

SEE yet a more ample exposition of the for-
mer sentence: for before, speaking in the
person of all the faithfull, he said, that the de-
sire of their soules was to the name of God:
but now he brings in himselfe speaking; *My
soule* hath desired thee, saith hee. As if hee
should say; All the powers of my soule are
buffed in seeking of thee and thy name.

The word *Nephesh*, is often taken for the
vital spirit: but because the Prophet vscth
two sundry words here, I so distinguish them,
as that the *soule* shall signifie the desire and
the will; and the *spirit*, the intellectuall part.
For we know that the vnderstanding & will,
are the two principall parts of mans soule;
and God will haue both of them; as good rea-
son is he should. And hereunto appertaines
that Commandement, Thou shalt loue the
Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with
all thy soule, and with all thy strength: Matth.
22.37. The Prophet teacheth then, that all
the faculties of his soule were bent, and led
him to seeke and desire the Lord.

How soule
and spirit is
taken here.
The vnder-
standing and
will, two
principall
parts of
mans soule.

Others take this word *spirit*, for the rege-
nerate part; and thus by the *soule*, they vnder-
stand the naturall man; and by the *spirit*, the
grace of God, which is supernaturall. But this
cannot stand: for the naturall man neuer
seekes vnto God; yea, and we know by expe-
rience what strife wee haue in our selues
when we aspire vnto God; as also with what
great difficulty we wind our selues out of this
repugnancie. This interpretation then needs
no long refutation, seeing it manifestly cros-
seth the very text of holy Scripture. Moreo-
uer, it sufficiently appeares by many places,
that these words, Spirit and Soule, import as
much as vnderstanding and heart.

By *night*, the holy Ghost often meanes ad-
uersities; which are compared vnto darknes
and obscuritie. But in this place I expound it
a little otherwise: as if the Prophet should
say; There is no time so vsiting and incon-
uenient, which I take not to call vpon thee,
and to seeke vnto thee. This exposition dif-
fers

In what
sense the
word night
is taken in
this place.

fers

neither by
corrections
nor benefits.

fers not much from the fiſt, yet it is ſome-
what more generall: for the night ſeemes to
be ordeined for reſt, in which all the deſires
and travels of men ceaſe; ſo as there is little
difference betweene ſleepe and death. But
when it was time to take reſt and to be quiet,
then the Prophet ſaith, he awaked to ſeeke
G O D, ſo as no occaſion could hinder him
from it.

The meaning whereof is not as if thoſe
which ſleepe can have any ſetled or ſtable
thoughts: but ſleepe it ſelfe being a part of
our courſe whiſt we ſeeke God, though we
lie as in a trance without uttering any word,
yet then we may be ſaid to praife him by faith
and hope. But the Prophet ſpeakes not of
ſleepe here properly, but rather by way of
ſimilitude, as it further appeares plainly by
the member following, where the *morning* is
oppoſed to the night: and thus he notes out
a continuall courſe.

In the next place we are to conſider of the
reaſon which he yeelds of his ſo doing when
he ſaith, that *the inhabitants of the earth ſhall
learne righteousnes by the iudgements of God*: ſig-
nifying thereby that men are inſtructed and
taught to feare God by his rods wherewith
he ſmites them. For in proſperitie they for-
get him, ſo as their eyes ſtand out for ſnares:
they reioyce and keepe a coyle, and can not
abide to be brought into any good order.
The Lord therefore is faine to repreſſe their
pride, and to teach them how to bow vnder
his hand. Laſtly the Prophet here confeſſeth
that himſelfe & the reſt of the faithfull were
prepared by the corrections of the Almighty
to kiſſe the rod, and to ſubmit themſelves
to his government; and to put themſelves
vnder his protection: for unleſſe the Lord
maintaine his owne right and authoritie o-
uer vs with an out-ſtreched arme, none of vs
all will willinglie frame our minds aright to
do him ſervice.

Verſ. 10. *Let mercie be ſhewed to the
Wicked, yet he will not learne righteous-
nes: in the land of vprightnes he will doe
Wickedlie, and will not behold the Maie-
ſtie of the Lord.*

THE Prophet oppoſeth this ſentence to
the former: for he had ſaid that when the
faithfull are afflicted, or ſee others in the like
caſe, that they ceaſe not for all that to reſt in
the aſſurance of Gods fauour, and to hope
conſtantlie in his help. Now on the contra-
rie he ſaith that y wicked can not be brought
to loue God, albeit he labour to draw
and knit them vnto him by all ſorts of his bene-
fits: nay rather they become the worſe, al-
though he ſhew himſelfe moſt gracious to-
wards them. It may ſeeme then at the fiſt
bliſh that this verſe ſhould be contrarie to
the former: for it was there ſaid that the iu-
ſtice of God is knowne vpon earth, euen then
whiſt he himſelfe ſhewes that he is Iudge of
the world, and executes vengeance vpon the
iniquities of men. But here he ſaith, that the
wicked can not be allured nor drawne by

any meanes to ſerue God: and ſo farre is it
off that they are any thing the better for the
ſtripes which they receive, that they waxe
worſe and worſe, and that whiſt he lades the
dayly with his benefits: for it is out of cen-
trouerſie that all make not a right vſe of af-
flictions. What vſe I pray you made *Pharaoh*
of the plagues wherewith God ſmote him? did
not the blowes which he felt make his heart
the more hard?

But howſoeuer he ſpake generallie of the
inhabitants of the earth beſore, yet he only
and properly meant Gods elect. I denie not
but this benefit redounds ſome time to hypo-
crites alſo, to wit, that they are now and then
touched with the feeling of Gods Maieſtie:
yea and they are often reſtrained from break-
ing out euen for feare of the whip. Not-
withſtanding becauſe the Prophet here de-
ſcribes the fruites of true repentance, it muſt
needs be that he ſhould only meane the chil-
dren of God when he ſpeakes of *the inhabi-
tants of the earth*.

Now ſome reade this verſe by an interro-
gation thus, Shall the wicked obtaine fauor?
or, Wherefore ſhould the wicked obtaine fa-
uor? As if the Prophet meant to ſay, that they
were vnworthie to taſte of Gods mercie. But
for mine owne part I rather thinke that the
wicked will neuer be taught to do well, albeit
God ſhould allure them therunto by pow-
ring out all his benefits vpon them. The Pro-
phet therefore here reſtrains that which he
ſaid beſore in generall termes. And when
he ſaith that *they do wickedlie in the land of v-
prightnes*, he therein further amplifies the vn-
worthines of this ingratitude. It was enough
and too much that they had alreadie abuſed
Gods benefits, and made themſelves more
obſtinate thereby: but they made their finne
about meaſure ſinfull when they dealt thus
wickedlie in the land which God had hallow-
ed. Now he ſpeakes only of Iudea; albeit
wee may alſo applie it to other Countries
wherein God is now worſhipped: But at that
time *Iſaiah* could giue this title to none o-
ther, becauſe there was no knowledge of God
but in Iudea. For this cauſe he calles Iudea
the land of vprightnes: and thus I interpret it,
becauſe the Prophet vſeth the word *Neco-
choth*, which is of the femenin gender, and can
no way be referred to men.

This land was adorned with this title in re-
gard the law was in force there, and for that
the people were the peculiar choſen of God:
therefore the Prophet addes this to aggravate
the peoples vnthankfulnes, as hath been ſaid.
For their expoſition is farre wide from the
naturall ſenſe, who extend it generallie to all
the world: becauſe in what place ſoeuer we
liue God maintaines vs vpon this condition,
that we behaue our ſelves vprightlie towards
all. The Lord indeed hath now cauſed his
kingdome to ſpread into all places; *the land*
of vprightnes therefore is whereſoeuer his
name is called vpon: and thus we deſerue a
double condemnation if wee yeeld not testi-
monies of true thankfulnes by giuing our
ſelves to pietie & good works whē God pro-
uokes vs therunto by ſo many of his benefits.

Whereſ

Where is the
practiſe of
this dutie
become in
theſe dayes?
See Pſal. 119.
35. & 62.

Pſal. 73.

The wicked
are bettered

How farre
this land of
vprightnes
may now be
ſaid to ex-
tend it ſelfe.

Where hee adds, that the reprobates shall see the maiestie of God; it is not to lessen the fault, but rather to augment and increase it: for it is a foolish and wicked ingratitude in men to bee carelesse of Gods glory, which plainly shines before their eyes. The wicked then are no way excusable: for although God proclaime his name diuers waies; yet in this so cleere a sunshine they see nothing. Questionlesse there want not euident signes at all times by which the Lord manifests both his glory and greatnesse: but their number is very small who take it to heart, as we haue seene before, Chap. 5. 19.

The Lord not onely sets forth his maiestie and glory by his ordinarie workes in nature, but also by certaine signes and worthy documents, wherein hee fully instructs vs as touching his iustice, wisdom, and goodnesse. The wicked shut their eyes at it, and perceiue it not, albeit they be very quicke and sharpe sighted in other matters. This frowardnesse and peruerstie the Prophet now reprobates. Others thinke hee threatens the reprobates here, as if they were unworthy to behold the workes of God. Which although it be true, yet seeing this member is ioyned to the rest, the Prophet still reprobates the fortitude of those, who are so farre off from making benefit of the workes of God, that rather they become the more senselesse by them. For which cause it should not seeme strange vnto vs at this day, if there be few which come to repentance, albeit Gods iustice manifests it selfe so diuersly: for infidelitie is alwaies blinde, when it should behold the workes of God.

Verf. 11. *O Lord, they will not behold thine high hand: but they shall see it, and be confounded with the zeale of thy people; and the fire of thine enemies shall deuoure them.*

This is an exposition of the former sentence: for hee enters into no new discourse, but expounds that at large, which he had said before in few words. He said in the other verse, that the wicked would not behold the maiestie of the Lord: now he shewes that this magnificence of the Lord is the same which appears in his workes. For the Prophet sends vs not to the hidden maiestie of God, which wee cannot behold with our eyes; but brings vs to his workes, which hee here represents by a figure, vnder this word *hand*. Well, he accuseth the wicked once againe, shewing that they haue nothing to allege for their defence; neither can they couer themselves, vnder any pretence of ignorance: for albeit they were starke blind, yet was the *hand of God* made manifest enough; so as nothing could hinder them from seeing of it, but their owne grosse vnthankfulnesse, or rather wilfull fortitude. For many haue skill enough to pleade ignorance, affirming that they perceiue not these workes: but hee telles such, that Gods hand is stretched forth; not onely in such wise that it may be discerned

of a small number, but also farre and neere.

They shall see it and be confounded. He makes it very apparent, that this beholding is not the same whereof he spake before, when hee said, that the wicked saw not the maiestie of the Lord: for they saw it well enough, but they regarded it not. Notwithstanding, at the last they shall see it, although too late, and to their great disadvantage. For hauing a long time abused the patience of God, in shewing themselves obstinate and rebellious, they shall be constrained in the end to take knowledge of his iudgements. Thus albeit *Caine, Esau*, and the like (who repented their sinnes too late) fled from Gods presence, yet in despite of their teeth, they were made both to see and feele that he was their Iudge: Gen. 4. 13. and 27. 38.

Thus hee often draws some remorse as it were euen from those that despise him, to the end he might cause his power to shine cleerely: but such apprehensions bring them no profit at all. The Prophet then so threatens the wicked, whose blindness hee hath rebuked, that he therewithall takes from all pretext of ignorance; plainly telling them, that the time shall come, wherein they shall know with whom they haue to doe, and shall then well perceiue that this *maiestie* and *high hand of God* which they reiected & made light of, ought not in any sort to be contemned. For they ouerslow in all riot and dissolution with their eyes shut, they flout and mocke, thinking God will neuer call them to iudgement: yea, which more is, the miseries and afflictions of the faithfull, are things wherein they take great delight. Thus they looke vpon vs with disdain, as if they were out of all danger, hardening their hearts more & more: but in the end, they shall know that the seruants of God haue not serued him in vaine. Now that hee might the better shew that this beholding of God, should not onely be vnprofitable, but also hurtfull to the wicked, he saith, that they shall be confounded, when they shall see the blessing of God vpon his people, wherein they shall haue neither part nor portion.

In the next place he further augments the sharpnesse of the punishment, in regard that these yngodly ones shall not onely be *confused with enmie*, when they shall see the children of God deliuered from these miseries, and exalted into glory; but they shall also be stricken with no lesse an euill, to wit, *the fire of the enemies shall deuoure them*. The *zeale of the people* then in this place, signifies the indignation wherewith the reprobates shall be inflamed when they shall compare the condition of the faithfull with theirs.

Hee calles that *the fire of the enemies* wherewith God consumes his aduersaries; taking this word *fire*, for Gods vengeance: for it must not be taken here for that visible fire wherewith things are consumed in this world; neither yet for lightning onely; but by a figure it is taken for a cruell torment: for so by this word the holy Ghost is wont often to note out the extreme wrath of the Lord. Yet I denie

God may well suffer the wicked to take their twinge for a while, but in the end hee paines them home.

Heb. 12. 17.

Infidelitie alwaies blinde when it should behold the workes of God.

Gen. 19. 24. nie not but the Prophet alludes to the de-
Deut 32. 21. ſtruction of Sodom and Gomorah.

Iob 20. 26.

☞ 22. 10.

Verſ. 12. *Lord vnto vs thou wilt ordaine peace: for thou alſo haſt wrought all our workes for vs.*

THIS tends to the conſolation of the faithfull. As if he ſhould ſay; We ſee what will fall vpon the heads of the wicked, for thou wilt caſt them out of the company of thy children, & wilt conſume them with fire as thine enemies; but we ſhal haue an happy and bleſſed eſtate. The verbe *ſhaphar*, which ſignifies to *Ordaine* among the Hebrewes, is as much to ſay, as to *Establish*; as if he ſhould ſay; Thou wilt hold and preferue vs in peace continually. The wicked indeed inioy a kind of peace, but it laſts not long: our peace is ſeated and eſtablished in the Lord, and hath ſuch a foundation as ſhall indure for euer. Now by the word *peace*, he meanes a ſetled and laſting felicitie. Hence let vs conclude then, that the children of God which truſt in him, are fully bleſſed: for the life of the wicked is more then miſerable, albeit it be ſoaked in much deliciousneſſe and pleaſures, as thoſe that haue all things at their wiſh. There is no aſſured nor ſtable peace then, but in the fatherly loue of our God.

By *workes*, hee meanes all the good which God doth to his choſen: as if he ſhould ſay; All our affaires and actions: all things which we vſe for our benefit in this world, in a word whatſo euer, we put our hands vnto. Thoſe then who haue alleadged this place, to overthrow the doctrine of free will, did not well vnderſtand the Prophets meaning. I grant it is God onely that works, whatſo euer is good in vs; ſo as all our vprightneſſe proceeds onely from his Spirit: but the Prophet meant ſimply to teach here, that wee receiue all the good things which we inioy, onely from the hand of God; and thence concludes, that this fauour ſhall neuer ceaſe, till wee be come to full and perfect happineſſe.

Moreouer, ſeeing God is author of all bleſſings, wee ought eſpecially to be mindfull of thoſe which are chiefe and principall: for if wee ought to acknowledge that the things which ſerue for our maintenance in this life, are the gifts of God; much more ought we ſo to doe in things appertaining to the ſaluation of the ſoule. If ſo be then we owe thankfullneſſe for his liberalitie in ſmall things, how much more ſhould wee acknowledge his goodneſſe in things that are high and excellent? But what need haue wee to object this text againſt the Papiſts, to refute their doctrine of free will, ſeeing they may be eaſilie answered by other places: yea, we haue infinite teſtimonies beſides which are much more euident.

Thus it ſeemes then that the Prophet ſtirrs vp the peoples mindes to thankfullneſſe: for hee commands them ſo to admire the goodneſſe of God in his benefits, that they confeſſe all things they haue to be his gift. We haue here then a very fruitfull doctrine; to

wit, that the faithfull are to conceiue an aſſured hope of Gods goodneſſe for the time to come, by conſidering what benefits they haue receiued from him in times paſt; and thence to conclude, that he will vndoubtedly haue care ouer them hereafter. Haue wee then at any time had experience of Gods mercy towards vs? Let vs learne to truſt in him for euer: and ſeeing it hath pleaſed him to ſhew himſelfe ſo bountifull and readie to doe vs good, let vs boldly and conſtantly ſettle our hearts in this truth; to wit, that hee will neuer faile vs.

All the faithfull haue done thus; and this way haue they confirmed themſelues in the faith: for ſee how *Daniel* ſpeakes, *Paſal.* 138. 8. Thou Lord wilt not forſake the worke of thine owne hands. And *Saint Paul* ſaith; He which hath begun a good worke in you, will perfect the ſame: *Phil.* 1. 6. Likewiſe the Patriarke *Jacob* ſaith; Lord, I am leſſe then all thy mercies and truth which thou haſt ſhewed thy ſeruant: but *thou ſaiſt*; I will doe thee good, &c. *Gen.* 32. 10, 11, 12. For God is not like to men; that is, to be wearie in well doing, or to be drawn dry by too much giuing; but the more good he hath done vs, ſo much the ſtronger ought our hope to be, and to receiue daily increaſes.

Verſ. 13. *O Lord our God, other Lords beſides thee haue ruled vs: but wee will remember thee onelie and thy name.*

THIS verſe containes a complaint which the faithfull make, becauſe they were oppreſſed vnder the tyranny of the wicked. Thus this ſong is compoſed to comfort the hearts of the faithfull, who in regard they were to vndergoe an hard condition of baniſhment, and to bee expelled out of that good land which was vnto them a ſigne of eternall happineſſe: as alſo being deprived of the ſacrifices of the holy aſſemblies; and ſo in a manner, of all conſolation and comfort: being furthermore ſhut vp vnder the bondage of the Babylonians, in a ſtrange Country, baniſhed from their Country, and overwhelmed with ſhame and moſt grievous afflictions; they might yet notwithstanding by this ſong, powre out their ſighes vnto God, and ſo find ſolace in him.

He ſpeakes therefore in the name and perſon of all the faithfull, who in appearance ſeemed to be reiecte of God, but therewithall profeſſing, that they were his people, and ſo conſequently, did put their confidence in him. But had they not great cauſe to mourne thus, when they were in bondage vnder the tyrannie of other rulers beſides the Lord himſelfe, who once had gathered them in vnder the wings of his protection? Hence therefore it follows, that if they had not been eſtranged from him, they had neuer fallen into ſo wretched a condition, as to be expoſed to the mercileſſe tyrannie of their enemies. But it ſhould ſeeme by this, that the gouernement of Princes is contrarie to that

Benefits receiued of God in times paſt, ought to encourage vs to hope for the like in time to come

He that hath begunne a good worke in vs, will perfect it vnto the end.
Phil. 1. 6.

Obiect.

Anf.

which God himselfe exerciseth; notwithstanding that they rule in his name: but the Prophet speaks not of these heere who beare rule for our good, but of such as are Idolaters, and enemies of the true doctrine. *David* himselfe was a King, hauing a diuers government from that which God exerciseth, yet so, that he was Gods minister notwithstanding for the common good and sauaiation of all the people that were committed to his charge; and likewise maintained the true Religion, which these tyrants desired whollie to ouerthrow. The like also did iustlie befall the Iewes, who had well deserued to be subdued vnder the crueltie of Infidels, seeing they refused to obey God who vied the so louingly.

But it is not amisse to note the close opposition which is heere put betweene Gods, and the faithfull Kings who gouerned the people vnder his name and authoritie; and those tyrants who at the last oppressed them vnder vniust laws. This will the better appeere by a like place out of *Ezechiel*, I haue (saith he) giuen them good lawes by the which they might liue: but because they haue not obserued my iudgements, and haue cast my statutes behind their backs; prophaning mine ordinances, and setting their eies towards the Idols of their fathers: therefore I also gaue the statutes which were not good, and iudgements in which they should not liue, *Ezech.* 20. 24. Now in regard they might haue professed and beene happie by Gods blessing in times past if they had yeilded their obedience to his word: therefore *Ezechiel* threatens them, that Tyrants shall rule ouer them, and in spite of their teeth shall cause them to submit themselues to their cruell edicts and lawes: yea and that without bringing any profit or reward at all vnto them.

Isaiah in this place bewales the like miserie: Oh (saith he) whilst the Lord reigned ouer vs we had much adoe to content our selues with our estate: but now we are constrained to beare a wofull seruitude; and therein are iustlie punished for our wickednes. The faithfull also which liue vnder the Papacie; or such as are forced to yeeld in any sort to wicked lawes and constitutions full of superstition, may well take vp the like complaint: for they are vnder such an authoritie as is against God: they are oppressed vnder more then a barbarous seruitude, which binds not the bodie only, but leads them to the slaying of their soules.

But we will remember thee only.] It seemes this particle should be opposed to the former thus, Albeit these prophane Lords would turne and withdraw vs from vnder thy gouernment, yet will we hold our selues fast vnto it, because we assuredly know our selues to belong to thee. But there may be gathered from hence a more ample doctrine, to wit, that although carnall reason is readie to say that such as are made a pray to their enemies, and cruellie vexed vnder their tyrannie, are forsaken of God: yet the Iewes cease not therefore still to reioyce in him; notwithstanding they saw him nothing neere vnto them: for the only remembrance of his name

sustained them; and did sweetly feede and nourish their hope. Thus there is an opposition of great weight betweene the remembrance of Gods name, and the present feeling of his fauor: for it is a rare and singular grace of God constantlie to cleaue vnto him, when he seemes to be absent and farre off from vs.

Others translate, In thee, and in thy name: but here is no such coniunction. To let that passe therefore, this place affords vnto vs such consolation as is exceeding necessarie for our times, wherein the peruerse vnthankfulness of men by casting off the sweet yoke of God, haue drawne vpon themselves a grievous and cruell flauerie: neither are we to wonder if we see this tyrannie already exercised euen in many places where the name of God is called vpon. The faithfull, I say, must not therefore be discouraged; only let them rest their hopes vpon this consolation, to wit, God will neuer vtterlie forsake those whose whole ioy and delight consists in the remembrance of his name. Let them: not feare then, I say, at any hand to professe this their confidence before all men. What confidence? Truly that they had rather die ten times then once to recoile back from God, and so to darken his glorie. For whosoever he be that through feare giues place to men, let him know for a truth that he hath not as yet rightlie tasted how gracious the Lord is. Whilst we enioy the free vie of Gods word then, let vs diligentlie exercise our selues in it, that so we may arme our selues therewith against the time of need, to the end the world may know that we haue not studied it as in a drcame.

Verf. 14. *The dead shall not liue, *neither shall the dead arise, *because thou hast visited and scattered them, and destroyed all their memorie.

The Prophet comes againe to speake of the wofull end of the wicked, whose prosperous estate often disquiets and dismaies vs, as we may see in the 37. Psal. and in the 73. 17. That our eies then may not be dazeled in the beholding of present things, the Prophet threatens that their end shall be most wofull. Others expound this place of the faithfull, who seeme so to die in the eyes of the world, as if they should neuer rise againe: but it is very cleare that he here speakes of the wicked and reprobates, which will euidentlie appeere by the contrarie to this, which is added in the 19. verse. For we haue in this place an opposition betweene the resurrection of the good, and the bad, whose estates would be little differing one from another, vnlesse it should appeere that the one sort were iudged to eternal death, and the other to a blessed and an everlasting life. Nay the wicked are not simple condemned to eternal perdition, but all the iudgements of God which befall them in this life, are as it were the beginnings and scales vnto them of their endless torment, for they can not be relieued by any consolation at all. Why so?

A singular grace of God it is to cleaue fast vnto him whē he seems to forsake vs.

A Consolation offering our times.

Better to die often then once to revolt.

They that sin against conscience for feare of men, neuer yet tasted in truth how gracious the Lord is.

It is iust with God to make vs serue cruel Lords, when we will not yeeld willing obedience to his lawes.

The flauerie of such as are vnder the tyrannie of the Romane Antichrist.

Every iudgement that lights vpon a reprobate in this life, is a scale vnto him of his endless torment in the life to come.

fo? Because they inwardly ſeele that God is their enemy.

*Pſal. 88. 10.
Prou. 2. 18.
& 9. 18. &
21. 16.*

Whereas we haue translated *ſlaine*; others read it *Giants*; but ſeeing the word *Rephaim*, in many places of the Scriptures is taken for the ſlaine, it will agree beſt if wee take it ſo here; otherwiſe the oppoſition would not be fitting.

That which followes; *For this cauſe haſt thou viſited them*; is put here by way of expoſition: for he ſhewes why the reprobates periſh without hope of any reſtauration; to wit, becauſe God hath determined to caſt them away. Now what can they expect from Gods wrath which is inflamed againſt them, but death and perdition?

Verſ. 15. Thou haſt increaſed the nation, O Lord; thou haſt increaſed the nation: thou art made glorious: thou haſt enlarged all the coaſtes of the earth.

THis verſe is diuerſly expounded: for ſome think the Prophet ſhewes how the faithfull are not preſſed with one affliction alone, but are plunged ouer head and eares as it were in extreme miſeries, and yet can ſee no iſſue out of them. Others expound it more ſimply thus; O Lord, thou haſt enriched thy people with many benefits: and ſo they think that the Prophet mentions thoſe bliſſings which God beſtowed vpon his people diuers waies: as if he ſhould ſay; Thy people, Lord, haue felt by experience, how liberall thou art by the infinite benefits which thou haſt beſtowed vpon them. But when I conſider that which by and by followes, where hee ſaith, *thou haſt enlarged*; that is to ſay, thou haſt cauſed thy kingdome to ſpread, which was once ſhut vp within verie narrow bounds; I had rather ioyned theſe two things together; for ſo the latter member expounds the former; and that alſo which followes, to wit, *that God ſhall be glorified*, agrees very well. For wee know that Gods glorie ſhines in nothing more, then in the aduancement and enlargement of his Church.

Gods glory ſhines in nothing more, then in the enlargement of his Church.

It is as much then as if hee had ſaid; Lord, thou haſt in times paſt but a little handfull of people, but now thou haſt multiplied and increaſed them. For the Gentiles were adopted and ioyned to the Iewes, on condition that they both ſhould make but one people. And thus the Lord added an infinite number to them; for the children of *Abraham* were gathered out of all nations. We muſt therefore ſupply in this place an addition of a greater number, and not of benefits; in this ſenſe, Thou diſt not content thy ſelfe Lord, with that ſmall number which once thou diſt ioy: and therefore thou gatheredſt vnto thy ſelfe a people without number out of all the quarters of the world.

Now this belongs to Chriffs Kingdome, which was euey where eſtabliſhed by the preaching of the Goſpell: and the Prophet now extols and notes out Gods mercy touching this increaſing and multiplication by

the word enlarged. I grant this phraſe ſtraight not much from our common manner of ſpeech, when wee vſe to ſpeake of the enlarging of a dominion, or of an inheritance: yet it is not the Prophets meaning to ſay, that the land ſhall become greater; but that it had larger bounds, and a more fixe habitauon by meanes of the mutual ſocietie of the inhabitants after the pure worſhip of God was publiſhed euey where: for the diſcords which were betwene the Iewes & Gentiles ſtraightened their dwellings, and made them leſſe free then otherwiſe they would haue been. Wee haue here then a promiſe touching the vocation of the Gentiles; which ought greatly to haue comforted the faithfull in their exile, and in that miſerable ſcattering and baniſhment from the Church: for how ſoever they ſaw themſelues wonderfully diminiſhed and weakened, yet they might without all peradventure, aſſure themſelues that they ſhould not onely increaſe to an infinite number; but that ſtrange nations alſo, and thoſe that were farre remote, ſhould be added vnto them.

A promiſe in this verſe, touching the vocation of the Gentiles.

Verſ. 16. Lord, in trouble they haue viſited thee: they poured out a prayer when thy chaſtizing was vpon them.

THIS may bee well expounded of thoſe hypocrits who neuer ſeeke vnto God, unleſſe they be conſtrained thereunto by miſeries and calamities. But ſeeing the Lord alſo inſtructs the faithfull by his rods and chaſtiſements, as the Prophet hath heretofore ſhewed: therefore I had rather referre theſe things ſimply vnto them. Firſt, to the end they may know that God is juſt in his iudgements. Secondly, that they might thereby learne to feare the Lord, and euey day to grow vp in it more and more. Thirdly, that they might feele that the bitterneſſe of the medicine is taken away by the fruite which they receiue from it.

Verſ. 8. 9. Three ends of afflictions.

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2
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Thus *Iſaiab* then ſpeakes here in the perſon of the Church; that ſo, when ſoever the faithfull ſhould read this ſentence, they might acknowledge that they were neuer vnto God in their afflictions, then when they abounded in all things which their hearts could wiſh; for then commonly we wax proud and forgetfull: ſuch is the ſtowardneſſe of our nature. Is it not needfull then that we ſhould be tamed & brought vnder by force of armes? This meditation is very profitable to correct the bitterneſſe of our troubles: for when we know what benefit redounds to vs by them, it makes vs leſſe to abhor them.

Iſaiab ſpeakes here in the perſon of the Church.

We are neuer God in afflictions, then when we inioy all that our hearts can wiſh.

The word *Lachab*, (which wee haue translated Prayer) ſignifies, To murmure. We are not to take this ſentence then for a well ſtamed praier; but for ſuch a one, as teſtiſieth that the heart is pent vp in great dolours, as thoſe who feele ſuch anguiſh, that they can ſcarcely open their teeth to vtter their perplexed thoughts. He therefore ſpeakes of ſuch a praier as is pure and far from all counterfeiting: for when Gods ſeruants are vnder

heauie afflictions, they studie how to breathe out their sighes, as witnesses of their extreme griefes. In time of prosperitie, men can speake with open mouth; but in aduersitie, they are smitten downe, they dare not open their lips: shewing the conceptions of their hearts, rather with inward grones, then with words. Thence proceede those sighes which cannot be expressed, whereof *S. Paul* speakes, *Rom. 8. 26.* The Prophet then pronounceth this of the faithfull, to whom indeed this doctrine ought to be restrained: for albeit inward garboiles doe now and then force out groanes euen from the very reprobates; yet they are hardened more and more, and become so much the more fierce and obstinate.

Verf. 17. Like as a Woman With child, that draweth neere to the trauaile, is in sorrow, and crieth in her paines, so haue wee been in thy sight, O Lord.

18. Wee haue conceived, Wee haue borne in paine, as though wee should haue brought forth winde: there was no helpe in the earth; neither did the inhabitants of the world fall.

Two things are to be noted here principally. First, he compares the faithfull to *women in trauaile*; wherein their paines are vn-speakable, as it is well enough knowne. The afflictions of the faithfull therefore, he saith, causeth them to cast forth verie bitter and loud cries. Whence we gather, that the Prophet speakes not here onely of that sorrow which procedes from the suffering of outward griefes and discommodities; but rather respects those horrible vexations which sharpe wound, and with incredible vehemencie assailes the hearts and spirits of the godlie, when they feele that God is angrie with them, their consciences also checking them. No bodily paine therefore may be compared with the griefe of the Spirit, which is most liuely expressed by the particule *before thee*.

In the second place he goes further, and exceeds the meane which is in his similitude: for where paines haue *no end*, the condition of the faithfull is far worse then is the condition of *women in trauaile*. For being once deliuered from their sorrowes and griefes, they reioice in seeing the fruite which they haue brought forth; yea they forget all the paines which they indured: but hee saith here, that *the faithfull are in cotinual trauaile*. Why so? Because they still are assaulted with new pang and trauailes; and whē they thinke the birth is neere, then they bring forth nothing but sorrowes and anguish, which is expressed by the word *wind*: to wit, they saw no appearance of any deliuerance or ease of their sorrowes. For so he forthwith expounds himselfe when hee saith, *that there was no helpe for them in the earth*. That is to say, we see no succour at all.

He adds, that *the inhabitants of the world did not fall*: for the Hebrew word *Naphal*, signifies to fall. Some asseme, it signifies to dwell. It we take it in the latter signification, the sense will be; That the Iewes shall not dwell; that is, they shall not returne into their Country; the inhabitants which inioyed it, should not perish. But if we follow the common translation, this must be referred to the wicked on this wise; *The inhabitants of the world oppresse vs, and yet they fall not*. Why so? Because they haue more then heart can with. For when the wicked flourish, as *Salomon* saith, then Gods children must of necessitie sigh, and be like vnto women in trauaile with child.

Yet let vs not refuse euen this hard condition, if wee would haue any place in Gods Church. It is most certaine that the common lot of all men is to beare sundry and infinite calamities; and thence came the old prouerb; It were best of all neuer to haue been borne; or being borne, to die quickly. But we see that the faithfull are tited with extreme miseries, and exercised therewith about all others. For God meanes to try their faith, to the end they may serue him, hauing renouced their lusts, and the world also. Seeing the Lord then hath such a speciall care of them, he will chastise them; and in the meane while, will suffer the wicked to run riot into all disorder.

Hence also wee are admonished, that wee must not onely suffer one or two calamities, and so an end, lest we should think our selues discharged after wee haue indured some few assaults: for we must alwaies be prepared to meeete with new trials. When the Lord takes vp his children, he lets them not down forthwith. For we must be content euen then to *bring forth the wind*, whē we thinke *the* hour of deliuerance is come: our sorrowes shall still increase, and our throwes shall ouertake one another at euery turne. Wee must hold out with patience then in this combate, as long as God shall be pleased to exercise vs vnderneath it.

We will therefore follow the vsuall exposition, *They fell not*: for as the Lord now and then cheeres vp the hearts of his children, in manifesting vnto them the light of his countenance in their saluation, and in shewing vengeance vpon the wicked: so he also giues them with all occasion of mourning, by causing them to see their aduersaries euery way advanced into high place of rule and authority ouer them. And if the Lord hath so exercised his Church in former times, why should we thinke much if hee take the same course with vs now?

By the *Inhabitants of the world*, he meanes the prophane and vnbeleeuers: for he opposeth the rest of the world to the countrie of Iudea, which by way of excellencie he called the *land*, or the earth, *verse 15.* making mention of the *Inhabitants* thereof apart.

Verf. 19. Thy dead men shall liue: euen with my body shall they rise. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for

Why God corrects his children, and lets the wicked in the meane while run riot.

Sight of Gods anger the chiefe cause of griefe. See *Prou. 18. 14.*

Iohn 16. 21.

*Or, my body.

* Or, of the meadow. *thy dew is as the dew* of herbes, and the earth ſhall caſt out the dead.*

Iſaiah ſtill continues to ſpeake of this Conſolation, and turnes his ſpeech vnto God: and thus he ſhewes that our beſt courſe is to bend all our ſenſes towards him, as oft as we are to reſiſt temptations. For wee ſhall find nothing more hurtfull vnto vs then to vter words at random, pleaſing our ſelues in them: for what doe we elſe but roule our ſelues hither and thither, and at the laſt plunge our ſelues into many errors? We can chufe no way therefore that is more faſe then to draw neere vnto God, who only is able to quiet our diſtreſſed conſciences: which if we doe not, we muſt of neceſſitie meeete with many encumbrances, which will ſhake our faith. Will you haue the ſumme of this verſe then? If God be the protector of his ſeruants, notwithstanding they be as good as dead, ſhall they not *live* euen in death it ſelfe, or rather ſhall they not haue power to *riſe againe* although they be altogether dead? Yes ſurely.

But it may here be demanded of what time the Prophet ſpeakes in this place, for many expound it of the laſt reſurrection. The Iewes referre it vnto Meſſiah and his kingdom: but they deceiue themſelues, becauſe they imagin that this was fulfilled at his firſt coming: our writers that are Chriſtians haue alſo miſſed the marke, who haue reſtrained it to the laſt Iudgement. For the Prophet comprehends the whole kingdom of Chriſt, euen from the beginning thereof vnto the latter end. Why ſo? Becauſe the hope of the bleſſed life alwaies overcomes the world, as we ſhall ſee anon. Now to the end we may the better vnderſtand the Prophets meaning, we muſt firſt know, that life is not promiſed generallie vnto all, but only to ſuch as die in the Lord: now he ſpeakes of the faithfull which ſo die, whom the Lord preſerues vnder his ſafeguard. We know that God is the God of the liuing, and not of the dead, Math.

22. 32. Are we the Lords? Doubtleſſe *we ſhall*

live. But we muſt in the meane while become as thoſe that *are dead*, for our life is hidden, and as yet we can not ſee that which we hope for. Thus then he only ſpeakes of the dead; that is to ſay, of the condition of the faithfull which ſit now in the ſhadow of death, in regard of the many afflictions wherewith they are dayly viſited: whence we ſee that this can not be reſtrained to the laſt reſurrection. For we contrariwiſe aſſirme that the reprobates are dead, euen whileſt they live. Why? Becauſe they neuer taſted of Gods fatherlie loue in Chriſt, wherein the true life conſiſts, and therefore they periſh in their brutiſh ſortithnes. But becauſe the faithfull runne vnto God, therefore they obtaine life in the miſſed of their greateſt dangers, yea, euen in death it ſelfe: but in regard they ſet this laſt reſurrection before them as the end of their hope; therefore it can not be ſaid properlie that they live, til that day be come; that being then freed from all ſorrowes and corruption, they may receiue a ſure life that neuer decays. And therefore S. Paul very

ſublie ſhewes that it were to turne the order of things vpside downe, if that the faithfull ſhould liue till ſuch time as Chriſt who is the fountaine of life appeeres. Therefore it is we ſaid before that *Iſaiah* here comprehends the whole kingdom of Chriſt: for albeit we begin to teele the fruits of this conſolation when we enter into the Church, yet we whollie enjoy not the full meaſure thereof, till the day of the reſurrection be come, wherein all things ſhall be perfectlie reſtored, in which reſpect it is alſo called the day of reſtauration, Act. 3. 21. Here then we ſee the only remedie to mitigate the bitterneſſe of all our grieſes, to wit, euen to turne our eies to the beholding of this day, in which God ſhall ſeparate the good from the bad.

As death then naturallie deuoures and deſtroyes all the race of *Adam*, ſo the miſeries to which they are ſubiect in this world are forerunners of the ſame death. Their life therefore is but a kind of death; but in regard that by the redemption wrought by Chriſt the curſe of God is taken away both in theſe beginnings of death, as alſo in death it ſelfe: therefore it is rightlie ſaid, That all thoſe that are grafted into Chriſtes bodie *live*, whileſt they die, becauſe all their euils are turned vnto their good, Rom. 8. 28. Whence it followes that they alwaies come forth as thoſe that are more then conquerors, euen out of the very iſues of death; and that till they be fullie and whollie knit vnto their head. Would wee then be eſteemed in the number of thoſe that are *dead* in Chriſt, of whoſe life he is the ſure gardian? We muſt then liſt vp the eies of our faith about the whole courſe of nature.

But this is yet better expreſſed by the word *body*, or carcaſe, as if he ſhould ſay, this old rottenneſſe which it ſeemes harh conſumed the bodies of the faithfull, ſhall hinder the Lord nothing at all to make them riſe vp in full beautie againe. As touching the proprietic of the Hebrue phraſe, ſome tranſlate it, With my bodie: others, Which are my bodie. Others againe, ſupplie a particle of ſimilitude, As my bodie: but in regard the ſenſe agrees well enough without adding or deminiſhing, lee vs content our ſelues with that which the words do plainely ſound of themſelues, and ſo had I rather take it by way of application.

At the leaſt this word is added of ſet purpoſe, ſo as the Prophet thereby ioines himſelfe to the whole bodie of the Church: and thus he placeth himſelfe in the number of thoſe which being dead in the Lord, do notwithstanding wait for a reſurrection apart. And in that he mentions himſelfe in particular, it is that he might giue the more authoritie vnto his doctrine. For he thereby ſhewes that he ſpake from the heart, vtering and teſtifying by this his confeſſion the fruit of his faith, according to that ſentence, I beleueed, therefore did I ſpeake, Pſal. 116. 10. 2. Cor. 4. 13. otherwiſe the wicked and prophane may well diſcourſe in words of Gods mercie, and of life eternall, and yet in the meane while haue no feeling at all of theſe things

Col. 3. 3. 4.

The day of reſurrection, the day of our retiring.

Mat. 25. 32.

All miſeries are forerunners of death.

Chriſt hath by his death taken away the curſe both of theſe beginnings of death, as alſo of death it ſelfe.

Our beſt courſe in affliction is, to gather in all our ſenſes, and fallen our minds vpon God.

God only able to giue our reſtleſſe ſpirits reſt and reliefe.

Queſt.

Aſſ.

1

2

Col. 3. 3.

Rom. 8. 23.

24.

The reprobates are dead whileſt they live.

A commendation of Iſaiahs faith in God, and liue to the Church.

in their heart. As did that false Prophet *Balaam*, who knew well enough that that which he spake was true; and yet for all that received no profit by his prophecies himselfe: Num. 23. 19. and 24. 5.

But our Prophet speaks in this place far otherwise; for he professeth; that he is of their number who belonged to a better life: thus shewing that he willingly vnderwent the sorrows and calamities which God laid upon him for the furtherance of his mortification; as one indeed that chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasures of sinne for a season. Now thus he makes it cleere to all the world, that he speaks nothere of things which he knew not, or of that which he felt not; but of those things which he learned by experience. Yea, hee shewes hereby, that his confidence was so great, that he willingly ranged himselfe among a company of *dead bodies*, which yet should (as he beleued) be restored to life, chusing rather to be accounted a *rotten carcase*, knowing himselfe to be a member of the Church, then to be in his full strength out of the same. And this doubtlesse caused his doctrine to be so much the more effectuell: for he opposeth it to the former sentence, verse 14. in which hee said, that the wicked should not liue; because all hope of (a ioyfull resurrection) was taken away from them.

Obiect.

Ans.

If any object that the resurrection shall be common as well to good as to bad; it is easilie answered: for *Isaiab* speaks not here onely of the resurrection; but of that felicitie which the faithfull shall enjoy. I grant the wicked shall rise, but it is to eternall perdition: their resurrection therefore shall be to their ruine and death; whereas it shall bring happiness and glory to the iust.

He calles the inhabitants of the dust, the faithfull, who are humbled vnder crosses and afflictions, who in life haue death continually before their eyes. Yet I deny not but they also enjoy the benefits of God euen in this life: but by this similitude the Prophet sets out their miserable condition, as those that beare in their bodies the dying of the Lord Iesus: 2. Cor. 4. 10. For it is needfull that their outward man should be beaten downe and mortified, till at the last it be brought to nothing, that so the inward man may be renewed daily: 2. Cor. 4. 16. If we meane then to haue any part or portion in this consolation, let vs willingly content our selues to lie downe in the dust.

For this cause hee commands the dead to arise and sing; which may seeme to be very vsfitting for men in their case, there being nothing among them but a sorrowfull silence. In this therefore the Prophet shewes an apparent difference betweene the elect of God, who arise by an heavenly power, albeit they be as good as rotten in their graues, and lie buried in the dust; and the reprobates: for they being separated from God and Christ, the fountaine of life, wither away, whilest they liue, that so death may vtterly deuoure them.

Now in that he promiseth to giue them the

deaw of the meddow; hee thereby intriceth his doctrine with a verie elegant and fit similitude: for we all know that the flowers do fade and die in winter, but especially in meddowes, for they seeme to be altogether dead, neither can a man be perswaded to the contrary, that shall onely behold the vpper face of the earth; but the rootes notwithstanding lie hid vnderneath, which after they haue sucked in the deaw of the spring time, doe againe gather strength and life: so as the flowers which before were withered away and dried, doe then become fresh and green.

Thus the people shall gather new force after they shall be reuiued and watered with this fruitfull deaw of Gods grace, although for a time it seemed they were wholly withered and gone. Sure these similitudes which are drawne from such things as are familiarly knowne amongst vs, haue great force in them to worke vpon our affections. For if flowers or grasse, which are wet with the deaw that falls vpon them, doe sprout forth, and wax greene; how much more shall we be reuiued if we be watered with the quickening deawes of Gods grace? Why should not our bodies receiue new liuelinesse, albeit they were rotten before? Hath not God as much care ouer vs, as he hath ouer the herbs? Is not the holy Spirit of greater force then the deaw? Saint Paul I remember vseth the like similitude, 1. Cor. 15. 38. where hee speaks of the resurrection: but in regard he applies his metaphor to another purpose, I thinke it not amisse to let it passe for this time; because I would not willingly confound that place with this. Let it suffice vs that we haue attained the true meaning of the Prophet.

What force
of familiar
similitudes
haue to worke
vpon our
affections.

Note.

In the end of the verse where I haue translated, *The earth shall cast forth her dead*: some translate it in the second person; Thou shalt bring downe the land of Giants: or, Thou wilt bring downe the Giants in the earth. I reiect not this interpretation, because the words may well beare this signification: but as I take it, the first seemes to agree best to the text, although the matter be not much materiall, in regard of the substance. For this must be referred to the consolation which we mentioned a litle before.

Verf. 20. *Come my people; enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doores after thee: hide thy selfe for a very litle while, vntill the indignation passe ouer.*

IN this verse hee exhorts the children of God vnto patience, that they might continue to beare their miseries and afflictions quietly, as also to remaine inuincible against all the sharpe temptations, which as it seemed should ouerwhelme them. There was great need of this exhortation therefore: for the pitifull case into which the poore people were soone after brought, seemed in all outward appearance to be farre off from the promise which was formerly made vnto them. The Prophet then like a tender hear-

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An apparent
difference
betweene the
elect and the
reprobate.

ted nurse, takes this troubled people by the hand as it were, who otherwise knew not what shift to make, and carries them aside into a *ſecret place* to lodge them in ſafety, till theſe ſtirres and hurly burlies were appeaſed. Now whereas he calles them *my people*, he ſpeakes in the perſon of God, and not in his owne.

By *chambers*, he meanes a quiet and peaceable ſtate of conſcience: to wit, when with boldneſſe of courage and confidence, we arme our ſelves with patience, in waiting for the coming of the Lord: as *Abacuc*, who having foretold what calamitie ſhould befall the Iewes, proceſſeth that hee ſtands all day vpon his watch-tower: that is to ſay, in a *place of ſafety*, to expect the euent in patience and ſilence. *Iſaiah* commands them to doe the like here: as if he ſhould ſay; You that are the ſeruants of the Lord, get you into your *chambers*, or into ſome other ſequeſtered place, when you feele your ſelves aſſaulted with ſuch temptations as you are not able to reſiſt.

But for as much as it is not ſufficient to be once well fortified againſt the violence of garboiles and ſtirres, he therefore alſo commands them to *ſhut the doore after them*; which is to be referred to conſtance and perſeuerance: as if he ſhould ſay; Looke to it that the diuell finde not the leaſt creuiſe open to aſſaile you: for hee can eaſily enter into our hearts, if we giue him but the leaſt aduantage that is.

Whereas he bids them to *hide themſelues*; his meaning is, that the faithfull ſhould inioy a ſecure freedom, if ſo be they were couragious in waiting for the coming of the Lord: for albeit we ought to fight boldly and valiantly, yet ſeeing the power of God is often manifeſted in our weakneſſe, wee cannot poſſibly take a better courſe, then in all humilitie to run and throwd our ſelves vnder his wings, that ſo hee may ſaue vs from all inordinate feares and terrors. Furthermore, in regard that wee are giuen to boiling paſſions naturally, and are euer and anon carried away with impatency, if we feele not Gods help at hand to ſuccour vs preſently: therefore hee ſaith, that theſe ſtormes and tempeſts ſhall *blow over*, and continue but a while. We muſt make account to fight euery day againſt one temptation or other; neither muſt wee thinke to come to the end thereof as long as we liue: and this is it that makes our miſeries ſeeme ſo wonderfull long and tedious vnto vs. But if we compare them with that eternitie wherein we ſhall inioy happineſſe without end; the meditation thereof will cauſe them to ſeeme but as a moment. As *Saint Paul* in a certaine place ſhewes, that the light afflictions which for a ſhort ſpace wee ſuffer in this world, are no way to be compared vnto that eternal weight of glory which ſhall be reuealed in the world to come: 2. Cor. 4.7.

When the Prophet addes, *untill the indignation be paſt*. he meant thereby to remoue all difficulties out of the minds of the faithfull: and it is no leſſe then if hee had promiſed them deliuerance out of hand. Wee thinke

this word *indignation*, ſimply conſidered in it ſelfe, ſignifies that affliction which proceeds from the wrath of God. Others referre it vnto the enemies of the Church; which ſenſe though I reiect not, yet the firſt likes me better. For wee ſee how careful the Prophets are to inſinuate into our minds, that no euill befall vs, but by the hand of God, and that he neuer ſends the ſame without cauſe, but is firſt prouoked thereunto by our finnes and offences. Hence we learne that God will not be angry with his Church for euer, but will cauſe his wrath to ceaſe at the laſt, euen as we ſee it to fall out in ſtormes and tempeſts: and this is the cauſe why the faithfull beare their croſſes with the greater courage. For thus the Church ſaith, Mich. 7.9. I will beare the wrath of the Lord, becauſe I haue ſinned againſt him, &c. Why ſo? She knew well that God meant her good in chaſtiſing of her. Now our Prophet brings in the Lord ſpeaking, (as I touched before) to the end his exhortation might haue the better authority.

Verſ. 21. For behold the Lord cometh out of his place to viſit the iniquitie of the inhabitants of the earth againſt him: and the earth ſhall diſcouer her blood, and ſhall not hide her ſtaine.

NO doubt but it is an heauie temptation to the faithfull, when they ſee the wicked exerciſe their rage againſt them, and in the meane while, that God ſhould hold his peace: for in ſo doing, they imagine he hath forſaken them. The Prophet then labours to preuent this temptation, and ſhewes, that howſoeuer the Lord hath been ſilent for a while, yet hee will in the end *ſhew himſelfe* in due ſeaſon, to giue reliefe to his ſeruants, and to puniſh the wrongs that haue been done him. Thus by the word of *comming forth*, he deſcribes the Lord reaching out his hand as it were to his children: as if the ſame had been hidden before, in regard they felt not his helpe. For that is the cauſe why he ſaith, the Lord *comes forth* into ſight; namely, to ſuccor his Church, and to execute his iudgements vpon her enemies: for in former time it ſeemed he had kept himſelfe cloſe and altogether ſhut vp in heauen. We may alſo verie well affirme, that *Iſaiah* alludes to the ſanctuary; which maner of ſpeech is often met withall in the bookes of the Prophets. As if he ſhould ſay; Howſoeuer the prophane nations deſpiſe the Arke of the couenant, being ſeated in a very meane place; yet *from thence* ſhall the faithfull feele by good experience, how readie the power and fauour of God is preſt to ſuccour them, and that hee is not called vpon in this holy place in vaine. In the meane while, wee muſt hold this as a ſure principle; that albeit the wicked ſcorne the Temple, as if it were no better then ſome Country barne, or ſome ſuch like thing; yet euen *from thence* will the Lord *come forth*, when

No euill befall vs but by the hand of God.

God will neuer alwayes reſtaine his anger towards his Church, but will cauſe his wrath to ceaſe.

Mich. 7.18. Zac. 1.12, 13

2. Cor. 12.9.

Wee muſt make our accounts to meeete with new conſiſts euery day.

Rom. 8.8.

Mich. 1.3. Abac. 3.13. Zach. 14.3.

he sees the time fit to defend and to auenge his peoples quarell vpon all the inhabitants of the world.

And this exposition sutes better then if by the word *place*, we should expound that he should come forth of heauen; for *Isaiab* meant to expresse somewhat more. The Prophets whē they make any mention of heauen they therewithall present before vs the glorie and maiestie of God: but our Prophet in this place respects our capacitie, that is to say, when we feele that God who in times past seemed to be farre off, and hidden out of our sight, doth at the last appeere for our comfort. He also hath vsed a particule demonstratiue, and a participle of the present tence for the greater certentie of the matter; as also to the end the faithfull might not thinke much to bridle their passions by patience till his coming forth.

Hitherunto appertaines that which he ads touching the *visiting of iniquitie*: for it were contrarie to his nature who is the Iudge of all the world to suffer wicked men to giue ouer themselves to all wickednes without impunitie. There is in the verb, *to visit*, a similitude well enough knowne: for we thinke that God either sees not at all, or else is busied about some other matters when he withholdes or deserres the execution of his iudgements be it neuer so little a while.

These words also, *against him*, want not their weight: for it is often said that when the wicked lay their ambushes they spread a net or dig a pit for themselves. The sense then is, that all the annoyances & oppressions which the wicked bring vpon the Church, shall in

*Psal. 9. 15.
& 57. 6.*

time fall vpon their heads that haue been the contriuers thereof.

Lastly, there is also a very great vehemencie in the word, *shall disclose*: for now whilst the wicked shed and tread vnder foot innocent blood, the earth seemes as it were to suck and drinke it into her womb: in the meane while it seemes the death of the faithfull is quite and cleane forgotten, and the memorie thereof raced out of mens minds for euer; yea, and y God himselfe vtterlie neglects it. These are mens imaginations, but the Lord witnesseth the contrarie here. He calles the blood of the earth then, which the earth hath drunke in, as it is said *Gen. 4. 11*. The earth hath opened her mouth to receiue thy brothers blood, when the blood of *Abel* was shed. For the Lord in that place amplifies and aggravates the foulness of the fact when he saith, That the earth is defiled with y blood which was shed: and therefore he therein shewes, first, how pretious the death of his Saints is in his sight: secondly, what care he hath of the same; and lastly, that he will reuenge it. For the earth it selfe shall be armed to punish the cruelties which haue been exercised by tyrants and the enemies of the truth against the faithfull: so that there is not the least drop of blood which is shed that shall not be accounted for. Let vs therefore remember this consolation, and set it alwaies before our eyes when the wicked smite vs, laughing and sporting themselves whilst they vex vs with all manner of outrages. For God in the end will shew that *innocent blood* hath not cried in vaine, because he can neuer forget his Saints.

A Consolation which we ought to haue continually before our eyes.

THE XXVII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. In that day the Lord will visit Leuiathan that pearcing Serpent, and Leuiathan that crooked Serpent, with his fore and great and mightie sword: and will kill the Dragon that is in the sea.



HE Prophet speaks here of Gods iudgement in generall, and so comprehends the whole kingdom of Satan. For hauing spoken before of the vengeance of God against tyrants and vnbeleeuers which had shed innocent blood, he now passeth on further, and publisheth the edict it selfe. The word *Leuiathan* is diuerslie expounded, but generallie it signifies a serpent, or the whales and fishes of the sea, which are as mōsters in regard of their excessiue greatness. Now howsoeuer this description agrees to the king of Egypt, yet vnder this one kind he meant to comprehend all the enemies of the Church.

For mine owne part I make no question but by way of Allegorie he speaks here of Satan and his whole kingdome, describing it

vnder the figure of some monstrous beast, and therewithall also priuicly taxeth the *subtilties* wherewith he couers his deceitfull baits. And thus he meant to preuent many doubts wherewith (as with mightie billowes) we are at euery turne tossed to and fro, whilst God on the one side promiseth to assist vs, and yet Satan on the other side ceaseth not to make vs feele the force of his darts and craftie concuyances: for his cunning is exceeding great to worke mischief, and his wrath is wonderfull hot against the poore Saints of God.

But in the meane while the Prophet shewes that neither his *force* nor *fraude* shall be able to let the Lord from destroying both him and his kingdome. Furthermore, it is not to be doubted but as he here speaks of Satan himselfe, so likewise of all his imps and instruments by whom he governs his kingdome, and molests the Church of God. Let it be granted that this kingdome be furnished with infinite policies, and also with an inuincible power, yet shall the Lord casily bring them all ro nough.

Which that we may the better conceiue, the Prophet opposeth against them the *mightie and sharp sword of the Lord*, by which it will be no matter for him to slay his enemy how strong or subtile soeuer he be. We are

*Gen. 3. 1.
Satan.*

1
2

Satans imps.

The Church assailed on every side with mightie and subtle enemies.

to make account then that we shall euer have to deale against Satan, who like a roaring Lion seeks about whom he may deuoure: and the world on the other side being like a Sea in which we are floting vp and downe, wherein euery moment diuers monsters assaile vs, endeavouring to sink our ship, and to cast vs away: neither is there any force left vs, by which we may resist them, vnlesse the Lord be our helpe. And therefore by this description the Prophet meant to set before vs the dangerous estate in which we stand; seeing we haue (on euery side) so many strong and furious enemies, being also full of fraud. In regard whereof, wee should be put to our thifts, and vttely vndone, if God prevented them not by opposing his inuincible power against them for our defence. For this wretched Kingdome of Satan can neuer bee destroyed, but by the sword of the Lord.

Nothing but Gods sword is able to subdue Satans kingdome.

But wee are to obserue what he saith in the beginning of the verse; to wit, *In that day*. For thereby he meanes, that God permits Satan to vphold and continue his Kingdome for a time; but so, that it shall downe in the end; as Saint Paul saith, Rom 16, 20. The Lord will shortly tread downe Satan vnder your fete. And thus by this promise wee see, that the time of our warfare is not yet accomplished, but that we must fight valiantly till this enemy be wholly subdued: who yet will neuer cease to assaile vs as long as we liue, albeit he hath bin put to the worst an hundred times. Let vs arme our selues then to wage battell with him continually, and to beare off the violent blowes, wherewith hee will try whether our armour be of prooffe or no: but that we may not be discouraged, let vs alwaies cast the eye of our faith to *that day*, in which all his forces shall be dashed in peeces.

Our warfare is not yet accomplished.

The epithites wherewith he sets out this *Lemathan* in part, notes his cunning and subtle policies; also in part his open crueltie: and thus he lets vs see that his strength is vnable to be matched or ouercome. For the word *Beriach*, signifies a bolt or stake of yron: vnder which the Prophet by a figure meant to note out a piercing power, either in regard of the venomous biting, or the violence of Satan. The second is drawne from the verbe *Akal*, which signifies to ouerthrow, and is to be referred to his ouerthwart and crooked bowings and turnings.

Verf. 2. *In that day sing of the vineyard of* red wine.*

*Or, to the red vine.

Now he shewes that all this shall be done for the saluation of the Church. Why so? Because the Lord prouides for the safetie of all such as he hath once vouchsafed to receiue vnder his protection. That the Church then may inioy a sure estate, Satan with all his retinue shall be brought to nought. And hitherto tend all the administrations of Gods vengeance vpon his enemies; namely, to shew that hee hath care of his Church. Now albeit the Prophet expresth not the word Church in this place; yet it is eident

enough, that it is she to whose heart the Lord speaks on this gracious manner. Nay this figuratiue manner of speech hath greater emphassis in it, then if he had in plaine words called them the people of Israel: for in as much as the excellencie of a vine, consisteth chiefly in the placing and planting of it, and also depends vpon the continuall dressing of it: if the Church be Gods vine, we thence gather, that she cannot flourish, but by the continuall course of his daily fauour and blessing vpon her. By this *similitude*, hee also excellēt what singular loue and affection the Lord beares vnto her, as we haue more fully declared in the fifth Chapter.

This word Vine, hath great emphasis in this place.

Now he calles it a *red vine*: that is to say, very excellent. For red wine in the Scriptures, signifies excellencie, if wee consider other places thereof well. Now he saith, that *this song shall be sung in that day*, in regard that for a time the Church should bee miserably wasted; so as it should become like vnto a desert, or a place vntilled. But therewithall hee foretels that after this waste, she shall be restored, and filled with such plentie of excellent fruit, that she shall haue ample occasion to sing for ioy.

Verf. 3. *I the Lord doe keepe it: I* will water it euerie moment: lest a- nie assaile, I will keepe it night and day.*

*Or, I am the Lord that keeps it.

In this verse the Lord shewes what care he hath for this vine, and what diligence hee vseth in dressing and keeping of it. As if he should say; I omit no care nor paines that belongs to a good master of a familie, who proudly prouides all things fit for his household in due season. Now hee not onely shewes what hee will doe when the time of ioy and gladnesse shall come; but he also tels what benefits the Iewes had receiued from his hands before, that so they might be put in the better hope for the time to come. But in the mean while, we must supply a close opposition here, of the time which is betwene these two: for God seemed vterly to neglect his Church, and that in such wise, as it became like a desert. And hence it was that the vineyard of the Lord was so spoiled and wasted, to wit, because the Lord left it for a time, and gaue it vp as a pray into his enemies hands. Whence we gather, that our welfare will soone decay, if the Lord doe neuer so little withdraw himselfe from vs: as on the contrary, that all shall goe well with vs, as long as hee assists vs.

Our welfare soone decayeth, if God doe but a little withdraw his hand.

Now he mentions two points wherein the Lord will shew his diligence; to wit, hee will water his vine continually, and will also inclose and watch it, that it be not ouerrunne by theeues or wild beasts, but may be preserved from all discommodities. These two things are chiefly to be looked vnto for the good conseruation of a vine; to wit, that it be well husbanded, and well fenced. By watering of it, he comprehends whatsoeuer belongs to the dressing and manuring of it: wherewith

he

he promiseth to leaue no dutie vnperformed wherety the good thereof may be procured. But vnto this, vigilancie must needs be added: for what would it auaile to husband a vine with great labour, if afterward it should be left open for cheecues and beasts to enter in and spoile it at their pleasures? The Lord promiseth therefore that he will likewise *keepe vs*, that no hurt be done vnto it, but that the fruites may haue time to ripen; and may afterward be reaped in their season. Howsoeuer this poore vine be subiect then to many inconueniencies by reason of enemies and cruell beasts which will still be assailing of it with great furie, yet God promiseth that he will interpose himselfe for her defence, so as it shall be kept safe and sound from all dangers. Now seeing he hath appointed a certaine day in which we shall *sing this song*, let not our hearts quaile if for a time he withdraw his help from vs. Be it that he leaues vs to be spoiled and vexed for a little while, yet will he let vs see in the end that he hath not forgotten vs.

God will neuer cease to supplie his Church with necessarie benefits.

Verf. 2.

Verf. 4. *Anger is not in me. Who would set the briars and thornes against me in battell? I would goe thorow them, I would burne them together.*

THIS verse contains a most sweet consolation in it. For the Prophet therein shewes the incredible loue which God beares to his people; albeit they be of a peruerse and wicked spirit. God takes vpon him heere then (as we shall see anon) the person of a Iouing father greatly offended, who is angrie with his sonne, yet so, that he must needs shew how much he is inclined to pitie and compassion, because y^e ardent loue he beares to his sonne ouercomes all his displeasure. In a word, he shewes that God can not so hate his chosen, but that he therewithall will make them feele his fatherlie loue towards them, euen in the middell of his corrections wherewith he visits them. The Scripture is wont to set forth God vnto vs many waies: for sometime it sets him before vs as one whose wrath is kindled, and as one terrible to behold; againe, in other places, shewing nothing but mercie and loue. Now why is he set forth thus diuerslie? Surely because wee are not capable of his goodnes. For this cause he is faine to shew himselfe froward with such as are froward; and pure with the pure, as *Dauid* shewes, *Psal. 18. 26*. For he manifesteth himselfe in such wise vnto vs, as we giue him occasion. And if he shew himselfe seuerer at any time, we may thanke the hardnes of our owne hearts for it.

But the Prophet speaks not here of all indifferntlie, but of the Church only, to whom he will euer be a father, notwithstanding that he chastise and correct her for her sinnes and iniquities. His Church shall continue safe then, howsoeuer she be vnworthie of such a benefit. This sentence therefore must be restrained to the Church, that so there may be a relation alwaies had betweene God and

This verse must be restrained to the Church.

his elect: whom he can not but dearly loue, although his anger be seuerer against the reprobate. Thus we see the excellencie of this Consolation: for if we be sure that we are the called of God, we may boldly resolute that he can not be angrie with vs; and to speake properly, it is impossible. Why so? Because he loues vs with such a constant affection, as he can neuer lose it. I denie not but God at that time hated some euen among this people, and yet he calles them his beloved, because of his secret adoption. Now by how much the more God shewed himselfe good and gracious towards the people, by so much the more were they all left without excuse that had provoked his wrath against them by their rebellions; Neither need we doubt but he aggravates their fault by this circumstance, to wit, that he is enforced to change his wonted affection towards them in regard of their frowardnes. For hauing spoken of his mildnes, he suddenly cries out, *Who would set the briars and thornes against me in battell?* Or (as others translate) who will make me like the briar and the thorne? Now it were not amisse to reade it, *Who will set the briar against me, that I may fight as the thorne against it.* For there is no coniunction copulative betweene these two words. But I unwillingly content my selfe with the first exposition, to wit, that God willeth he might haue to do with thornes and briars, which he would quicklie consume with the fire of his indignation. But if any had rather say that the Prophet here taxeth the doubts which often troubles vs by reason of our owne infidelitie, when we feele the anger of God to be kindled against vs; as if he should say, You much deceiue your selues in that you compare me to a thorne and a briar; that is to say, in attributing a cruell or froward disposition of nature vnto me: if any (I say) shall thus interpret it, I hinder him not to follow the same: and yet I suppose it to be besides the Prophets meaning. Whereas others also thinke that God here puts vpon him the person of one that is angrie, as if he should say, I will no longer be so milde nor easie to be intreated as I haue been heretofore: this also seemes so constrained that it needs no further refutation. I grant, that as God is gracious and mercifull by nature, so nothing goes more against the same then roughnes and seueritie; as one that is constrained to borrow another nature (as it were) from others, when he would shew himselfe angrie. But if the text be read as I haue first interpreted it, I doubt not but it will be sufficient of it selfe to refute the rest, to wit, that God takes vp a heauie complaint that he is not to fight rather with thornes, then against his vine, which he is therefore constrained to spare, because it is his inheritance.

That which follows after, *I will goe by steps thorow them, and burne them* doth also confirme mine exposition: for burning belongs to thornes and briars; all which the Lord would burne euen as if he made war against them: and therefore he shewes, that he will carrie himselfe more moderately, because hee hath to doe with his vine. Hence we gather, that

God is not to be angrie with his chosen.

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if

If God re-
fraine his
anger to-
wards vs, it
is not for
our merits,
but for his
free election
like.

if the Lord be not angry with vs, wee are not to attribute it to our owne merits or deſerts, but to his owne free election. For in ſaying, *who would ſee him*, he apparently ſhewes, that he hath juſt cauſe to make war vpon vs, and vtterly to confine vs; were it not for the compaſſion he hath to his Church. And we ſhould alſo be like to *thornes* and vnbeleeuers, ynleſſe the Lord in his mercy, did vouchſafe to ſeparate vs from amongſt them, leſt wee ſhould periſh with them. If any would ioyne theſe two words, *in baſtill*, with theſe words, *who would ſee the ſenſe* alſo would not be amiſſe.

Verſ. 5. *Or Will he feele my ſtrength, that he may make peace with me, and be at one with me?*

*Or, let him
make peace
with me, let
him make
peace with
me.

The Hebrew particle is often diſjunctiue; and therefore this place is expounded as if it had been ſaid; Either let her feele my ſtrength, or let her make peace with me: that is to ſay, *if ſhe make not peace with me, then ſhall ſhe feele my ſtrength, to her great liſſe*. Others expound it a little otherwiſe; Who will feele my ſtrength? that is to ſay, *who will repreſſe us?* But I leaue this interpretation, becauſe it ſeemes too much conſtrained; contenting my ſelfe with that which is moſt receiued. The expoſitours thinke then that God threatens the Iewes, as one that aſſaies all meanes to bring them home into the right way: for God muſt worke vpon vs many waies, in reſpect wee are ſo accuſtomed to abuſe his patience and goodneſſe. And therefore he often teſtifies, that hee will bring vpon vs the puniſhment of our ingratitude; which it ſeemes *Iſaiah* doth in this place: as if he ſhould ſay; If this people will not accept of my kindeſſe, and repent, and ſo *make peace with mee*, I aſſure them they ſhall feele the waight of my hand, which hitherunto I haue withholden from them. There may another apt ſenſe be alſo gathered hence, and yet ſomewhat differing from this. As if the Lord ſhould exhort the people to acknowledge his power, by which they might be brought to ſecke peace with him: for whence proceeds that brutiſh confidence, that wee feare not the anger of God, but becauſe we reuerence not his power as we ought to doe?

Yet had I rather take it here by way of interrogation; which kind of reading we often times meeete with all; as thus: Will hee feele my force that hee may make peace with me? as if a father being in ſome perplexitie and care for the good of his ſonne, ſhould take vp a ſorrowfull complaint on this manner; Will not this vntoward boy indure that I ſhould doe him good? I am at my wits end, I know not how to deale with him; he will abide no rough handling: and yet he abuſeth my lenitie. What ſhall I doe? Surely I will turne him out of doores, if I ſee no amendment: and then I thinke hee will feele how great the power of a father is, whereby I haue hitherto maintained him. For ſeeing he cannot beare kind vſage, I will try what ſeueritie

will worke. Will hee not at length acknowledge what mine authoritie is ouer him, and ſecke to bee at one with me? Now wee ſhall the better vnderſtand this, if wee conſider that all our euils ariſe from the want of being touched with the feeling of Gods goodneſſe: for could it once come into our mindes how many benefices wee haue receiued from his hands, it would ſuffice to withdraw vs from all our bad courſes, and wee would forthwith ſecke to bee reconciled vnto him.

Our miſeries
ariſe from
the want
of feeling
of the Lords
goodneſſe.

We may behold here then, how careful our heavenly Father is for our ſaluation, as one that would make vs feele both his power and goodneſſe; that ſo perceiuing the worth of them both, we might partake in the fruits of both more and more. In a word, he would be as familiar with vs, as with his children, if our owne wilfull malice did not hinder him. Seeing then we wil not indure that he ſhould deale *graciouſly* with vs; muſt hee not needes manifeſt his power and greatneſſe, that we being humbled by the ſame, and touched to the quicke with his iudgements, we may with all meekeneſſe ſecke vnto him, and gladly ſue for pardon and fauour at his hands? now this is brought to paſſe when we conuert vnto him without ſinning: for it cannot be that we ſhould finde fauour in his ſight, as long as wee pleaſe and flatter our ſelues in our vices. On the other ſide, if wee make peace with him, then muſt wee make full account to bee at enmitie with Satan and ſinne.

Note how
carefull the
Lord is for
our welfare.

1

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Let vs make
our accounts
that if we will
make peace
with God,
we muſt be
at enmitie
with Satan
and ſinne.
Note Gods
willingneſſe
to be at
peace with
vs.

But the doubling of the words giues vs moſt cleerely to perceiue, how deſirous the Lord is to be at one with vs. for hee might haue ſaid in a word, that hee is willing to make peace with vs, and readie to forgue. When then he doubles it twice, *Let him make peace with me, I ſay, let him make peace with mee*: he therein expreſſeth with what a willing and readie mind, yea and with what feruent deſire hee haſtens to abolith all our iniquities.

Verſ. 6. *Hereafter Iacob ſhall take roots, Iſrael ſhall flouriſh and growe, and the world ſhall be filled with fruit.*

Now hee ſhewes by the effects, what this loue is whereof he ſpake in the former verſes. For the better vnderſtanding whereof, wee muſt conſider the eſtate of this ancient people which was Gods heritage; not by their deſerts, but by the benefit of the free adoption. The Lord had juſt cauſe to bee angry with them, ſo farre forth as to caſt them wholly out of his ſight, and to roote them cleane out. But hee reſtrained his anger, becauſe hee had to doe with his vine and inheritance. For his onely meaning was, that the people ſhould acknowledge their fault, and by that meanes returne into fauour with him. And this is the cauſe why hee addes this promiſe to the former, leſt the people ſhould deſpaire, by being ouermuch feared with this power of God, from which theſe rods and chaſtiſements were threatened

Verſ. 2, 3.

Simile.

It is an easie matter to slip into despaire by the sight of Gods iudgements, vnlesse some hope of mercie be left vs.

to proceed. For it is easie to slip into despaire by the sense of Gods iudgement, if there be not some hope left vs of mercie.

Therefore he saith, *that Iacob shall saue roote* againe: as if he should say, I haue in deed wasted my Church, and brought her almost to nothing, yet shall she *reouer her first flourishing estate*, to as the shall fill the whole world; for she shall increase more and more after she is recieued vnto me. Now this similitude which is drawne from *taking roote*, is very elegant, because we are as good as plucked vp by the rootes whilest God is angrie with vs, for then we are as good as dead and vterlicke cut off: but how soeuer the Lord afflictis his Church, yet he neuer suffers the rootes to die: true it is they lie hid, but yet in time they shall reuiue and bring forth fruit.

Whereas he saith the world *shall be filled* with the fruit of these rootes; that was accomplished at the coming of Christ, who gathered and multiplied the people of God by his Gospell: for then Israel and the Gentiles were vnited into one bodie, and so the difference was taken away which was betweene them in former time. Now we are not ignorant that the Gospell, and the whole fruit which it brought forth, proceeded first from the Iewes.

Verf. 7. Hath he smitten him as he smote those that smote him? or is he slaine according to the slaughter of those that were slaine by him?

HE confirms the former sentence, to wit, that they might see sure and euident signes of Gods loue and goodness enen in his chastisements: for he is wont so to correct his people that whilest he beates the downe with his left hand, he susteins them with his right. This verse is diuerslie expounded: some interpret it thus, Haue I smitten Israel, as his enemies haue smitten him? The Assyrians shewed them no mercie, but vexed them with all rigor, but I haue moderated my wrath, and haue not smitten them for their ruine: whereby I haue well shewed that I was not their enemie. And yet me thinks the other exposition pleaseth me better, which also is the most receiued, to wit, that a difference is here put betweene the faithfull and the wicked: for the Lord punisheth them both indifferently; but yet after a diuers maner. For in punishing the reprobate he giues way to his anger, because he meanes to root them out in regard they are vessels of his wrath ordeined to destruction, as those that haue no taste nor feeling at all of his goodnes: but when he corrects his children, he moderates his anger, and aims at a contrarie marke, for he thereby meanes to worke their amendment, and to draw them to himselfe, that so in the end they may haue a better & a more permanent estate.

But may some man say, Wherefore doth the Prophet vse a relatione here, saying, *of him which smote him*. I answer, it is because the Lord often vseth the wicked as his instrumēt

to correct his chosen, and that for their greater humbling. For no doubt it is a very great triall the Lord puts vs vnto, when he suffers vs to be oppressed vnder the tyrannie of the wicked: for we doubt sometimes as if he tooke part with them against vs, or as if he hated vs, and meant to disappoint vs of his succor. For the preuenting of this doubt, he saith, It is true, that now and then he permits the wicked to afflict his people, and to worke their wills vpon them for a time, but in the end they themselues with their impietie shall be punished much more sharplie then they haue punished the faithfull. Notwithstanding if any had rather follow the first exposition, I leaue it to his choice, namely, that the Lord will not deal with vs as with his enemies. Thence came that sentence, It is better to fall into the hands of God, then into the hands of men: for the Lord can neuer forget his couenant; wherein he hath giuen his word to vse his Church with all louing and fatherly affection.

*Verf. 8. In measure in the branches thereof wilt thou contend with it, * When he bloweth with his rough wind in the day of the east winde.*

* or, although he shall blow.

THIS is the second prooue of Gods mercie towards his elect; whom he iudgeth with the world, lest they should be condemned with the world: for whilest he smites them, he so moderates his blowes, that he still hath an eye to their weaknes; so as he will neuer correct them beyond measure. As touching the word *measure*, all the expositors conclude that it signifies moderation: for otherwise wee were neuer able to beare Gods hand; but should be ouerwhelmed forthwith: but he holds an euen hand, and is also faithfull, as *S. Paul* saith, and wil not suffer vs to be tempted about that we are able to beare, *1. Cor. 10. 13.* And thus *Ieremias* desires the Lord to correct him in iudgement, that is to say, *in measure*, that so the blowes might be proportionable to his infirmities. But the expositors agree not in y interpretation of these words, *in the branches*: for some translate, In setting one of them against another by ciuill warres: Others, that God will reuenge their wickedness by that sword which themselues haue drawne out and put into his hand. But I passe by both these expostions, because I can not approue of them: that interpretation which I take to be the most probable is theirs, who expōūd, In his *birds*, that is to say, In his plāts, signifying, that the Lord will not only curse their goods, but their persons also. For we know that Gods chastisements are of diuers kinds: the lightest are those whereby he depriues vs of outward things, which are commonlie termed the goods of fortune. His meaning is then, that God will so chastise the faithfull, as he will not only touch them in their persons, but he will also deprive them of ordinarie sodde, to wit, of wheate, wine, oyle, and other like commodities which the earth brings forth: for the verb *Sbalach* (wher-

Goods of fortune.

of

God afflictis his Church, but he neuer suffers her roote to perishe.

Ephes. 2. 14.
I. Ia. 2. 3.

Iob. 4. 2. 2.

God afflictis the elect and reprobate both alike in this life, but after a diuers maner.

Rom. 9. 22.

Quest.

Ans.

of this word bud comes) ſignifies to bring forth, ſprout, or bud.

But I haue another expoſition which comes neerer the Prophets meaning; to wit, that God contends with his Church in her buds or branches: for albeit hee lops off the branches, and cuts downe the body of the tree alſo, yet he will not ſuffer his wrath to conſume the rootes and all: but the tree ſhall ſpring, becauſe there is alwaies ſome ſap in the rootes, which God will neuer ſuffer to die nor decay. And this fits well with the ſixt verſe, where hee promiſed that Iſrael ſhould take roote, and bring forth fruit. He expounds that then which hee ſpake before; to wit, *in meſure*; that is to ſay; hee will not plucke it vp by the rootes: for the Lord will lop off that which appears on the outſide of the tree; to wit, the branches and the leaues; but he will keepe the roote ſound. As for the reprobates, hee will vterly ſtab them vp, and ſo mangle them to peeces, that they ſhall neuer ſprout more.

Whereas others haue tranſlated; He blew with his wind: I haue thought it better to ſay; *although he ſhall haue liued*: for he continues the ſimilitude in which hee alluded to the herbes and plants, which wither away when any ſharpe wind blowes vpon them; yet it is but in the ypper parts, becauſe the roote lies alwaies warme in the earth. So, albeit the Lord comes violently vpon the faithfull, and diſfigures them ſo, that they ſeeme as good as brought to nothing, yet is hee wont to preſerue ſome ſappe and ſeede within them.

Whereas the Prophet names *the eaſt wind*; he reſpects the ſituation of Iudea, becauſe that wind did much hurt there; as wee may ſee by many other places. Now we know that euery Country hath his particular wind, which is noſome vnto it. As for example; ſome haue the the north-eaſt wind; ſome the fourth wind; others the eaſt wind riſing vnder the Sunne, which is very hurtfull; for it makes the corne to ſhed, blaſts and ſpoiles al fruits; it ſhakes the trees, and leaues nothing almoſt in the fields y is good behind it. By this *eaſt-wind* then, ſome vnderſtand that which is towards the Sunne riſing, being exceeding noiſome to many Countries.

Verſ. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquitie of Iacob bee purged, and this is all the fruit, the taking away of his ſinne: When hee ſhall make all the ſtones of the Altar as chalke ſtones broken in peeces, that the groues and images may not ſtand vp.*

HAuing ſpoken of the chaſtiſement of the people; he now begins in plainer words to ſhew, that the Lord wil ſo provide for their ſaluation, by thoſe rods wherewith he corrected them, that they ſhall feele the fruit thereof. I grant he ſpake of this before, but now he expounds himſelfe more cleerely; to wit, that all the afflictions wherewith God

humbled them, ſhould ſerue as medicines to purge their finnes, ſo as they ſhould recouer his former fauour.

But will ſome man ſay, are finnes purged by afflictions, by which God corrects vs? If it bee ſo, then it follows that they are ſatisfactions for finnes; as the Papiſts teach. For theſe two things depend one vpon another; to wit, if God correct vs for our finnes, that they may be done away; then if he ſends no affliction, it follows that there muſt be ſome ſatisfaction in ſtead of it. But it is no hard matter to looſe this knot, if we note that the Prophet meddles not here with theſe queſtions; namely, whether wee merit remiſſion of finnes by workes, or whether afflictions bee ſatisfactions for our offences. For his purpoſe is plainly to teach, that corrections are remedies ſent of God, whereby hee cures our maladies, in regard we are wont to abuſe his patience and long ſuffering. Needfull it is therefore that he ſhould force vs to acknowledge our ſins, & to beare afflictions patiently: and thus afflictions are as purgations whereby our wicked luſts are conſumed; euen as if they had paſſed thorow the fire; which metaphor the Scripture is often wont to uſe. But they can no way become ſatisfactions: I grant men may be prepared by them to repentance.

Thus hee teacheth then that the faithfull haue none occaſion at all to repine againſt the hand that ſinote them; but rather to acknowledge that God uſeth this as a meanes to procure their ſaluation; becauſe otherwiſe they would not be brought to taſte how good and gracious he is. If any deſire a ſhorter diſtinction, we ſay in a word, *that chaſtiſements purge our finnes mediately, but not immediately*, for they bring vs to repentance; which in its order and place, leades vs to the obtaining of the forgueneſſe of finnes.

Now whereas we haue tranſlated, Behold, all the fruit ſhall be, &c. others read it in the genitiue; Of the taking away: but I hold it better to reade it in the nominatiue caſe, in which it is. The word *all*, is often taken for great, or abundant: hee meanes then that there ſhall come a plentiful harueſt as it were, by theſe afflictions. To be ſhort, hee would haue this correction to be well taken, in regard of the profit which it brings with it; that the faithfull bearing of them patiently and quietly, might thereby be purged from their corruptions, and brought into the way of ſaluation.

But in the next place the Prophet expounds himſelfe yet more cleerly, where hee ſpeakes of the abolishing of *ſuperſtitious*: for whilſt Iſrael was in proſperitie, they neuer thought of repentance: and true'y it is giuen to men naturally to wax extreme proud and ſubburne, when they inioy eaſe and pleaſure. He ſhewes then that God meant together with their chaſtiſement, to purge their finnes; becauſe they had ſoothed vp themſelues in their naughtineſſe before, whilſt the Lord heaped vp bleſſings vpon them, and cauſed them to feele his goodneſſe and mercy: but now they ſhould change both their mind and

In what ſenſe it is ſaid that afflictions purge away finnes. Obiect.

Anſ.

Corrections are Gods medicines by which he cures our maladies.

Psal. 66. 10. 12. Psal. 89. 46.

Afflictions ought to be taken in good part, in regard of the fruit they bring with them.

Proſperitie begets pride in vs naturally.

their maners, acknowledging and confessing that they were iustlie punished. Now the Prophet puts one kind here for all, to the end we should comprehend the whole vnder this part: so as in a word he notes out the abolishing of all Idolatrie and superstition. For he mentions not the *Altar* which was consecrated vnto God, but that which themselues had dedicated to their Idols. *When she stones of it then should be broken, the Idoles ouerthrowne, and dashed in pieces,* so that no signes of Idolatrie at all were to be seene, euen at that very instant should the *sinnes of the people be taken away.*

If sinne be put away when all Idolatrie is banished: then whilst Idolatrie remaineth sinne must needs be imputed.

Hence we learne that we can looke for no pardon from the Lord vnlesse we forthwith repent vs of our sinnes: for whosoever he be that flatters himselfe in his finlines, he shall assuredlie pull downe the wrath of God vpon his owne head, which he ceaseth not to inflame against him. Our iniquitie then is taken away when we are touched with a true feeling of repentance. In the second place obserue, that albeit repentance be an inward affection of the heart, yet it staves not there, but brings forth fruites to the view of men. For it is in vaine to make men beleue we feare God, vnlesse we cause our light so to shine before them by our outward works: for we can not separate the roote fro the fruitie. Thirdly we haue to note, that the Prophet mentions *Idolatrie* principallie in this place, because it is the fountaine from whence all euils flowe. For whilst Gods pure worship and sincere religion flourisheth, you shall see the duties of charitie necessarilie to flow fro thence: but we no sooner forsake God, but he forthwith lets vs fall into all sorts of vices. And this is the maine reason why he comprehendes all kinds of wickedneses vnder the name of *Idolatrie*. Besides, we see that he not only condemnes Images and Idols, but whatsoever the Iewes had inuented without the prescript rule of the law: whence it followes, that all will-worship is reiected of G O D. Where he addes in the end, that *they shall no more arise* or stand vp: he shewes how odious a thing Idolatrie is in Gods sight, seeing he will haue the very memorie thereof to be quite abolished, so as afterwards there should no signe thereof be left at all. And yet the Prophet meant to expresse somewhat more, to wit, that our repentance should be such, as that we ought to perseuere therein constantlie vnto the end. For we call not that true repentance when men are only moued vpon some sudden passion to renounce and abolish their superstitions, and then forthwith to suffer them to sprout and increase againe, which yet we see comes often to passe in manie, who in the beginning seemed to be consumed with zeale in an outward shew, and within a while haue growne key cold againe. But the Prophet here notes out such a constant zeale, that those who haue once begun to forsake and renounce their abominations, hold out and perseuere in a good course vnto the end.

be desolate, and the habitation shall be forsaken, and left like a wilderness. There shall the Calfe feede, and there shall he lie, * and consume the branches thereof.

* Or, shall brouze vpon the tops thereof.

YEt.] Some take the Hebrew Coniunction *Vau*, for a particule of rendring the cause; and some, as if it signified Otherwise: therefore it will beare a double sense. If we interpret it *For*, then the Prophet should giue a reason of that which went before: but that is against the drift of the text; and besides, it is vtterlie a verie absurd exposition. Those who take it for Otherwise, haue the most likelihood: for this threat may well agree, If you repent not, looke to the issue; *Your Citie* which is so well fortified, *shall be made like a wilderness.* But yet me thinks this is too constrained a sense, I had rather then expound it, Notwithstanding, or *nevertheless*: for the Prophet meant to say, that Ierusalem and the rest of the Cities of Iudea should be destroyed: neither could Ierusalem possible escape, albeit God meant to spare his people. This admonition was very requisite, because the faithfull might haue been discouraged in seeing this *holie Citie* ouerthrowne, and the Temple laid on heapes: but they knew by the former propheties that God had meanes enow in store to conserue his Church, and the consideration thereof vpheld them. The Prophet then goes about to prevent this temptation. And from hence learne, that we ought neuer to be out of heart howsoever we be broughed to a great exigent; and that the Lord begins to handle vs with all extremitie. Now albeit this threatening may well concerne all Iudea, yet I rather thinke that he speaks here principallie of Ierusalem, which was the Mother Citie of that countrie.

Whereas he addes that *the Calfe shall feede there*, it is a figuratiue manner of speech much vsed among the Prophets as oft as they mention the destruction of a Citie: for they then forthwith shew that the place shall be made pasture ground. In which we haue to obserue what should moue the Lord to execute such a iudgement as to put brute beasts to feed in that place which the Iewes by their wickednes had prophaned. Surely he had adopted them to be his children, and therefore it was their duties to haue yeilded subiection to so louing a father: but in regard they had broken out into licentious behauiour against him, and had shaken off his yoke, it was iust with the Lord as a punishment of their ingratitude, that the place of their dwelling should now be inhabited by better inhabitants, taken from among brute beasts, rather then men.

The sinnes of a nation may so farre prouoke the Lord, that where it was: an habitation for men, it shall become an habitation for beasts only.

Whereas he saith the *tops*, it is to augment the description of this waste and desolation: as if he should say, There shall be such plentie of grasse, that the *Calues* shall only brouze vpon the tenderest parts thereof. The word *Saiph* signifies also a bow or branch: but because they naturallie sprout vp on high, I take it here for the *top*, or end. We may also affirme that the Prophet alludes to the faire shew which

The forsaking of God, the next way to tumble vs headlong into the committing of all iniquities.

God reiects not Idolatrie alone, but all willworship, all be it be grounded vpon neuer so good intents.

True repentance holds out to the end.

* Or, neuertheless.

Verf. 10. * Yet the defended Citie shall

which the Citie had, it being in times paſt beautified with faire and high buildings; but nothing ſhould be ſcene there (theſe houſes being throwne downe) but *graffe*, and *boughs of trees*, wherewith the *calamities* being plentifully fed, ſhould onely for wantonnes, *brooze* vpon the *ſops* thereof.

Verſ. 11. *When the boughes of it are dry, they ſhall be broken: the women come and ſet them on fire: for it is a people of none vnderſtanding; therefore hee that made them ſhall haue no compaſſion of them; and he that formed them ſhall haue no mercy on them.*

Some thinke the Prophet hath reſpect to the ſimilitude of the *vine*, whereof hee ſpake in the beginning of this Chapter; and therefore they tranſlate, When the branches ſhall die. I grant that the word *Kefiah*, is ambiguous: but becauſe the ſimilitude of the harueſt agrees better; as alſo that the Hebrew word may be ſo expounded, therefore I had rather take it in this ſenſe. And yet I tranſlate not, When the harueſt ſhall be dried; but, *When the harueſt ſhall dry*. Now, *To dry* in this place ſignifies nothing elſe but to come to ripeneſſe; as if hee ſhould ſay, Before the crop be ripe it ſhall be cut downe: and ſo the Lord will deprive thee of that which thou thoughteſt thou hadſt ſure enough in thine hand. Where he ſaith, *the women ſhall come*; his meaning is, that God ſhall neede no ſtrong armie of men to finiſh this buſineſſe, but poore weake women ſhall ſuffice: and thus he amplifies the indignitie that ſhall bee offered them in this chaſtiſement. For he threatens that the calamitie ſhall be full of ſhame and reproach, in regard that it is a greater diſgrace to be praiſed vpon and ſpoiled by the hands of ſillie women, who were neuer expert in feates of armes, then by *men* who are ſouldiers by profeſſion.

In the next place hee ſhewes the cauſe of this ſo great a calamitie: for at the firſt bluſh the Lord might ſeeme too ſeuere in ſuffering his choſen to be ſo miſerably vexed and ſcattered, without any ſuccour. Why ſo? Becauſe it is contrary to his louing and fatherly diſpoſition, to deale thus with his children. But our Prophet ſhewes, that God did not correct the Iewes ſo rigorouſly without good reaſon, for they were deſtitute of vnderſtanding, & ſound iudgement. It is not for nothing tht that he ſaith, *ignorance* was the cauſe of all their miſeries: for ſeeing true wiſdome conſiſts in the feare of God, doth not the holy Ghoſt iuſtly condemne all them to bee blind earthwormes, who deſpiſe God to walke after their owne inordinate luſts?

And yet ſuch a blindneſſe cannot excuſe nor free vs from being guilty of malice: for they that offend God, doe it maliciously, notwithstanding they bee hoodwinked, in reſpect of the violences of their luſts: *ignorance* and *malice* then are ioyned together; yet ſo, that this ignorance proceedes from a corrupt deſire of the heart. Thence is it that the

Hebrewes call all finnes generally by the name of ignorances. and thus *Moſes* ſaith, *O* that they were wiſe! Deut. 32. 29. Now euery one may eaſily bee drawne to ſubſcribe to this, by conſidering in himſelfe with what crooked affections he is carried away: for being once deprived of the light of holy doctrine, and deſtitute of vnderſtanding, the diuell ſets vs going with ſuch a head ſtrongneſſe, that we neither feare Gods hand, nor make any account of his holy word. And that he may ſet vs ouer bootes and all, as they ſay, in the next place hee ſtrives to take away from vs all hope of pardon, which may be referred to the whole body of this people in general. For albeit that a remnant were preferred, yet the wrath of God ceaſed not for all that to be inflamed againſt the whole multitude in general.

Whereas the Prophet calles God *the maker and former of Iſrael*; it is not meant as in reſpect of the creation of heauen and earth; but becauſe he made & formed Iſrael his Church anew, by the worke of regeneration: in which ſenſe, *Saine Paul* ſaith, that we are the workmanſhip of God: as wee alſo haue ſhewed in another place. Now the reaſon that moued *Iſaiah* to ſpeake thus, was to aggravate and to amplify the meaſure of their vnthankfulnes, to which they were growne: ſhewing that they were iuſtly puniſhed, becauſe they diſhonoured and diſreuerenced that God moſt ſhamefullie, who had both formed and preferred them.

Verſ. 12. *And in that day ſhall the Lord thresh from the channell of the river, vnto the riuer of Egypt: and yee ſhall bee gathered one by one, O children of Iſrael.*

In this place the Prophet mitigates the ſharpeſſe of the former ſentence: for it was an horrible iudgement of God vpon this people, to be left deſtitute of all hope of fauour or mercy. The Hebrew particle *Uau* therefore, ſhould bee tranſlated as it was in the tenth verſe; *Notwithſtanding, or, Neuertheleſſe it ſhall come to paſſe in that day*. Alſo the Prophet vſeth a ſimilitude, wherein he compares the gathering of the Church to corne that is threshed; which is afterwards ſeparated from the chaffe. But what might moue him to vſe this ſimilitude? The poore captiues were ſo oppreſſed, that they appeared no otherwiſe, then as corne that is hidden and ſcattered vnder the chaffe. The Lord was faine to diuide that which was hidden vnder this confuſed heape then, as with a fan. This ſimilitude therefore of *threshing* out the corne, doth very fitly reſemble this gathering.

By the *channell of the river, vnto the riuer*, hee means *Euphrates* and *Nilus*: for the people were driuen partly into *Caldea* or *Aſſyria*, and partly into *Egypt*: for many fled into *Egypt*, when the reſt were carried captiue into *Babylon*. Thus then he foretelles how the Lord wil gather his people from all quarters, not onely from *Caldea*, and out of the whole

*Or, his harueſt ſhall dry.
*Or, ſhall come, and ſhall ſet, &c.

Ep̄. 2. 10.

Chap. 17. 7.

*Or, yet notwithstanding.

Pr̄. 1. 7.
Pſal. 111. 10

Ignorance excuſeth not.

For ignorance is for the moſt part ioyned with malice.

region of Mesopotamia, but from Egypt also.

I haue translated *one by one*: others turne it; Euery one from euery place; but this is too conſtrained an expoſition. I therefore take mine to agree beſt: and thus there may bee a double ſenſe, Either I will gather you all till I come to one: or, I will not gather you by bands or companies, but one after another: as we ſee it come to paſſe in the gathering in of thoſe that haue wandred and ranged higher and thither. For all cannot be muſtered at an inſtant, but they muſt bee gathered to their files one by one. So the Iewes being ſcattered and diſperſed abroad, could not eaſily bee gathered and vnited together. His meaning is then, that this diſſipation ſhould be no impediment vnto them to be reſtored to a flouriſhing eſtate againe; which indeede afterwards came to paſſe. For the Iewes were ſent home, not with troopes of horſemen and chariots, nor with any great power of men, neither yet with ſwords and ſpeares; but as *Hoſea* ſaith, by the onely hand of the Lord. See *Hoſea* 1.7.

Verſ. 13: *In that day alſo ſhall the great Trumpet be blowne, and they ſhall come which periſhed in the land of Aſhur, and they that were chaſed into the land of Egypt; and they ſhall worſhip the Lord in the holy mount at Ieruſalem.*

HERE he expounds the former verſe: now he ſheweth another ſimilitude, in which he ſhewes, that God ſhall be of ſufficient power to bring home his people with little adoe. For as Kings are wont by the onely ſound of a trumpet, to aſſemble great armies; ſo he ſhewes that the Lord will quickly call his people together: in reſpect of whom, this prophetic ſhould bee no leſſe effectually, then the voice of the trumpet is, which aſſembles ſouldiers together. He calles them the *loſt people*, in regard they were ſo miſerably diſperſed, ſo as they ſeemed very neere to ſuch a ſorlorne eſtate, as was vtterly without any hope of being reſtored: for had the Monarchy of their

enemies continued, it is like enough they would neuer haue releaſed their priſoners. For they caried them not captiues ſo far off; but they went therewithall to abolith the name of Iſrael by little and little.

That which the Prophet addes of *Egypt*, contains yet a more excellent teſtimonie of Gods loue: to wit, that thoſe which fled thither, ſhould be gathered, albeit they were vnworthy of pardon For their offence was double, as *Ieremieſh* verie well ſhewes in the ſenen and twentieth verſe of the tenth of his prophetic. For firſt of all they had obſtinately rebelled: and in the ſecond place, they would not obey the reuelation of the Prophet. For they ought rather to haue ſubmitted their neckes to the yoke of the Babylonians, then to haue fled into *Egypt*, againſt the expreſſe commandement of the Lord.

Now our Prophet ſhewes further, what fruit ſhould come of this deliuerance; to wit, as ſoone as the Iewes ſhall returne out of captiuitie, into their owne land, they ſhall then worſhip the Lord their Sauiour better then euer they did, in all puritie and vprightneſſe: for by the *mountaine*, hee meanes the Temple and ſacrifices. True it is that this was accompliſhed in the time of *Darius*: but doubtleſſe the Prophet extends his prophetic further off: for this reſtauration was as it were an obſcure ſhadowing out of that deliuerance which they obtained afterwards by the meanes of *Chriſt*: at whoſe coming, the ſpirituall ſound of the *Trumpet*, that is to ſay, of the Goſpell, was heard; not onely in *Aſſyria*, nor in *Egypt*, but in the vttermoſt bounds of the earth. And then were the people of God indeede, ſummoned to meeete together in *mount Zion*, that is to ſay, in the Church. For wee know it is vſuall with the Prophets thus to ſpeake, when they purpoſe to ſhadow our vnto vs Gods worſhip and ſeruite, and a true harmonic and conſent in godlineſſe and religion. Thus applying their manner of ſpeaking to the cuſtome that was in vſe among that people, that ſo they might be the better vnderſtood of all: we alſo know that the Goſpell came vnto vs out of this *mount Zion*, of which we haue ſpoken more amply in the ſecond Chapter.

It is the duty of ſuch as haue receiued any deliuerance from God, to returne him thanks and praife for the ſame. *Ezra* 6.1.

THE XXVIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Woe to the crowne of pride, the drunkards of Ephraim: for his glorious beauty ſhall be a fading ſlender, which is vpon the head of the valley of them that be fat, and are overcome with wine.*



L *Saiab* enters now into a new ſermon, as it were altogether diuers from the former, from which alſo it ſhould be ſeparated. Firſt, hee ſhewes that the wrath of God is neere vnto the Iſraelites, and then

to the Iewes. For it is very likely the Prophet foretold theſe things when the Kingdome of Iſrael flouriſhed: which yet wee cannot aſſure for certaine, albeit it ſufficiently appears y the ten Tribes were not yet caried away captiue. This courſe the Prophet takes then; firſt he ſhewes that the indignation of God is ready to fall vpon *Iſrael*, in regard of the groſſe wickedneſſes, and all forts of corruptions which bare ſway amongſt them: for they were puffed vp with pride & arrogance; yea, they had plunyed themſelues into all diſorders, and ouerflowed in all voluptuouſneſſes and diſſolutions. Thence they grew to an open

open contempt of God: for we dayly ſee that when men giug themſelves out to their luſts, they eaſily forget him. In the next place he ſhewes how God moderates this his anger, by ſparing the tribe of *Iudah*: for when the ten tribes were led away captiues with the halfe tribe of *Beniamin*, the Iewes yet remained vntouched. This mercie of God the Prophet magnifies, to wit, that he would not ſuffer his Church whollie to periſh, but preferred a ſmall remnant. Thirdly he ſhewes that the Iewes had alſo corrupted themſelves, ſo that they would not indure that God ſhould continue his mercie towards them: whatfore ſeeing impietic reigned as much amongst them as it did among the *Iſraelites*, they likewiſe muſt make account to feele the rod as well as their brethren.

Which order we ought diligentlie to obſerue: for many deceite themſelves in the expoſition of this place, in regard the Prophet hath not named *Iſrael* expreſſie. But it is a thing well enough knowne that the tenne Tribes are comprehended vnder this word *Ephraim*. As touching the word *wo*, becauſe the particle *Hoi* doth for the moſt part ſerue to expreſſe an execration, I would not depart from the common opinion of the expoſitors, eſpeciallie ſeeing the Prophet vſeth a plaine denunciation of iudgement. Yet if any had rather turne it, *Alas the Crowne*, I hinder him not. The letter *Vau* ſhould be taken as a particle that ſhewes the cauſe, thus, For his ſlowre ſhall be fading. He compares the honor and glorie of *Iſrael* to a *ſlowre* which fades, as ſhall be ſaid by and by. In a word, he *curſeth* the wealth of the *Iſraelites*: for by the *Crowne of pride* he means nothing elſe but the falſe confidence wherewith they were ſwollen in regard of their ouermuch abundance and riches. You ſhall euer lightlie ſee theſe two finnes god hand in hand: for the ouerflowing of worldlie commodities begets pride and crueltie, becauſe in proſperitie we ſoare aloft, and can not vſe theſe things with ſobrieties as we ought.

Now the *Iſraelites* dwelt in a very fat and fruitfull ſoile: and that is the cauſe why *Amos* calles them the *fat kine* of the mountaine of *Samaria*, *Amos* 4. 1. Being puffd vp then in regard of their riches, they (proudly) deſpised both God and men. And therefore the Prophet calles them *drunkards*, in regard that being made drunke with their proſperitie, they feared no danger nor inconuenience; nay, which was worſt of all, they would not ſubieſt their necks to Gods yoke.

As a fading ſlowre.] I make no queſtion but he alludes to the *Crownes* they vſed in banquets at that time, which alſo are vſed at this day in many places. The *Iſraelites* gaue themſelves to gluttonic & drunkennes: no doubt alſo but the fruitfullnes of the land was an occaſion vnto them of this their intemperancie. In calling this ſlowre *fading*, he ſtill proſeutes his ſimilitude, alluding elegantlie to *ſlowres*, which quicklie wither.

He alſo ſaith that this glorie is upon the head of the *fat valley*, becauſe they ſaw the fat paſſures and the fruitfullnes (which cauſed them

to ouerflow in pride) vnder their feet. Others tranſlate *valley of ſoyments*: but this agrees not ſufficientlie. For by this word the Prophet ſignifies ſuch an abundance and fulnes as made them forget and deſpiſe God and all godlines.

By the word *head*, he alludes to the ſituation of the cuntry, in regard the *Iſraelites* dwelt for the moſt part in fat and fruitfull vallies. He attributes a *Crowne* vnto them; compaſſing the whole land and kingdome, becauſe it flouriſhed, and abounded with all ſorts of good things. For he meant to note out their wealth, which begat careleſnes, ſecuritie, boldnes, intemperancie, and crueltie.

And this doctrine alſo belongs (as well) to vs (as to them): for we are admoniſhed by the example of theſe, to vſe our proſperitie moderately, otherwiſe we ſhall be vnhappie euerie kind of way. For the Lord will *curſe* our riches and abundance.

Verſ. 2. Behold, the Lord hath * a * Or, mightie
mightie and ſtrong hoſt like a tempeſt of and ſtrong.
haile, and a Whirlwind that ouerthro-
weth, like a tempeſt of mightie Waters
that ouerflow, which throw to the ground
* mightily.

3. They ſhall be troden vnder foote,
euen the Crowne, and the pride of the
drunkards of Ephraim.

* Or, with
the hand.

This may be referred to the *Aſſyrians*; as if the Prophet ſhould ſay, They are euen readie to come vpon you vnder the leading of the Almighty; and that at an houres warning whenſoever it ſhall pleaſe him to call them forth. Yet had I rather take it for a ſtaffe, or ſome ſuch like thing, whereby the Lord would bring downe the height of *Iſraels* pride. He compares this ſtaffe, or whatſoever thing it was, vnto a *whirlwind*, or deluge of waters, which beate downe graſſe and ſlowres, and marre all the beautie of the earth: wherein he continues forth the ſimilitude of the fading ſlowre, wherof he ſpake in the beginning; for there is nothing more hurtfull to the tender ſlowres then a ſtorme of haile, or a whirlwind.

Now he vſeth a particle demonſtratiue; to wit, *Behold*, becauſe the wicked are not ſtirred nor moued, be the danger neuer ſo imminent. He tells them then that he ſpeakes not as of things that are to be called into queſtion, neither of ſuch things as come out of his owne head, but of that which ſhould ſpedilie fall out.

Where I haue tranſlated, *with the hand*, *S. Ierome* turnes it, *A ſpacious land*: but this *S. Ierome* croſſeth the very text. Others take it for ſtrength: and ſo they affirme that he ſpeakes of a violent driving an end. But the natie ſenſe, as I think, is this, that all the glorie and magnificence of *Iſraelites* ſhall be throwne downe, euen as if a man ſhould puſh downe one overcome with drinke with his hand. The third verſe is only a confirmation of that which went before.

Verf. 4. For his glorious beantie shall bee a fading flower, which is upon the head of the valley of them that bee fat, and as the hastie fruite afore summer, which while bee that looketh upon it while it is in his hand, hee eateth it.

It is not an easie matter to humble such as are besetted with the pleasures of this life. Denys a tyrant of Sicilia.

He almost repeats the verie same words which were in the first verse: for it is not an easie matter to humble and terrifie those that are besetted with the pleasures of this life, whose eyes are hoodwinked by reason of abundance and prosperitie. For *Deys*, the second, a tyrant of Sicilia, became so bewitched, that hee was ready to fall on his nose ever and anon, because hee was an excessive eater and drinker at great banquets: and thus mens mindes are intoxicated, through ouer much psmpering of themselues with delicates, so as they both forget God and themselues. The Prophet then repeats one and the same thing twice, to these that were so blockish and dull of hearing: to the end they might vnderstand and beleue that which otherwise would haue seemed incredible.

But hee yet adornes his speech by another goodly similitude; which is verie fitting for his purpose: for fruits that are *hastie ripe*, are best esteemed, in regard they come first, and giue some hope of a future inttease; but they last not long, neither are they fit to keep. And besides, they are fit for none but great belied women, or for childre or else for youths, which being inordinate in their appetites, deuoure them by and by. Now he saith, that such shall be the felicitie of the Israelites: as if hee should say; Your prosperitie wherein you so much reioice, will not last very long, but will be eaten vp in an *instant*. Now looke what *Isaiah* threatens to the kingdome of Isracl, the same belongs also to all the world. For men by their ingratitude; are the cause that all the benefites which the Lord bestowes vpon them, cannot come to ripeness. Why so? Because wee abuse and corrupt them by our naughtinesse. Thence it is that we bring forth hastie fruites of small continuance, which otherwise might last to nourish vs a long space.

Verf. 5. In that day shall the Lord of hostes be for a crowne of glory, and for a diadem of beantie vnto the residue of his people.

HAVING spokē of the Kingdome of Isracl; he comes now to speake of the Tribe of Iudah, and shewes, that in the midst of this so fearefull a iudgement of God, hee will alwaies cause his mercy to be felt. So that howfouer the ten Tribes were gone and lost; yet the Lord would reserue a remnant which should be consecrated vnto him, that therein the crowne and the *diadem* of his glory and

magnificence might be found: that is to say, the Church shall neuer bee so wrangled and disfigured, but that the Lord will find a means to crowne and decke her with honour and glorie. And yet I extend not this propheticke indifferentlie to all the Iewes, but onely to the elect, who were miraculously preserued from death: for albeit he calles this one Tribe and an halfe but a *remnant*, in respect of the other ten Tribes; yet wee shall see hereafter, that he puts a difference betwene those who were of the Tribe of Iudah onely. Neither are wee to wonder that the Prophet speakes thus diuersly of one and the same people; for sometimes he directs his speech to the whole body as it was generally infected with vices; and another while he applies himselfe to the faithfull in particular. It is certaine that hee rightly calles the Iewes a *remnant* of people, in regard of the ten Tribes which had reuolted from the pure seruice of God, and had separate themselves from the vniuy of faith: but if we shall consider them without comparison, and shall view them as they were in themselues, apart from the rest, hee had iust cause to tax their wickednesse.

I am not ignorant that others are of a contrary iudgement; the reason is, because he by and by speakes of wine, *vers. 7.* and so they thinke this sentence should bee ioyned with the beginning of the Chapter: thus it may be the Lord will spare the Iewes; but how is it possible he should, seeing they are as bad as the rest? Seeing then that they are guiltie of the same sinne of vnthankfulness, must they not needes share with them in their punishment? But these expositours doe not aduersely consider that the Prophet is about to set forth a testimonie of Gods singular fauour, in that hee did not cause his whole indignation to fall at once vpon all the race of *Abraham*: but albeit hee ouerthrew the Kingdome of Isracl, yet he gaue the Iewes respite to see whether they would repent or no. Now with the setting forth of Gods patience towards them, hee vnder hand amplifies the fault of this peoples ingratitude. For should not they haue learned wisdome by their brethrens harmes? yes; the calamitie of the Israelites should surely haue awakened them, and drawn them to repentance. But they past it ouer lightly, and neuer tooke it to heart. Were they not vnworthy of so many benefites then, that would take no benefite thereby? Well, yet the Lord was pleased to conferre his Church euen in the midst of them.

Now you see the cause why hee deliuered Iudah and the halfe Tribe of Benjamin, out of calamitie in which he wrapped the Israelites. Moreover, because Iudah was a verie small Tribe, and was therfore contented of their brethren the Israelites, the Prophet affirms that there is glory and riches enough in God, to supply all outward wants. By this place we are taught what is the true way vnto saluation; euen to place our whole happinesse in God himselfe: for we no sooner turne backe to the world, but wee gather flowers which fade and wither, yea and vanish away by and by. But alas this phrensic reignes in

The Church shall neuer be to disfigured, but the Lord will find a means to decke her with beantie and honour, Cant. 1. 4.

Our true way vnto happinesse, is to place it wholly in God,

euerie place more then it ſhould: for men will ſeek to bee happie without God: that is to ſay, without happineſſe it ſelfe. *Iſaiah* alſo ſhewes, that no calamity, be it neuer ſo great, can any way let God to inuich and adorne his Church. For when all things ſhall ſeeme as good as deſperate, yet God lues ſtill to crowne his ſeruants with glory. It is to be noted alſo, that he promiſeth the Church ſhall bee beautified with a new hew, euen then when her multitude ſhall be diminished; that by this meanes the faithfull might neuer be deſtinat in the moſt horrible waſte that may befall them.

Verſ. 6. *And for a ſpirit of iudgement to him that ſitteth in iudgement, and for ſtrength vnto them that turne away the battell in the gate.*

THe Prophet ſhewes the cauſe why the Lord wil beautifie the remnant with new glorie. For hec propounds before them the eſtate of a right government, vnder which a people is preferred: which conſiſts in two things principally; that is to ſay, *Counſell* and *ſtrength*. By *counſell* and *wiſdome*, affaires ought to be managed amongst the ſubiects at home: *force* and *munitiō* are for the annoyance of the enemy abroad. Now for as much as Kingdoms and Commonwealtheys uphold and maintaine their eſtates by theſe two meanes; therefore God promiſeth the *ſpirit of wiſdome* and *ſtrength* vnto his people. And therewithall teacheth them, that the gift of both theſe are in his owne hands; and that they are not to be ſought elſewhere: for neither can the Magiſtrates gouerne the Citie well, in giuing to euery one his due; neither can the Captaines and Leaders repulſe the enemy, vnleſſe both be led and directed by the Lord.

Wiſdome and ſtrength are the Lords; Job 12. 13. *Pſal.* 127. 1.

Verſ. 7. *But they haue erred becauſe of wine, and are out of the way by ſtrong drinke: the Prieſt and the Prophet haue erred by ſtrong drinke, they are ſwallowed vp with wine, they haue gone aſtray through ſtrong drinke; they faile in diſcretion, they ſtumble in iudgement.*

HEe now direſts his ſpeech vnto the profane deſpisers of God, who were lewely onely in name; and ſets forth their ingratitude to the full: for albeit they had ſo euident a teſtimonie of Gods wrath before their eyes, and ſaw their brethren ſeuerely chaſtiſed, in their ſight, yea, albeit they had good experience of his mercie & patience towards them, yet could they not be brought into the right way, by this ſo fearefull an example of ſeueritie: neither could they be brought to anie amendment by ſo liuely a taſte of Gods goodneſſe in ſparing of them.

He ſpeakes here of *wine* and *ſtrong drinke*, by way of ſimilitude: for I vnderſtand not this place of the common ſinne of drinkecenneſſe,

againſt which he ſpake in the firſt verſe; but I rather thinke hec meanes they were become like vnto *drunkeards*, in regard they were deſtroyed of common ſenſe and vnderſtanding. If the word *As*, therefore be ſupplied to *wine* and *ſtrong drinke*, then the ſenſe will be the more plaine and euident. I deny not but men wax worſe then beaſts, by the exceſſe of taking in meates and drinke: nay, queſtionleſſe their exceſſe therein had fore dazeld the ſpirits of the Iewes; but if we conſider well of the whole courſe of the text, it will bee caſie to ſee, that he condemnes their iniquitie vnder a ſimilitude.

Where hec addes, *the Prieſt and the Prophet*, he continues the amplification of their ſinne whereof we ſpake before: ſo that the common people were not onely drunke, but euen the *Prieſts* themſelues, who ſhould haue been lights to haue giuen direction vnto others: for they are compared to the *ſalt* of the earth, as Chriſt teacheth: now if they grow vnſauorie and graceleſſe, what ſhall become of the multitude? if the eye be darke, what ſhall become of the parts of the whole body? *Mat.* 5. 13. and 6. 23.

But the worſt of all was, that they erred not onely in open wickedneſſes, but in *viſion* and *iudgement* alſo: whence we may gather, that the ſtate of the Iewes was very deſperate. And here haue we a faire looking glaſſe, wherein we may take a thorow view of our ſelues. Is ic not ſtrange, that after ſo many miſeries and afflictions, which God hath vſed to purge out our corruptions, that the Church ſhould yet notwithstanding be, ſo impure? But ſuch is our ſtowardneſſe, that we kicke againſt the prickes: ſo that how ſo euer the Lord induors by all meanes to correct our vices, yet we not onely fruſtrate the ſame by our rebellions, but daily gather new defilements to the former, wherewith we were ſpotted before. It is no meruaile then if men now adayes are ſo hardened and wax worſe and worſe, notwithstanding the Church hath been ſo manie waies humbled: for *Iſaiah* affirms, that the people in olde time did the like.

Now whereas the Lord ouercame ſo great and execrable a *ſalvatic*, by his ſoueraigne bountie, and did ſtill preferue his Church; we muſt needs acknowledge that this came to paſſe by his ſecret purpoſe, far beſides the expectation of any: for he ſhall preuaile but litle with vs, if he onely vſe ordinarie and common remedies.

From this place alſo it appeeres how ſortly & childiſh the *Papiſts* are in their brags, who haue euer in their mouthes the Church, the Church: & vnder the title of their *Prieſts*, *Bishops*, *Prelates*, & their authoritie, reſiſt the open and manifeſt *Scriptures*: as if, for ſooth, theſe holy orders could neuer erre. Indeede they would make vs beleue, that they haue the holy Ghoſt ſhut vp in their braine, as if they were, the body repreſentatiue of the whole Church, which is neuer forſaken of God. But here we ſee what *Iſaiah* ſaith of the *Prieſts* and *Prieſts* of his time, whoſe calling was far more excellent then was the calling of anie (of their ſhauelings.) Doubtleſſe if euer there

The ſortlineſſe of the *Papiſts* aſſertion, The Church cannot erre, ditcouered.

were a true Church of God, it was amongst the Iewes: and the calling of the *Priests* of that rine was approued of by his word, for which thele haue not so much as a syllable. And yet he shewes that euen they were not only corrupted in maners, but *erred also in vision and iudgement*: and not only that, but the *Prophets* also, whom God raised vp extraordinarylie to be helpe vnto the *Priests* in regard of their negligence: euen these became *blinde* in their reuelations, and in that holy ministrie of teaching and instructing the people. What is more vaine then, then vnder the pretext of a titularie office to exempt themselves from erring, when as yet in the meane while they haue not only forsaken the Lord and all true religion, but haue also troden vnder foot all honestie, and yet are not ashamed to defend their tyrannie by all the means they can?

Verf. 8. *For all their tables are full of filthie vomiting: no place is cleane.*

HE goes on with the similitude, and represents out vnto vs as in a glasse the maners of such as are giuen to gluttonic: for hauing once cast off all humanitie, they not haui become like brute beasts, but plunge themselves into all filthines. Doubtlesse it is an odious and vile spectacle, to see *tables* bestrowed with *vomitings*: and therefore *Isiah* vnder this figure shewes, that the whole lites of these people were very noysome and vsauoric. Yea we may safely coniecture that the Prophet in a word meant to say, That things were whollie corrupted and prophaned amongst the Iewes; so that if any one approached but neere to their *tables*, he should find nothing but *drunkennes*, and *filthie vomiting*: that is to say, he that should obserue their carriage, should see no part thereof free from loathsome vices and impieties. And as for the doctrine, which of all other was the most precious, truly that was so corrupt, that it stanke no lesse then if it had bene defiled with spewings and excrements. Now it is not my purpose to soare aloft into allegories heere, as some doe.

Verf. 9. *Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to vnderstand the things that he heareth? Them that are weaned from the milke, and drawne from the breasts.*

THE Prophet in this place with great astonishment shewes, that the peoples disease is growne incurable, and that God had no more fit medicines left in store to heale them, in regard he had but lost all the labor and cost which he had spent to recouer them. Truly, behold heere the most seueraigne remedie that God can vse, when he seekes to call such as are gone astray out of the right way, neuer ceasing to call vpon them that erre, to that purpose: but when this takes none effect; what hope is left of their recouerie, that refuse to be ordered by those

means that should do them good? He complains then that God is driuen to his shifts (as it were) in regard the people were become so senselesse that they would not endure he should cure them: and therefore he compares the Iewes to *little children* lately *weaned*, or to such as begin to prattle, vpon whom a man should lose his labor that should endeour to teach them any thing.

S. *Peter* for good cause exhorts the faithfull to draw neere, and as newborne babes to suck in the sincere milke of the word, that they might grow thereby: 1. Pet. 2. 2. for a man will neuer shew himselfe teachable vnllesse he puts off that rebellion which all of vs haue brought with vs from our mothers wombs, But the Prophet here condemnes another kind of Childhoode, to wit, when men be so befotted in their vices that they meditate no more in the heauenlie doctrine then if they were become starke idiots. And therefore some sondlic ioinie this verse and that place of S. *Peter* together: for they make the Prophet speake as if the Lord should be brought in seeking such disciples as were emptied of all pride; and were become like children lately *weaned*. But he rather complains that his doctrine was published in vaine, being propounded as a matter of wonderment to fooles and vnwise, who yet are not children in malice, but in vnderstanding, as S. *Paul* saith 1. Cor. 14. 20. It will also appeere by that which followes in the text, that howsoeuer they could not comprehend his doctrine, yet that God was not to be accused of ouergreat seueritie if he reiected them; and would no longer lose time in speaking as to deafe eares.

Verf. 10. *For precept must be vpon precept, precept vpon precept, line vnto line, line vnto line, there a little, and there a little.*

THIS verse sufficientlie manifests that the Lord complains as one that had lost all his labour, in teaching a people obstinate and vnteachable. For the case was all one as if a man should take vpon him to instruct *little children*, to whom he must repeat the letters ouer and ouer, who yet immediatlie forget what was taught them. For although the Master should spend a whole day in teaching them a letter, yet the next day he must begin his labour afresh, and so the next to that likewise, and yet he shall gaine nothing by it, albeit he bestowes all the paines and skil he hath. Those who change the Prophets words here, that they might not offend the eares of the readers, do by an affected phrase of speech corrupt the sense, and cause his words to lose that grace which otherwise is in them: for in repeating the same words, hee meant to signifie a variable and continuall repetition, which we know is very troublesome. For it is a similitude drawne (as we haue said) from little children, whose memories the Master dares not charge with any great matter, because they are vncapable of it, but is

faine to diſtill the firſt principles into them as it were drop by drop. And for that cauſe he repeats the ſame thing once, twice, yea, many times, and is ſtill refreshing their memories with their old Jeſſon. In a word, ſuch ſchollers muſt be alwaies fed with milke, vntill they bee growne to more maturitie and ripenes of iudgement.

The Prophet in like manner ſomewhat after a quipping manner of ſpeech, vſeth theſe words; *heere a liſte, and there a liſte.* Thoſe interpret it ill, as I thinke, who reade the word *a liſte, line*: as if the Prophet had had reſpect to a building that goes vp ſlowly, and is raiſed an end by lines, now a little, and then a little. For this had been an improper ſimilitude, and too farre fetched, ſeeing he ſpeakes heere of childrens firſt rudiments. I confeſſe indeed that the ſame Hebrew word is vſed in the 18. Chapter, where I haue traſlated, From all parts, or, Line after line, and ſo in manie other places: but the circumſtance of this text requires another ſenſe, as alſo in Pſal. 19. 4. Vnleſſe the word *line*, or meaſuring inſtrument ſhould agree better there: yet I denie not but vnder a figure it may well be taken for inſtruction, or rule. For in as much as the rule or plummet which they vſe in buildings is called by the ſame name, as we ſhall afterward ſee in this Chapter, it is no maruell if it be referred to other rules.

Verſ. 11. *For With a ſtammering tongue, and With a ſtrange language ſhall he ſpeake vnto this people.*

Whereas ſome ſupply, that it is as if one ſpake, it is ſuperfluous. I referre this to God then, who, as the Prophet ſaith, *ſpake in a ſtrange language* to this barbarous people. This reprehention ought therefore to haue pierced them to the heart, in regard that by their owne default they made him to *ſim* and *ſtammer*, who yet giues ſpeech vnto all. He threatens them not, but rather accuſeth them of blockiſhnes, in that they made the heauenlie doctrine to become nothing elſe but a conuulſed ſound vnto them, ſo as they receiued no benefit by it, becauſe they wittingly ſtopped their eares againſt it. The Prophet therefore compares their follie to a thing againſt nature, in that they would not heare the voice of the Lord.

Verſ. 12. *Vnto Whom he ſaid, This is the reſt: giue reſt to him that is wearie: and this is the refreshing, but they would not heare.*

Some expoid this ſentence in many words thus, If anie ſay vnto them, This is the reſt, they will not heare: but this is of no force, neither doth it make that coherēce which it ſhould. The Prophet rather ſhewes why God became a barbarian (as it were) to the Iewes; to wit, becauſe they wanted eares to heare him; ſo that in effect he ſpake as vnto them that were deafe, for they would not learne what this reſt meant. But this deafnes proceed

ed from rebellion; for they preſumptuouſlie reiected all wholeſome doctrine with a ſetled malice. It was a frowardneſſe doubly inexcusable then, to reiect *that reſt* which was offered them, which all men alſo naturally deſire. They were too farre gone already in impietie to ſtop their eares when God ſpake: but their ingratitude was much more ſupportable to deſpiſe ſo deſireable a benefit with ſuch an high hand. The Prophet ſhewes them therefore that ſuite they might haue reaped from the obedience of faith, of which they deprived themſelues by their owne obſtinacie. He blames their blindnes and ignorance then, becauſe all this proceeded from their rebellion: in that they maliciously ſhut their eies againſt the cleere light, which ſhined vnto them from heauen, and loued rather to grope in darknes then to walke in the light.

Hence we gather, that the vnbeleeuers doe willingly plunge themſelues into a miſerable vnquietnes of mind: as ſoone as God renders his word vnto them: for he allures all men to partake in this bleſſed *reſt*. He ſhewes vs alſo the marke, vnto which if we Ieuell the whole courſe of our liues, true ſelicitie attends vs; ſo as hauing once heard the heauenlie doctrine, no man can run aſtray, vnleſſe he will doe it wittingly. Oh how amiable then ought this good word of God to be in our eyes, ſeeing it brings vs ſo inſtimable a benefit with it, when with reſt and peace of conſcience we may poſſeſſe ſo perfect a bleſſednes! All will in words affirme boldly, that nothing is better then to dwell in a *place of reſt*: and yet where is he that makes account of it when it is offered him? Nay, all in a manner ſhun it, as if men had agreed with a common conſent to liue in miſerable perplexitie, and continuall trembling of heart. In the meane while, none is to murmure and ſay, that he ſinnes ignorantlie: for what is more cleere and manifeſt then the doctrine of God? all excuſes of men therefore are but in vaine. In a word, what is more abſurd, then to lay the fault vpon God, as if he taught men either obſcurely, or confuledly? Now as God here teſtifies that hee ſhewes vnto men by his word the way how to come to an aſſured *reſt*: ſo on the other ſide hee certifies the vnbeleeuers, that the continuall broiles which are within them, are the iuſt recompences of their wickedneſſe.

Where it folloves, *Giue reſt to him that is wearie*, ſome expound it, as if God required works of charitie, if ſo be we will find fauour in his ſight; and theſe workes are here comprehended vnder a part for the whole. But as I thinke the Prophet meant another thing: he rather ſhewes what reſt it is which God affords vs for the releeuing of our infirmitie: and certainly we are conuincied of our great ingratitude, if neceſſitie, which of it ſelſe is a ſharpe ſpurre, cannot for all that quicken vs forward to ſeeke this remedy. This ſentence of the Prophet tends almoſt to the ſame end that the words of Chriſt do, Math. 11. 28. *Come vnto me all ye that trauell and are heauie laden, and I will eaſe you.* So that Iſaiah ſets the choice of two things heere before the Iewes,

What an inſtimable benefit Gods word brings, if our owne inſidelitie deprived vs not of it.

All men naturallie deſire reſt, yet few take the right way to enioy it.

We are conuincied of great ingratitude, if our owne neceſſities can not quicken vs vp to ſeeke the remedies which God freely offers vs.

1 to wit, whether they had rather be comforted and refreshed; or to fall vnder the burthen, and so be ouerwhelmed. Wherein hee confirms that which I touched ere while; to wit, that God exhorts not those that haue neede of rest, to come vnto him in vaine; as he saith, Chap. 45. 19. I haue not said in vaine to the house of Iacob, Seeke yee me. Are wee taught by this word then? Surely if the fault be not in our selues, we may safely rest in the doctrine which he sets before vs. For it is not his custome to feede vs with vaine hopes; though men are often wont by fond conceits, to throw themselves into many griefes and vexations.

Moreouer, in that he shewes that this rest is prepared for those that are weary and groane vnder the burthen: we are taught, therein at the least, to haue our recourse vnto the word of God, to the end wee may obtaine rest. By which wee may be assured, and that by good experience, that it is the propertie of this word, to quiet our boiling passions, and to appease our distracted and amazed consciences. Whosoeuer hee be then that wanders in seeking rest out of the bounds of this word, shall alwaies be vexed, and shall surely tremble in continual feares; and good reason, for they will bee wise and happie without God. This, as we see, betwixt the Papists, who hauing scorned this peace, are therefore tossed to and fro all their life time with horrible anxietie. For Satan turnes and winde them, that they are cauer vexed with terrible astonishments, and yet can neuer find anie place of rest.

Verf. 13. *Therefore shall the word of the Lord be vnto them precept vpon precept, precept vpon precept, line vpon line, line vnto line, there a little, & there a little, that they may goe and fall backward, and bee broken, and bee snared, and bee taken.*

Albeit the Prophet repeats the same speech with the former, yet y sense doth a little alter: for now he denounceth the punishment of this so wilful a deafenesse whereof the spake. The iudgement is, that God shall so *dazle their wits*, that they shall not only reap no fruit at all of the doctrine of saluation, but an empty and vnprofitable sound. In a word, from the former verses he concludes, that seeing the word of God had in no sort profited the Iewes; that their vnthankfulness should now be punished. Not that Gods word should bee cleane taken from them; but in wanting vnderstanding and a *right iudgement*, they should groape for the way at noone day, and should not finde it. And thus God blinds the eyes, and hardens the hearts of the reprobates more and more, when they are waxen incorrigible.

Saint Paul alleadgeth this place when hee reprehends the foolish conceit of the Corinthians, who were so possessed with pride, that they admired none but such as spake vnto

them in strange languages, 1. Cor. 14. 21. It being an vtuall thing with the common people, to wonder at strange & vnwonted things. But this place of Paul is ill vnderstood, by reason they haue not well pondered the Prophets words; which the Apostle very fitly applies to his purpose. For he declares how the Corinthians were caried away with a foolish and vnbridled ambition, vnreasonably affecting things altogether vnprofitable; and thus were become children, not in malice, but in iudgement and *vnderstanding*. By means whereof, they pulled the curse of God wittingly vpon themselves; wherewith the Prophet had threatened the Iewes in this place. And so it came to passe, that the word of God was vnto them *precept vpon precept*, receiuing no more fruit by it, then if one had told them a long tale in a language they vnderstood not. Men are grown exceeding fond therefore, when they begin to throw themselves by a vaine affection into wilfull blindness and benumbednesse of spirit; with which plague the Lord here threatens the obstinate & rebellious. Saint Paul then expounds and cleares this sentence of the Prophet verie well; shewing, that such as abule the doctrine of saluation, are vnworthy to profit any thing at all by it.

We had almost the like place to this in the eight Chapter, where our Prophet compared his doctrine to letters sealed vp; and anon he will liken it to a closed booke. This fallies out 10. when the Lord deprivens men of the light of his spirit, and of sound iudgement for their vnthankfulness sake; that seeing, they might not see; and hearing, they might not heare at all: whereby hee punisheth them most iustly. We ought to obserue this well, for wee often take our selues to be great proficient, and to be exceeding happie that we haue the word of God amongst vs; but what profit get we by it, vnlesse our vnderstandings be fitted to conceiue it, and our hearts framed to be directed by it? For wanting this, wee are more accursed, then if we had not the word at all. And therefore wee stand in neede of a twofold grace: First, that God would enlighten vs by his word: secondly, that hee would open our eyes, and dispose our affections to imbrace the obedience of it. Otherwise, the light of the Gospell shall stand vs in no more stead, then the light of the Sun doth to the eyes of him that is starke blind.

By this chastisement then we are admonished, not to abuse the word of God by our prophaneesse; but to vse it to that end for which he hath ordained it.

In the end of the verse he shewes, what ruine is like to fall vpon those that profit not by this cleere light of the word, euen to bee left without a guide, and to *stumble and fall*; because they are departed out of the right way. But he telles them their fallies shall not be easie, for they shall be *broken*.

By the word *snared*, hee vseth an other similitude; to wit, that *snarres* are prepared for vnbelieuers, wherein they shall be hampered and led to destruction. Wee haue had the like speech in the eight Chapter, and almost

It is the property of Gods word to bring assured rest to our soules. See Ier. 6. 16.

Chap. 8. 16.
Chap. 29. 9.

We are in worse case in inioying the word, then if we were vnder bereaued of it, vnlesse we yeeld obedience therunto.

Let vs beware how wee abuse Gods word.

Note that God may continue his word in a nation, & in the mean while depriue them of the benefit thereof.

Chap. 8. 16.
most

moſt expreſſed in the very ſame words : for the Prophet handles the ſame doctrine, as touching the blinding of the people, who by the hardneſſe of their hearts, had prouoked God to anger. Now his purpoſe is here to ſhew, that ſuch who take the bridle in their teeth, and will needs turne their backs and begone from the direction of the word, are verie neere to a ruinous downefall. For they ſhall either meete with *ſtumbling blockes*, againſt which they ſhall *daſh themſelves in peeces*, or with nets, in which they ſhall be *ſnared and taken*. In a word, they ſhall no way eſcape; for a miſchiefe warcheth for them at euerie turning, who will not walke in the paths which God ſhewes them; for either they ſhall *fall* and bee *broken* before all men; or themſelves by priuie wiles, ſhall intrap their owne ſeete in the *ſnare*.

Verſ. 14 *Wherefore heare the word of the Lord yee ſcornefull men, that rule this people which is at Ieruſalem.*

HEE (further) amplifies that ſharpe reprehention which he vſed before, and withall, adds a conſolation to reuiue the hearts of the faithfull. For as on the one ſide hee threatens the wicked with deſtruction; ſo yet on the other ſide he leaues matter of conſolation for the faithfull, aſſuring the that their ſaluation is deere and precious to God. Now by the word *mockers*, hee means thoſe that were witty and malicious, who by their wylie deuices, thought to eſcape the iudgements of God : for the verbe *Luts*, from whence this word *mockers* is deriued, ſignifies to cauill and to mocke. Now he ſpeakes not here to common perſons; but to the Princes and Magiſtrates, who thought themſelves wiſer and more prudent then thoſe that were vnder their government. But they employed this dexteritie of wit, in deuſing how they might play mocke holy day with God. It is not for nought the that the Prophet doth tauntingly accuſe them, in calling them *ſcorners*. As if hee ſhould ſay, You thinke you haue ſuch deepe deuices in your heads, that you can circumuent the Lord; but he will not take it at your hands.

Surely the greateſt conflicts which the Prophets had, were againſt the *rulers* of the people : for howſoeuer all eſtates were horribly corrupted, yet they being ſwollen with a falſe conceit of their owne wiſdome, were the moſt obſtinate and vtractable of all others. This is to be ſeene at all times almoſt : for albeit the common people be caried away with a violent brutiſhneſſe, yet doe they not ouerflow into ſuch impietic as the great ones, Courtiers, & ſuch other ſubtile heads do, who thinke to goe beyond all men in fineneſſe of wit. The Miniſters of Gods word then had need to arme themſelves (with the ſword of the Spirit) principally againſt ſuch ſubtile enemies: for there are none ſo dangerous, that not onely hurt themſelves, but leade others alſo by their example, to become *ſcoffers* and deſpiſers. And for the moſt part, they dazle

the eyes of the meaner ſort, by means of their authoritie and great titles.

Is it not a ſearcfull and prodigious thing, thinke you, whē the gouernours of the church are not onely blind, but alſo labour to put out the eyes of others, and imbolden them to deſpiſe God, to contemne his holy word, and to rent it in peeces with their ielts? yea, when they employ the vttermoſt of their wits and ſkill to ouerthrow true religion. But we ought to bend our forces againſt ſuch kinde of men, and that according to the Prophets example in this place, and not to be outfaçed in this fight, whatſoeuer they can ſay or doe vnto vs. And himſelfe ſhewes how ſuch ſcorners ſhould be vſed : that is, not much to trouble our heads in deuſing how to inſtruct them, (for teaching wil doe them little good) but wee ought to *rebuke them ſharply*, and to terrifie them with Gods iudgements. The greatneſſe of the offence is augmented in regard ſuch had place in Gods ſanctuarie, and thereby infected his choſen people with their vile behauiour.

Verſ. 15. *But yee haue ſaid; We haue made a couenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement : though a ſcourge runne ouer, and paſſe thorow, it ſhall not come at vs : for we haue made falſhood our refuge, and vnder vanity are we hid.*

HERE the Prophet adds the reaſon wherefore he called them mockers; namely, becauſe they had caſt off all feare of God. And hee ſhewes how they made themſelves beleue, that (of all men) they ſhould neuer be puniſhed for their tranſgreſſions, ſo as they grew the more braſen faced. And as if this had been a ſufficient warrant for them, they gaue themſelves the more freely to doe euill, and without any feare, purſued whatſoeuer their luſts led them vnto. And this is it that hee means by their *couenant with hell and with death* : for they audaciouſly ſcorned all the threatnings and plagues of God; becauſe they tooke themſelves to be out of his gunſhot.

By the word *Koze*, he ſignifies that which he ſaid touching the word *Berith*, which ſignifies a couenant: for he repeats one thing twice. This word *Koze*, which ſignifies viſion, is as much as wee vſe to ſay, To vnderſtand : and it ſeemes there is a ſecret oppoſition in this place betwene the *viſions* of the Prophets, and thoſe cunning deuices which theſe wylie ellowes delighted in. But yet in the meane while it is certaine, that theſe fine heads neuer came ſo far as to brag thus, and to vtter ſuch words indeed; for that had been too ridiculous, and little children might haue laughed at them. Moreouer, they alwaies ſtudied doubleſſe how to get themſelves all the credit they could among the people, albeit they deſpiſed God, & reiected al holeſome admonitiōs; they would not be ſo groſſe then to confeſſe that they *made falſhood their refuge*.

But the Prophet obserued their affections and outward practise, and not their faire shewes: and considered what was in their hearts by their deeds, & not by their words. Now because men are wont to please themselves in their vices, and with brazen faces, in despising Gods threatnings, it proues by their practise that they haue made a *covenants* with death, which they nothing feare though God terrifie them with it: therefore the Prophet in generall reprobates this carnall confidence, which makes men forget the remembrance of God and his iudgements, whereby they wittingly deceiue themselves as if they were able to escape his hands.

Lucianists.

But especially he closteth with these Lucianists and mock-Gods, who thinke they are in nothing so wise as in deriding of God: and the more they would couer their villanie, the louder y^e Prophet cries out with open mouth against them; as if (out of some darke corner) he should draw all their deepe and desperat thoughts into the light. After this sort I pray you behold the wit, the cunning, and subtletie of these wise men of the world, who being inuironed with miseries and ruine on euery side, do yet thinke themselves hidden in safetie. Are they not well worthie therefore to seeke their saluation in lies, seeing they despise the saluation of God which themselves scorne and deride? Indeed they couer their practises with cunning deceits, and vnder goodly pretexts, and in the meane while take them for nothing lesse then lies: but (whatsoever they imagin) the Prophet hits the nail on the head (as we say) and calles them by their names.

A double simile.

As touching this clause of a *scourge running ouer*, the Prophet vnder those words comprehends two similitudes. For first he compares the afflictions and calamities wherewith God chastiseth the wickednesse of the world to a *scourge*: and then resembles the same to a *deluge*, in regard of the violence and vehemencie thereof. Now these scoffers thought themselves cock-sure in regard of being hurt by any such tempests, how sharp or furious soeuer they were, and made full account to escape; albeit they *ouerranne* the whole land: provided y^e they were fortified with *falshood* and with *vanitie* before hand. They could nor but see what iudgements and calamities men are subiect vnto: but because they beheld not Gods hand in them, nor considered his prouidence, but imputed whatsoever fell out to blind fortune, therefore they sought remedies and leaning-stocks whereby they might secure themselves, and keepe back these scourges farre off from them.

Verf. 16. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lay in Zion a stone, a tried stone, a pretious corner stone, a sure foundation. He that beleeueth shall not make haste.*

NOW *Isaiah* comforts the faithfull, and threatens the wicked with their iust and deserved perdition. First, he sets downe the

consolation which concerned the faithfull, who were then in stead of a May-game to these Gallants. For we see how the wicked are not ashamed at this day to deride our simplicitie, holding vs no better then idiots, that in the midst of so many troubles and bitter persecutions wee still hope notwithstanding, that God will turne all to the best for vs. The Prophet soares vp and relieues the hearts of y^e good with this consolation then against the insolencie of the reprobate, to the end they might goe on cheerefullie and boldlie, contemning all their flouts & mocks, and might also be assured that their hope should not be in vaine. The word demonstrative *Behold*, is put heere for the greater assurance of the matter; as if he should say, Albeit the vnbeleeuers make no reckning of my words, nor giue any credit vnto them, yet will I be as good as my promise for all that. The pronoun *I*, is also of great weight, for the further confirmation of the prophesie. Now for the words, first *Bochan* is put by way of an epithite with the word *stone*, and signifies, Of prooffe; and may be taken as well in the actiue signification, as in the passiue, or for a stone vpon which the whole building is to be framed and ordered as to his rule: or for a tried stone. But the first exposition seemes to agree best, and the proprietie of the Hebrew tongue requires that we interpret it rather in the actiue signification. He calles it a *tried stone* then, in regard of his effect, because the whole building was to be squared and fitted vpon this stone, otherwise of necessitie the whole house must sinke.

The word *corner* which he adds to it, signifies, that it beares vp all the weight of the building; and by this title (which is also giuen him in *Pal. 118. 22.*) his power and vertue is recommended vnto vs. Lastly, he calles it a *foundation*, or (if we may so speake) a foundation fundamentall: thus proceeding by little and little, and as it were by degrees to the commendation of this stone. For he shewes that it is not a common stone, or such a one as is taken out of many which serue in the building: but that it is a rare and excellent one; euen such an one as beares vp all the weight thereof. It is a *stone* then; yet so as it fills the *whole corner*: and is so the corner stone, that the *whole building is laid vpon it*. For as no man can lay any other foundation, *1 Cor. 3. 11.* so must all the Church & her members rest and be built vpon it only.

Some translate the second part of the verse as if it were an exhortation, Let not him that beleeueth make haste: but I rather take it in the future tence, in regard it agrees best both with the scope of the text, as also because it is approved of by the authoritie of *S. Paul*. I denie not but the Apostles followed the Greeke translation, and in vsing their libertie, were content to giue the sense of the place without looking curiously to the words: but they haue in nothing altered the sense, but haue rather truly and naturallie deliuered the same: respecting the drift to which it was rightlie applied. As often then as they alledge a text out of the old testament, they diligentlie

Diligentlie retaine both the end and uſe of it. The Apoſtle alleading this propheſie tranſlated it according to the Greeke; Who ſoever beleueth, ſhall not be confounded, Rom. 9.33. which agrees with the Prophet: for queſtionles his meaning was to ſay, That he which *beleueth*, ought to be quiet and ſill; ſo as to deſire nothing beſides; neither wauering in vncertentie, nor yet *haſting* to ſeek out new remedies, but ſhall ſullie content himſelfe in his *faith* only. The tranſlation is proper then as you ſee, in regard the word *haſt* notes out ſeruenice, or trembling. In a word, the Prophet meant to eſtimate *faith* by this inſeſtimable ſtute; becauſe in it we find aſſured reſt and quiet. Whence it followes, that we ſhall alwaies be in vniquietnes and vexation of mind, vntill ſuch time as we haue attained it: for no other haue remains for vs to harbor in in ſafetie, but y^e truth of God, vpon which, if our faith be firmly ſetled, we ſhall find it the only meanes to ſee vs in reſt and tranquillitie of mind. The ſame Apoſtle in another place deſcribes vnto vs the fruite of this faith, where he ſaith, That being iuſtified thereby, wee haue peace with GOD, Rom. 5.1.

A commendation of faith, in regard of her effect.

No peace without that faith which is grounded vpon the truth of God.

Chriſt is this corner ſtone. Mat. 21. 24. Act. 4. 11. Rom. 9. 33. 1. Pet. 2. 6.

Now the Apoſtles and Euangelists ſhew that this *ſtone* is Chriſt himſelfe: for when he was ſent into the world the Church was then truly built and ſetled. For firſt, all the promiſes had their ſtedfaſtnes in him: ſecondly, mens ſaluation reſteth vpon him alone. Take away Ieſus Chriſt then, and the Church by and by ſhalles and goes to ruine. It is euident by the very text it ſelfe therefore that this is to be referred vnto Chriſt, without whom we haue no aſſurance of ſaluation, but ſhall be in danger of vtter ruine euer and anon. Moreover, we haue the authoritie of the Euangelists and Apoſtles; yea, the Holy Ghoſt teacheth the ſame plainly by their mouth and miniſtrie.

But if we ſhall ſcan things a little better, it will be eaſie to ſee how theſe things are applied vnto Ieſus Chriſt. Firſt it will be granted that *Iſaiah* doth not for nought bring in the *Lord himſelfe* pronouncing this, to whom only it belongs to lay the foundation of his Church, as hath been ſhewed before, and ſhal be touched againe hereafter: and beſides, this ſentence is oft met with in the Pſalmes. For though all men ſhould lay their hands to this worke, yet were they not able to lay the leaſt ſtone aright: it is God alone then that founds and builds his Church, howſoever for this purpoſe it pleaſeth him to uſe the miniſtrie and labors of men. Of whom is it now, I pray you, that we hold Ieſus Chriſt, but of the Father? It was the heavenly Father then who did and performed all theſe things, and appointed his only begotten ſonne to be the foundation of our ſaluation.

Reasons to proue that this ſtone muſt be Chriſt.

It is God himſelfe that hath builded his Church vpon this corner ſtone.

Obiect.

Anſ.

But was not this ſtone laid before? Was not the Church alwaies built vpon this foundation? I confeſſe it was ſo, but only in hope: for Chriſt was not yet manifested in the fleſh: neither had he as yet accompliſhed the office of our Redeemer. The Prophet ſpeakes therefore as of a thing to come, to the end the

faithfull might be well aſſured that y^e Church which they then ſaw, not attained only, but woſulhe rent and ſhaken, and falling as it were to the ground, ſhould be eſtabliſhed by a new prop when it ſhall reſt vpon that *ſtone* which God would put vnder it with his owne hand.

He ſaith, it ſhall be laid in *Zion*, in regard Chriſt was to come out thence. Which alſo ſerues much for the confirmation of our faith; when wee ſee that he proceeded from that place which was ſo long before appointed vnto him. But *Mount Zion* now is euerie where, becauſe the bounds of the Church are ſtretched to the ends of the world. Now Chriſt is the true *triad ſtone*: for all the building muſt be ſquared and proportioned vpon him, ſo as we can not be the building of God, vnleſſe we be fitted vnto him. For which cauſe the Apoſtle commands vs to grow vp in him which is the head, in whom all the bodie ought to be knit and ioined together, Ephes. 4. 15. for our faith muſt be whollie proportioned to Chriſt, to the end he may be the rule of it. He is alſo the *corner ſtone*, vpon which not only a part of the houſe reſts, but the whole weight and ſubſtance of it; for hence other foundation can any man lay, ſaith *S. Paul*, but that which is laid, to wit, Ieſus Chriſt, 1. Cor. 3. 12. Now yee ſee wherefore *Iſaiah* leads vs to this *foundation* when he brings in the *Lord* promiſing the reſtauration of his Church: for there was ſuch a woſull deſolation, that it reſembled a waſt wildernes, which could no way be brought into any good ſaſhion but by Chriſt alone.

The Churches ruins can no way be repaired but by Chriſt alone.

In that he is called *a ſtone to ſtumble at*: this is by accident: for the vnthankfull who reſiſt him by their owne malice, ſinde him to be that which he would not be vnto them. But of this we haue ſpoken in the eight Chapter.

Verſ. 17. *Iudgement Will I alſo lay to the rule, and right couſes to the ballance; and the houle ſhall ſweepe away the vaine confidence, and the waters ſhall ouerflow the ſecret place.*

IN regard the waſt of the Church was ſuch, as the faithfull durſt ſcarce hope for a better ſtate, he ſhewes that God hath the *meanes*, readie in his hand to reforme the Church anew. And as before he uſed a ſimilitude taken from building, ſo now alſo by another he teacheth that they needed not to feare as if God were not able in the end to finiſh the good worke of his building begun. In the meane while he doth by the way taxe the pride and inſolencie of ſuch as would be taken to be pillars of the Church; which yet as much as in them lay tooke the next way to ouerturne it. The light of faith was almoſt put out: Gods ſeruiſe was corrupted: ſo that there was a fearefull deſonitic to be ſcene in y^e ſtate of this people, albeit they boſted theſelues to be the royall Prieſthood. Which we ſee now fulfilled in the Papacie. For they ſtick not to belch out glorious titles without any ſhame at all, albeit the lamentable con-

Another ſimile. When God begins to build his Church, he will alſo finiſh the ſame.

No forme of
a found
Church
amongst the
Papists.

fusion which is to be seene amongst them, doth plainly discouer to all the world that there is no forme of a found Church amongst them. Therefore it is that the Prophet stands to shew at what end the reformation of a true Church ought to begin.

Now it is very likely that the words *rule* and *measure* are all one in sense, as may be collected more probable from the 21. Chapter of the 2. booke of the Kings, vers. 13. where the Lord saith, I will spread the *line* or *rule* of Samaria vpon Ierusalem, and the *measure* of the house of *Ahab*. Albeit I denie not but he alludes to the ballance wherein things are weighed: but let vs remember that both similitudes are taken from buildings, wherein the master carpenters & masons frame all things by *rule*, that so a iust proportion may be kept in euery part. And thus it is said, That the Lord hath appointed an equall *iudgement* to restore his Church by, wherein, without that all things areumbled confusedlie together, as the ruinous heapes of an house, to wit, when the wicked are exalted, and the faithfull dejected and afflicted. The same he affirms of *Iustice*, to wit, that it shall be measured & poized with the ballance, and that all things shall be equalled according to the *rule*. For by *Iustice* and *iudgement* he meanes a iust and lawfull gouernment of the Church, which is opposed to those disguised shewes which the titularie Bishops so much brag of. *Isaiah* tels vs then that this foundation is not only laid to the end the Church might be new begun, but also perfectlie restored and whollie settled, as they say.

How Iustice
and Iudgement
are taken in this
place.

The other part of the similitude notes out a most iust equalitie. Nothing can be wanting to the building then if Christ be laid for the foundation: but if he be not laid, all will be full of vanitie and confusion. Now in regard that Iustice and Iudgement could not be received whilste these false confidences tooke place, therefore the Prophet shewes that they shall be *swept away*, because the wrath of God shall bring downe all pride, and the ouerflowing of waters shall enter in to all these secret corners vpon which they so much relied. He threatens then that the hypocrites shall perish with their vaine brags, and that the Lord in the meane while will not faile to provide for the safetie of his Church.

Nothing
wants to the
building, if
Christ be
laid for the
foundation.

But he speaks not of these scourges as if the wicked should become any whit the better by them, for lightlie they waxe rather worse and worse. This should be the purgation then, to wit, God would discouer the vaine & false confidence wherof they boasted, after he had drawne the out of their denues. For the wicked thinke they are so couered vnder the cloake of iusthood and vanitie, that no blowes can any way touch them: and that is the *cause* why they flatter themselves till their iniquitie be found worthis to be hated. But the *waters* will easily come, that is to say, the wrath of the Lord, which runnes and makes a noyse like a streame of waters that will easily breake into the bottome of their lowest caues.

Vers. 15.

Vers. 18. *And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand: When a scourge shall runne ouer and passe thorow, then shall ye be trod downe by it.*

BEFORE he spake against the hypocrits, who obstinately scorned at God and all his threatenings; and also ouerthrew their goodly discourses, because they imagined that death and they were agreed: that is to say, they promised vnto themselves neuer to be touched with any of Gods scourges for their vngodlines: as if with iesting and scoffing out the matter they could haue escaped from Gods hand. Now he giues them to vnderstand, that as it is certaine they must giue accounts of this vnto God, so they shall be ouertaken with feare & terror in despite of their teeth. For when men grow thus secure and fortish, it proceeds from a kind of giddines or deepe sleep which they are fallen into, so as they can not feele y^e greatnes of their sinnes, but the Lord will rouze them out of their drouzines well enough, be they rocked neuer so fast asleepe in it, and wil make their forged couenants to vanish away in the aire. In a word, his meaning is to say, That this peace in which the wicked enioy whilste they thus sleepe in their sinnes shall not last euer, for they shall be forced, will they nil they, to acknowledge God to be their Iudge: and although they intended to giue themselves to pleasure, yet should they be surprized at vnawares, and tossed with troubles and griefes of minde in the midst of their rest. For he will apprehend them as malefactors, who hauing broken prison, scorne their Iudges; raile vpon them; and rise vp in all insolencie against them: but espying the Sergeants at their heeles that pursue them, their courage is by and by cooled, and all their mirth is turned into mourning, and then is their state much worse then if they had neuer broken prison at all. Thus the wicked enioy their pleasure which they take in the forgetfulness of their sinnes committed only for a momēt, but the Lord takes them by the neck, and so affrights their consciences, that they can by no meanes obtaine any quiet.

Vers. 19. *When it passeth ouer, it shall take you away: for it shall passe thorow every morning in the day, and in the night, and there shall be only feare to make you vnderstand the hearing.*

HE expresth more in this verse then in the former, for he shewes that the reprobrates are neere their destruction, notwithstanding they promise to themselves an eternall happines. The wicked can not but feele the afflictions wherewith they are pressed, but in the meane while they flatter and besot themselves, and thus they thinke to put their misfortunes farre from them. For heare what (duclish) proverbs they breathe out, *Torment vs not before the time: Let vs be merry whilist*

Diuelish
proverbs
used by the
wicked.

whileſt we may; let vs take our pleaſure, and neuer wax melancholicke without cauſe, or for nothing. But the Prophet tels them here, that there hangs an horrible calamitie ouer their heads which they ſee not.

And he addes *every morning*: that is to ſay, ſpeedily and continually, in regard the wicked neuer feare the Lord till his hand be vpon them. For ſometimes they feare where no feare is; it being only a blind feare, in regard they know not whence it comes. Moreouer, if God threaten, they grow ſecure; becauſe they take him not to bee their Iudge. And thus they had rather feele his hand, then ſeriuoſitie to bethinke them what a one heeis.

In that he repeats the *morning* twice, and by and by after, *day and night*; his meaning is, that the plague ſhal not ceaſe, but ſhall ouerflow euertie day. And that to this end, left they ſhould imagin it to be but a light calamitie, or ſhould teede themſelues with hope of ſome releaſe. For albeit the wrath of God laſts but for a moment towards the faithfull, yet it indures for euer vpon the wicked; for hee neuer ceaſeth to purſue them to the vtmoſt.

The expoſitours agree not about the expoſition of the latter part of the verſe, which I haue tranſlated, *Fear oneſy* ſhall cauſe to heare: Saut *terum* tranſlates, Feare giues vnderſtanding to the hearing; but the interpretation following comes neerer the Prophets meaning, *Onely armour or feare will make them vnderſtand*: that is to ſay; All thoſe that ſhall heare this newes, will become teachable, and will harken to the Lord, becauſe of the rumour which they haue heard. And yet I expound it leſſe conſtrainedly thus, (not ſtanding to reſuſe the expoſitions of others) *The time will come, when feare alone will open your eares to receive aduertiſement*. As if he ſhould ſay; Hitherunto (I confeſſe) I haue gained little by the warnings I haue giuen you, but the Lord himſelfe will deuſe a meanes to teach you; to wit, by the chaſtiſements and calamities wherewith hee will *feare you*, that ſo you may know with whom you haue to doe. As for example; a ſorrowfull and carefull father that can no way tame a leaud ſonne, will thus ſay vnto him; Seeing thou deſiſeſt my counſell, the hangman (I feare) muſt one day be thy ſchoolemaſter. And thus deales Iſaiab with the rebels of his time, which ſcorned all his ſermons. The Prophets are no body with you now, ſaith he, but a day will come, that you ſhall know to your coſt, that they haue not ſpoken the truth to you in vaine. Yet all this ſhall not ſerue the turne, becauſe there ſhall be no place left for repentance in ſo late an acknowledgement: for the Lord muſt bee ſought whileſt he is to be found. Did *Pharaoh* become the better for his chaſtiſements? Exod. 8. 15. What got *Iſau* by his teares, when hee ſaw himſelfe deſtroyed of his birthright? Gen. 25. 38. For fiſt he was deſtitute of true repentance: ſecondly, there followed none amendment of life: Heb. 12.

By the word *feare*, he ſhewes how fearfull a thing it is to fall into the hands of the li-

uing God: Heb. 10. 31. and that his word is neuer deſpiſed, buche reuenger the contempt thereof. Hee takes the word *Shemurah* here, for that which is heard; to wit, for the doctrine.

Verſ. 20. *For the bed is ſtrait that it cannot ſuffice; and the conering narrow, that one cannot wrap himſelfe.*

BY this ſimilitude hee adorneſ the former ſentence. For he compares the reprobates that are preſſed with Gods hand, to thoſe that are laid in a *ſhort and narrow bed*, where they can neither ſtretch nor ſtir any member without much annoiance: ſo that in the place of reſt, they feele nought elie but diſquietneſſe and griefe. As if he ſhould ſay; You ſhall be ſo hampered; that being compaſſed about with extreme pangs, your *bed* (which is appointed for you to reſt in) ſhall be in ſtead of a racke, or ſome other kind of torture. And if they ſeek to couer theſelues, euē their *conering* ſhall be too narrow. Thus their miſeries ſhall be doubled vpon them, becauſe in the middeſt thereof, they ſhall be deſtroyed of all neceſſarie comforts. For hee expreſſeth the manner of their miſerie by the ſimilitude of a *ſtrait or narrow bed*, to the end they might know, that their condition ſhould bee the moſt wretched of all men, in regard Gods vengeance ſhould follow them thicke and threefold, which way ſo euer they turned them, and yet ſhould find no eaſe or redreſſe at all.

Now the Lord is wont to vſe theſe ſimilitudes, to ſhew the end he might frame his ſpeech to our capacities; for otherwiſe we are vnable to conceiue how fearfull his iudgements are. From theſe things we gather then, that the *feares* wherewith the wicked are troubled and inwrapped, are verie great and terrible, when the Lord begins once to purſue them: for they would gladly hide themſelues then in the deepeſt bowels of the earth, that the Lord might not find them; but he drawes them out into the light, and pins them vp in ſo *ſtrait and narrow* a roome, that they cannot ſtir a foote.

Verſ. 21. *For the Lord ſhall ſtand as in mount Perazim: hee ſhall bee wroth as in the valley of Gebeon, that hee may doe his worke, his ſtrange worke, and bring to paſſe his act, his ſtrange act.*

BECAUſE he ſpeakes here of the reprobate and caſtawayes, the Prophet propounds nothing but horrors and extreme vengeance: for as the Lord ſhewes himſelfe good and gracious towards them that are his; ſo hee ſhewes himſelfe terrible and fearful to them whom hee reuengeth. And for prooſe hereof hee allegeth ſuch examples, as wherein the Lord maniſteſt his power for the defence of his people; namely, when he put the Philiftines

It is a miſerie of miſeries to be diſtreſſed, and in the meane while to want neceſſarie comforts.

To what end God is ſaine to vſe theſe and the like ſimilitudes.

A horrible thing to be purſued by the Lord as an angry Iudge.

Simile.

A day will come, when the wicked ſhall know that Gods Miniſters haue not ſpoken to them in vaine.

Chap. 55. 6. Heb. 12. 17.

to flight in the valley of Baal-perazim by the pursuit of *David*, 2.Sam.5.20.25. 1.Chro.14.11. Secondly, when the Amorites and other enemies were discomfited in the valley of Gibeon by the Israelites, vnder the leading of *Ioshua*, who obtained such fauour of the Lord that the Sunne and Moone stood still at his request, that he might haue time the better to giue his enemies the foile, Iosh.10.10.

By the word of *standing vp*, he notes out Gods power, because we thinke him asleepe, or sitting idle in heauen, when he lets the vngodly alone at their ease. It is said that he riseth, or stands vp then, whe in all mens sight he giues testimonies of his might, which especially appears when we behold what great care he hath ouer his Church. And albeit there were sundrie respects which caused the Lord in former times to lift vp his hand against strangers which were the enemies of his chosen, and now to proclaim open warre against the Iewes: yet *Isaiah* applies these examples very fitlie to his purpose, in regard the Lord provides no lesse for the safetie of his Church by expelling her domesticall enemies, then if he bent his force and weapons of artilerie against alians. He holds them then for no lesse then his enemies, howsoeuer they haue the face to professe themselves his friends and people.

Some thinke he calles this *a strange worke*, because nothing agrees better to Gods nature then to shew mercie in pardoning sins: for when he is angry, it is against his liking, and therefore puts vpon him another nature as it were contrarie to his owne. Because in Exod.34.6. he proclaimes himselfe to be gracious, mercifull, patient, good, and slow to anger, to which the rest of the Scriptures do accord in many words, and diuers phrases, setting him forth to be infinit in compassion.

Others expound *Strange*, in regard he was wont in former time to defend his people; it was therefore a rare and *strange worke* that he should now be so seuerer towards them to roote them out as his enemies. To speake what I thinke, I take this word *Strange* for wonderfull, and a thing ynheard of: for so we are wont to esteeme those things that are seldome seene among men, who as (we know) are much giuen to woder at new and strange accidents. It is as much then as if he had said, The Lord will not punish you after a common and ordinarie maner, but so *strangely*, that who soeuer sees or heares of it shall be astonished.

True it is that all the works of God are so many testimonies of his power, yea, the least of them is sufficient to draw vs into an admiration: but in regard they are little respected because they are common, we thinke he works nothing, vnlesse it be by some extraordinary meanes. The Prophet therefore sets before vs the examples of old time, to the end men might know that howsoeuer this was esteemed a wonderfull and strange hand of God, yet it was no new thing with him, seeing he hath shewed the like testimonies of his power long since, and that no lesse great and vnwonted. Yet I receiue it for granted and

willingly agree thereunto, that the Prophet opposeth the wicked Israelites heere, to the Philistims and Canaanites: As if he should say, The Lord was wont to shew miracles when he saued his people, but now he will do them for their destruction: for seeing the Israelites haue so farre degenerated, they shall feele the hand of God in their perdition, which their fathers felt in their preservation.

Verf. 22. Now therefore be no mockers lest your bonds increase: for I haue heard of the Lord of hosts a consumption, euen determined vpon the whole earth.

HE againe aduertiseth these wicked ones whom before he had called scorners, that their subtle deuises, contempts, flouts and cauils should stand them in no stead, because all their fetches should vanish into smoke; and herewithall exhorts such vnto repentance in whom there was yet left any hope of healing. For this cause he repeats the same thing often, to trie if he could awaken them: for he affirms, if they will obstinatlie stand out, they shal do nothing elsse but more and more weaue the web of their own ruine. Whereas some in stead of *bonds*, translate Chastisements, it agrees not well with the context, which contains in it a very apt similitude, borrowed from nets. For as the Fox that is taken in the net, or snare, fastens the knot the more whilest he endeouers with strugling to escape, and to saue himselfe: so the wicked, the more they seeke starting-holes, the further they worke themselves fast in the snare. They will needs be running out of Gods reach, and will kick against the pricks, like the iades, who in deuoer by all meanes to throw their rider: but what get they in the end by such rebellion and stubbornnes; nothing but the harder and heauier strokes.

By this wee are taught how to proceede with wicked persons, but then especially whe wee see them destitute of the feare of God: Truly we must forthwith threaten them that they shall escape by none of their cunning shifts or iests from that wrath of God which is readie to seaze vpon them. Hence also we are admonished, that it is no good iesting with God, because he shewes vs here as in a glasse, and that from the beginning of the world, what the end of such haue been as haue set light by Gods admonitions and warnings.

Now to the end this prophesie might the rather be beleued, *Isaiah* shewes that he speaks nothing but that which was revealed to him by the *Lord of hosts*. The word *Calah* signifies sometimes Perfection, sometimes Consumption, as was said Chap.10.23, but it is to be taken here for *Consumption*, because the Prophets drift is to shew that the Lord is determined quicklie and whollie to roote out this sinfull generation from off the earth. Two things are comprehended in this verse then: first, that the world is neerer to a fearefull destruction (vnlesse any had rather to referre this word *earth* to the land of Iudea, which I receiue not.) Secondly, that the *day* is assigned,

God provides no lesse for the safetie of his Church by expelling her domesticall enemies, then if he bent his power against strangers.

In what sense this word *strange* is taken in this place.

Verf. 14.

Simila.

Simile.

1

2

assigned, in which it shall be done, and that it is also at hand. The word *beard*, is here taken for reuelation: and thus he saith it was reuealed vnto him. For as the Lord determined to vse the ministerie of his Prophets, so did hee also reueale his secrets vnto them, that they might be the expositors of them. It is as much then as if hee had said; The whole world is filled with wicked impieties, the reprobate reioyce in their rebellion, as if there were no God at all to punish them: but hee will shew himselfe Iudge and auenger thoroughout the earth, or in all the quarters of Iudea; neither shall any part thereof be exempt from calamities and affliction, in regard of *the open contempt of God and his Lawes*. Now albeit *Iſaiah* published these things in his time, yet they no lesse belong to ours, then to his: for God will shew himselfe to be alwaies one and the same, and hath been wont to execute his iudgements with like equitie and iudgement.

Verſ. 23. *Hearken ye: and heare my voice: hearken ye and heare my speeche.*

The Prophet vseth a preface, as if hee meant to speake of a thing of great importance: for we are not wont to call for *auisance*, or to will the hearers to giue their attention, vnlesse some matter of good consequence is to be propounded. And yet it seems *Iſaiah* speakes here of common things, as of *silling, sowing, threshing, and such like*. But the Prophet meant by this to raise the mindes of his auditors about these earthly matters: for speaking of Gods iudgements, and shewing how great his wisdom is by which hee gouernes the world, albeit the wicked sort thinke that all things goe vpon wheels at a venture, his desire was to teach and expresse an high mysterie by familiar similitudes, such as were well enough knowne to all.

We often complain, as if God altogether wincked at the praesises of the wicked, because hee thunders not downe vpon them at our pleasures: but the Prophet telles vs that God ordaines nothing but that which is lawfull and right. This preface then hath this drift; namely, to teach men how foole-hardy they be to set God to schoole, in that they controll his iudgements, and interpret them to the worst; the reason is, because hee hath set a schoolemistrie before them in the ordinarie course of nature, in which they may behold these things as cleerely as in a glasse. Behold here then a secret complaint against the *blindnesse* of men, who stumble at the very noone day. He shewes that they are senselesse and brutish, in not cōprehending the workes of God that are so apparant; and yet are so bold, as to subiect that to their senses, and to controll that, which is high and hidden from them. For example, *Saint Paul* in speaking of the resurrection, calles them *fooles* which know not the power of God in the feedes that are cast into the earth. *Thou foole*, saith hee, that which thou sowest, is not quickened, except it die first: so *Iſaiah*

here pronounceth them senselesse fooler, who are not able to comprehend the wisdom of God in so plaine & euident things. To be short, hee affirmes men to be widelesse and blind in beholding Gods workes, when they are to profite by them.

Verſ. 24. *Doth the Plowman plow all the day to Ioy? Doth he open and breake the clots of his ground?*

This place is vsually expounded, as if God taxed the people of ingratitude, in regard that hee had plaiced the part of an husbandman with his ground, and had left no cost or paines vnbestowed; but yet had not receiued that fruit which he expected. And thus the Iewes expound it; whom both Greekes and Latins haue followed: but the Prophet meant another thing. For he ioynes this doctrine with verſ. 22. in which hee had threatened that the destruction of Iudah; or of the whole earth was reuealed vnto him; and therefore now adds, that God doth not alwaies stretch out his arme, neither doth he euer keepe one rate in punishing the rebellions of man, but often times winkes thereat, and defers his iudgements for a time. This patience of the Lord the wicked abuse, taking the greater libertie thereby to sinne; as *Salomon* well sheweth; that is, because all things fall out alike both to good and bad; and that the most desperate wretches doe prosper, when the faithfull in the meane while are subiect to many miseries; yea often to greater then the very reprobates, as cast-awaies: In a word, when the vngodly perceiue no difference (in outward appearance) to be put betweene the godly & themselves, they either thinke there is no God at all, or else that things are gouerned by the disposition of blind fortune. *Iſaiah* answers to this on this manner; Know you not that God hath the times and *seasons* in his owne power, and that hee hath skill enough to dispose of his matters in all ages? If the *Plowman* be not alway plowing his ground, nor breaking of his clots, is any man therefore to taxe him of ignorance? Is it not his wisdom rather that causeth him for a time to cease? For what should a man doe in turning vp the ground continually, but trouble himselfe to no purpose, vnlesse it were to hinder the growth of his corne? Much lesse may God bee said then to doe things at random, or without iudgement; for he knowes how and when to performe his worke.

Eccleſ. 8. 11.

The application of this similitude of the Plowman.

Verſ. 25. *When he hath made it plaine, Will he not then sow the sitches, and sow cumrains, and cast in wheate by measure, and the appointed burley and rie in their place?*

26. *For his God doth instruct him to haue discretion, and doth teach him.*

27. *For sitches shall not bee threshed with a threshing instrument, nei-*

B 3 *ther*

High mysteries are sometimes expressed by common and familiar similitudes.

The drift of this preface.

1. Cor. 15. 36

ther shall a cart wheele be turned about upon the Cummin, but the fitches are beaten out with a staffe, and Cummin with a rod.

28. Bread corne when it is threshed, he doth not alway thresh it, neither doth the wheele of his cart still make a noyse, neither will he breake it with the teeth thereof.

Now he speakes of the *seede*, whereof the Plowman puts not in as much as he can; neither powres he it out by heapes, but views the ground, and then sows it with as much as is convenient: for otherwise, great heapes would lie and rot, and there would not so much as one kinnell take roote. Againe, he mingles not *divers seeds* together, but reserves one part of his field for *wheat*, another for *fitches*, and the rest for *Cummin*: all which he doth by *measure*, which is here vnderstood by the word *Shorab*, which ought thus to be vnderstood as I take it, and not for good, or excellent, for he speakes heere of measuring. He saith the like of reaping and *threshing*: for corne is not *beaten out* all after one manner, but *wheat* is beaten out with the cart *wheele*, or some ragged or toothed instrument: *fitches* with a *rod*, and *Cummin* with a *flaile*. Now he speakes heere after the custome of his Countrey: for wheat is threshed in France only with a *flaile*, Prouence only excepted. To be short, his meaning is, that euery kind of grain is not beaten out after one fashion, but euery one hath such an Instrument as fits the *nature* thereof. Also that the Husbandman is not alway *threshing*, but keeps a *measure*, lest otherwise he should bruise the corne.

But who *sautes him* this knowledge? Surely God only. If they then be so well instructed, and so prouident in these small things, what are we to thinke of that great Master and Doctor who hath taught it them? Knowes not he how to *keepe a steadie hand* and an euen carriage in his works? Foresees not he the *fittest times* when to execute his iudgements: to wit, when to turne vp the wicked, and to cause his *Plowe* and *Harrooes* to passe ouer them? Doth not he know the *fittest time* when to *thresh* them out? yea, and *how many blowes*, and *with what kind of punishment he is to strike men*? Knowes not he what is *fittest* for euery time, and for euery person? *Shall not hee shat hath framed the whole order of nature, dispose of things by equall proportion*? Dare men be so foole-hardie to quarrell with him; or to call his wisdome in question? In a word, the Prophets meaning is, that no man ought resist to censure the Lord, if he bring not the way of the wicked vpon his owne head by and by: but rather that men are in this behalfe to repress their boldnes, seeing for the most part they mistake things euen in small matters.

For if one that knowes not what belongs to Husbandrie should see a Plowman driving his Plow ouer the fields, making furrowes, and breaking the clods, turning his oxen this way and that way, and following them at an

inch, he would surely laugh y man to scorne, and it may be would thinke it a pretie sport for little children: but the Plowman on the contrarie knowing what he doth, can easilie condemne & conuince such an one of rashnes and ignorance: for such as are modest, will iudge that these things were not done in vaine, nor at random, albeit he knew not the reason. Would not a man thinke that the feed which is cast into the ground were lost? An ignorant bodie would iudge it to be so. And yet if they should giue such a sentence (as those that lack knowledge are alwaies the forwardest and boldest in giuing their verdict) would not men of vnderstanding reprove and condemne such for their rashnes, and that iustlie? Now if the case stands thus, how will the Lord deale with vs (thinke we) if we presume to controll his works, which are so farre about our reach, and altogether incomprehensible. Iudge we then by this, how much we ought to flee all ouerweening: and on the other side, in what sobrietic and modestie we are to keepe vnder all our thoughts. For if it be our duties to walke in modestie with men, and not rashlie to condemne that wherof we are ignorant, ought we not much more to walke thus with our God?

As oft then as we shall thinke of the calamities wherwith the Church is so many waies afflicted, let vs not by and by crie out that God hath cast her off, as if because the wicked are let loose, therefore they shall presentlie haue their willes: but let vs on the contrarie assure our selues that the Lord will prouide a remedie for vs when his time appointed is come; and in the meane while let vs reuerentlie and hartilie submit our selues vnder his iust iudgements. Now if any be pleased by taking a narrower view of these words, to gather, that some are punished sooner, some later, as being deferred for a season: this will not only be found probable, but it is also fullie agreed vnto by the Prophet. Hence then there is ministred vnto vs a singular consolation, to wit, the Lord will so moderate his strokes, that at no hand he will bruise or breake in pieces those that are his seruants. Indeed he destroyes the wicked and brings them to nothing; but he corrects his children, that being thereby purged and tamed, they may be brought home into his garner.

Verf. 29. *This also commeth of the Lord of hostes, which is wonderfull in counsell, and excellent in worke.*

Some expound this place as if the Prophet should say, that this knowledge of Husbandrie comes of the Lord: but I rather thinke it to be the application of the things that went before. For as he hath set forth Gods wisdome in the smallest matters, so would he now raise our minds higher, that we might learne with the greater reuerence to consider of his secret and *wonderfull* iudgements. We may, and no doubt ought (by the way) to note, as touching that which is contained in the 26. verse, that not Husbandrie alone, but all

There is a place in 2. Tim. 2.19.20. which answers to Master Caluins exposition touching this text.

If we ought to iudge modestlie of mans actions, much more of Gods.

God destroyes the wicked, he only corrects mans actions, he only tames his children.

We are not to quarrell with the Lord, if he bring not his iudgements speedily vpon the heads of the wicked, but rather to repress our boldnes in this behalfe.

All profitable ſciences the gift of God. all other profitable arts alſo are the gifts of God, who powres into their vnderſtandings, choſe artificiall and cunning inuentions. Men therefore ought in no caſe to wax proud of them, or to attribute the knowledge hereof vnto themſelues; as thoſe of old time haue done, who being vnthankfull vnto God, haue deſiſed thoſe whom they thought to bee the deuſers of arts. Thence came the heapes of ſo many goddes which the heathen haue forged vnto themſelues, out of the ſhop of their owne braine. From out of this workehouſe haue proceeded the great *Ceres, Triptolime, Mercurie*, and infinit others more, ſo highly renowned by the words and writings of niem.

But our Prophet ſhewes, that as theſe ſciences were giuen them from God, ſo ought they to be referred to his glory, as to him that is the onely author and maſter workeman. And if this eſteeme be to be held of husbandry and other handicrafts, what ſhall wee ſay of the noble and liberall ſciences; as of Phyſicke, Law, Aſtronomie, Geometry, Logicke, and the like? Shall we not much more affirme, that theſe are the gifts of God? Nay, ſhal we not both conſider & acknowledge his goodneſſe in the beſtowing of them, that ſo as well in the leaſt, as in the greateſt thereof, we may ſet forth his honour and praife?

If God be the author of handicrafts, much more of Liberall arts.

THE XXIX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Ab* altar, altar of the Citie that David dwelt in: adde yeere vnto yeere: let them kill lambs.*



It ſeems this ſhould be another Sermon: in which *Iſaiah* threatens *Ieruſalem*. Hee calles it *Ariel*, that is to ſay, the Altar of God; becauſe the whole ſtrength of the Citie depended vpon the Altar.

For howſoeuer the Citizens truſted in other meanes whereof they had great ſtore; yet they chiefly relied vpon the Temple and the altar, more then vpon any other defences. They thought themſelues inuincible indeed, by reaſon of their power and forces: but aboue all, they held themſelues in a fort vterly impregnable, in regard that the Lord couered them vnder his wings. Now they imagined that God was with them as long as they retained the Altar, and the ſacrifices. Some thinke that the Temple is here called *Ariel*, becauſe it was proportioned like a lion; to wit, broad before, and narrow behind: but I had rather vnderſtand it ſimply of the Altar; and the rather, for that *Ezechiel* alſo giues it this name, Chap. 43. 15. This prophecy doubtleſſe was directed to the whole Citie; but we muſt note the Prophets drift, which is to plucke away from the Iewes this fond truſt, becauſe they thought God would ſurely helpe them, as long as the Altar and ſacrifices laſted. For they bragged of them, as thoſe who vntruely perſwaded themſelues that they had ſerued God to the full, albeit their lues were vile and wicked.

In the next place hee bends his ſpeech againſt the Citie, which hee adorneſ with a goodly title, by calling it *the Citie that David once dwelt in*, and yet onely by way of yeelding ſo much vnto them: for he will afterwards reſute theſe their vaine pretext, ſo full of vannie.

Some by this word vnderſtand little Ieru-

ſalem; that is to ſay, the innermoſt Citie, which was alſo compaſſed about with walles: for two Citieſ were compriſed in one as it were, becauſe it was enlarged and extended the confines thereof further off then at the beginning: but as I thinke this place ſhould be vnderſtood of the whole Citie. He mentions *Dauid*, in regard they gloried as much in his name, as if Gods bleſſing had bin continually tied to the palace royall: for God indeed had promiſed that *Dauid*'s Kingdome ſhould indure for euer.

Hence wee may gather how ſottiſh and ridiculous the Papiſts are now become, who will needes lincke the Church to *Saint Peters* chaire; and thus would make the world beleue, that God can no where find a place to dwell in, but in the chaire of *Rome*. Wee diſpute not with them now, whether *Peter* was euer Biſhop of *Rome* or no: but let vs grant it were vndoubtedly ſo, yet dare they affirme that *Rome* had at any time ſuch like promiſe that *Ieruſalem* had? *I his is my reſt, here will I dwell, for I haue a delight therein: Pſ. 132. 14.* But what if God had made them ſuch a promiſe? doe we not ſee how *Iſaiah* threatens *Ieruſalem*; to wit, that God is driuen thence, when his word was reiecteſt, and his pure worſhip corrupted. What ſhall become of *Rome* then that hath no promiſe at all? Date theſe compare with *Ieruſalem*? If God curſed that holy Citie which he had ſpecially choſen; what will he ſay, thinke you, to other Citieſ, who haue ouerthrowne all his holy lawes and ordinances?

Adde yeere vnto yeere. The Prophet ioynes this with the former, becauſe the Iewes thought themſelues elcere aboard, as they ſay, when they had a little breathing and reſpite giuen them: for the wicked imagin that there is a truce betwene God and them, when they ſee no ſignes of his wrath likely to ſeaize vpon them: for this cauſe they promiſe to themſelues nothing but peace, peace; whileſt the Lord ſuffers them to inioy eaſe and proſperitie. Againſt ſuch ſecuritie the Prophet threatens, that God is readie to execute his vengeance; notwithstanding they offered their ſacrifices ordinarily, and renewed them

2. Sam. 7. 13. Pſal. 39. 36.

Papiſts ridiculous in tying the Church to *Saint Peters* chaire.

Rome neuer had that promiſe made her, which God made to *Ieruſalem*.

God is baniſhed from that place whence his word is excluded.

*Or, *Ariel*, *Ariel*, or woe be to, &c.

The Prophets drift.

years after yeere. Hence we may learne, that albeit the Lord defers his chastisements, and the executiō of his vengeance, yet we ought not therefore to defer our repentance. For what if hee spares and beares with vs for a time, hath hee therefore forgotten our sins? No such matter. Let vs beware how we build our peace then vpon so slipperie a foundation. Let vs at no hand abuse his patience and long suffering, but let the same rather draw vs to repentance, and to the seeking of free reconciliation with him.

Verf. 2. *But I will bring the Altar into distresse: and there shall be heavinesse and sorrow; and it shall be vnto mee like an Altar.*

I thinke that the letter *Vau*, should bee taken here for a particle aduerfatiue; as if he should say, Yet will I execute my iudgements vpon you, and will auenge my quarrell, although it seeme for a time, that in thus sparing of you, I am at one with you. In the next place hee threatens them with *sorrow* and *lamentation*, in stead of their festiual daies. Some thinke the word *sorrow* to bee an adiectiue: but I am not of their mind; for it is taken in the same sense in the Lamentations of *Ieremiah*, Chap. 2. 5. The Prophet shewes then that the Lord will bring this Citie into such distresse, that the Iewes shall well perceiue they haue not to do with men, but with God: so that howsoeuer the Assyrians made war vpon them, yet they should know to their cost, that God was their chiefe Commander and Captaine.

Where hee addes, that it shall bee to him like *Ariel*, it cannot agree to the Temple onlie: for his meaning is, that the Citie and all shall be sprinkled with the slaughter which the enemies shall make in Ierusalem; which he compares to an altar, whereupon beasts are slaine to be sacrificed: for as oft as the wicked are destinacō to destructiō, the Prophets compare the same to a sacrifice. In a word, in that he alludes thus to the altar, he affirms that the whole Citie shall bee like *Ariel*, because it shal ouerflow with the blood of the slaine. Whence it is manifest enough, that an outward profession of Gods worship, together with the externall ceremonies and tokens of his fauourable presence are to little purpose, vnlesse a francke and cheerefull obedience be ioyned therewith. And thus in raunting the hypocrits (who prophanely presented their beasts in sacrifice to God, as if by such meanes they thought to appease his anger) he saith, that all their labour is lost: for hauing polluted the Temple & the Altar, he relles them that none can sacrifice rightly vnto God, but in killing and sacrificing those that were appointed to the slaughter thoroughout the Citie; as if he should say, You shall be murdered and killed in euerie place. He calles this sacrifice a violent slaughter, by an improper phrase of speech; because they refused to offer themselues willingly vnto God.

Verf. 3. *And I will besiege thee as a circle, and fight against thee on a mount, and will cast vp ramparts against thee.*

BY the verbe *Chaddur*, hee alludes to the roundnesse of a ball; and signifies as much as if in our vsuall speech we should say, I will compass him about; and thus shewes, that they can no way escape. Where it is added, *I will fight against thee on a mount*, it concerns the second meanes by which a Citie is to be taken: for they vse to make incurfions heere and there, or to lay a standing siege. Now he confirms the doctrine of the former verse, & shewes that God should be the chiefe Leader in this war, and that the Assyrians should vnder take nothing but by his commandment, notwithstanding themselues were thrust forward with an inordinate lust and desire of reigning ouer the poore Iewes. For it was verie requisite that this people should be fully perfwaded, that God was the author of all the calamities wherewith they were oppressed, to the end they might thereby come to a narrow examination of their impieties. Now the oftener wee meete with this doctrine in the holy Scriptures; so much the more carefull ought wee to be in imprinting the same well in our hearts: for the blessed Spirit of God is not wont to repeat one thing againe and againe without iust cause.

Verf. 4. *So shalt thou be humbled, and shalt speake out of the ground, and thy speech shall bee as out of the dust: thy voice also shall be out of the ground, like him that hath a spirit of diuination, and thy talking shall whisper out of the dust.*

HE derides the pride of the Iewes, who as long as they were in prosperitie (as hypocrits are wont to doe) despised all admonitions and threatnings. The Prophet therefore saith, that they should one day be humbled: to wit, after their pride shall bee taken downe. Not that they shall change their manners, but because shame shal constraine them to turne their wonted mirth into mourning. And therefore here must be a close opposition supplied: for he speaks to those iolly fellows, who seemed to haue the world at will, who with big looks disdaind every one, as if they had bin subiect to no God at all. Nay, they feared not to load him with blasphemies and iniuries, and contemned his holy word. This pride, saith *Isaiah*, shall be brought downe well enough, and this intollerable arrogancie shall cease.

In the next words hee expresseth this further by a similitude, laying, that they shall whisper and speake, as it were, out of the holes of the earth. For he compares the voice of those which in times past was so loud and high, to the speech of Coniurers, who giue their an-

fwets out of ſome hollow caue digged vnder the earth, mumbling out I know not what confuſed noiſe; for they ſpeake, with no diſtinct voice. His meaning is then that theſe haughtie ones ſhall be like vnto them.

Some expound this as if the Prophet meant to ſay, that their chaſtiſement ſhould nothing profit them: but the text croſſeth that ſenſe; and beſides, he will by and by ſhew that the Iewes ſhould be brought to repentance. But firſt of all he terrifies them, to the end he may beate downe their pride, becauſe they did ſtoutlie & rebellioſlie deſpiſe all the threatenings of the Prophets. The *humbling* therefore whereof he ſpeakes ſignifies nothing elſe but that they ſhould be couered with ſhame, in ſuch wiſe, that they ſhould not dare to aduance themſelues, nor to vtter forth their ſwelling words of vanitie.

Verſ. 5. *Moreover, the multitude of thy ſtrangers ſhall be like ſmall duſt, and the multitude of ſtrong men ſhall be as chaffe that paſſeth away, and it ſhall be in a moment euen ſuddenlie.*

I Will firſt recite the opinions of others, and then that which to me ſeemes moſt probable. All (in a manner) do thinke that this ſhould be ſpoke of the enemies of the Iewes; for they take the word *Strangers* for enemies, and ſo they affirme that the multitude of thoſe who ſhould oppreſſe the Iewes ſhall be like the *duſt*, that is to ſay, infinite. But conſidering all things circūſpectlie, I incline rather to another opinion, to wit, that the Prophet ſpeakes by way of contempt of the fortrefſes and garifons whereupon the Iewes relied. For they had ſouldiers out of forreine Countries that were valiant vnder their pay. And thus I interpret the word *Arifsm*, which properlie ſignifies ſo much; neither do I wonder a little that ſome of the Rabbins ſhould take it for the heathen or wicked. In regard the Iewes then drew vnto themſelues diuers garifons out of *ſtrange Countries*, they thought they were cock-ſure, and out of danger. The Prophet on the contrary threatens that their garifons ſhall *ſkirmiſh in vaine*, notwithstanding their companies be many in number, for they ſhall be but as *duſt* or *chaffe*, that is to ſay, like vnprofitable, oſcourings, ſo as they ſhall haue neither ſtrength nor actiuitie. Hence may we obſerue, that be our riches or abundance neuer ſo much, yet all ſhall turne to ſmoke as ſoone as the Lord ſhall but blow vpon it. The preparations which men make laſt awhile it may be, but when the Lord ſhall euen but liſt vp his hand, all ſtrength muſt vaniſh and become like chaffe.

In the end of the verſe ſome expound, that a ſound ſhall ariſe ſuddenlie, and as in a moment from the inuaſion of the enemies: but I rather referre this word, *ſhall be*, to the time that this ſhall endure, which ſhall be but *ſhort*, as faith the Prophet: for his meaning is, that theſe garifons ſhal not hold out long, but ſhall vaniſh away in a *moment*. Men ſhall boaſt but in vaine therefore, ſeeing God is their enemy.

Verſ. 6. *Thou ſhalt be viſited of the Lord of hoſtes with thunder and ſtoking, and a great noiſe, a Whirlwinde, and a tempeſt, and a flame of deuouring fire.*

HE addes the cauſe why all theſe multitudes of garifons ſhall be like ſtubble, ſetting it forth by a contrarie ſimilitude. For he oppoſeth the wrath and *viſitation* of the Lord of hoſtes againſt theſe ſouldiers: For alas, how will *ſtraw* and *ſtubble* be able to reſiſt the flame of a *deuouring fire*? How ſhall *duſt* be able to abide the force of the *whirlwinde*? His meaning is then that the vengeance of God ſhall be ſo great, that no preparations ſhall be able to withſtand it. And in this ſenſe he thinks the text conuertes well; the parts whereof would not anſwere proportionable one to another if we ſhould follow another expoſition. Now by this wee learne, that our enemies which aſſaile vs ſhall neuer attempt more againſt vs then the Lord ſhall permit. If he then be pleaſed to defend vs, our aduerſaries can not hurt vs, although they ſhould ſtirre vp all the world againſt vs. On the contrary, is he minded to correct vs? We can reſiſt his wrath neither by weapons nor any fortrefſes whatſoever, for he will ſweepe them away as with a *whirlwinde*; yea, he will conſume them like a *deuouring flame*, that leaues nothing behind it.

Verſ. 7. *And the multitude of all the nations that fight againſt the Altar ſhall be as a dreame or viſion by night: euen all they that make the warre againſt it, and lay ſiege vnto it.*

I Expound this verſe otherwiſe then ſome do, who thinke that the Prophet meant to comfort the faithfull, which I confeſſe is not without great ſhew of reaſon. And ſo it containes a very excellent doctrine, to wit, that the enemies ſhall be like thoſe that dreame, when the Lord ſhall diſappoint them of their hope, euen whileſt they imagined they were ſure of the pray. But this interpretation (for ought I ſee) ſeemes not to agree very well with the text. Sometime it fallies out that a ſentence ſounds ſo goodly in ſhew, that we are drawne to ſuch a liking of it that it ſteales from vs the true and natural meaning thereof, ſo as we neither aduifedlie conſider the text it ſelfe, nor yet take any great paines to ſeek out the authors intent and purpoſe.

Let vs ſee then whether the Prophets meaning be as they ſay, for ſeeing he ſtill continues to denounce threatenings in the verſes following, I doubt not but he proſecutes his ſpeech in this place, which otherwiſe ſhould be broken off abruptly in this ſentence. For he rebukes and taxeth the Iewes for their obſtinacie, in that they durſt be ſo bold to deſpiſe God & all his threatenings. To be ſhort, he reprooues their falſe truſt and confidence by a very fit ſimilitude, ſaying, that the enemy ſhould ſuddenlie come vpon the Iewes euen at that time when they thought them-

The firſt member of this ſeuenth verſe is explained in the verſe following.

We muſt not eaſily be carried away to like of ſuch a ſenſe of ſcripture as ſteales from vs the meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, how goodly a ſhew ſoever it ſeemes to haue.

No wiſdome nor ſtrength againſt the Lord.

ſeliſes

felles safe and out of all danger; so that the thing shall be so sudden and v unexpected, that it shall resemble a *dreame*. Although then (saith the Prophet) thou art now forging in thy braine a perpetuall rest vnto thy selfe, yet God shall easily awake thee, and plucke this thy confidence away from thee.

Now the Prophet tauntingly saith the Iewes *dreamp*, because being plunged in their voluptuousnesse, they neither felt nor saw a nic thing, but (onely) forged to themselves such a happinesse in this drowfinesse, that it held their mindes amazed and confounded. Thence hee gathers, that the enemy should come as in a *dreame*, to scarre these *dreamers*. For it often fallcs out, that a quiet and sweet sleepe, is interrupted with fearefull *dreames*. It also comes to passe that the pleasant things which they *dream* of, serue them to no vse: for albeit they thinke nothing lesse, yet the alarm will be sounded in an instant. But this would be somewhat obscure, if the Prophet should not explain his meaning more fully in the verse following.

Verf. 8. *And it shall bee like as an hungry man dreameth, and behold he eateth; and when hee awaketh, his soule is emptie: or like as a thirstie man dreameth, and loe he is drinking; and when hee awaketh, behold he is faint, and his soule longeth: so shall all the multitude of all Nations bee that fight against mount Zion.*

HE compares the Iewes to men hungerstarued, who sleepe indeede; but in the meane while, their stomacke is emptie and yearnes after meate: and thus it is a thing verie incident vnto them, to bee dreaming of that naturall sustenance which they want. So then when the Iewes should be awaked, they should resemble affamished persons. For the Lord admonished them by his Prophets daily, and called them to the heavenly banquet of his word. But they made light of it, neither would they be awaked by it: for they chose rather to play the sleepe beasts in their finnes, then to be filled with these sacred delicacies. Whilest they thus rocked their consciences asleepe then, they thought they needed nothing, but were thoroughly furnished for all alliaies. *Isaiah* telles them that this is but a *dreame* or deceitfull *vision*: for when they shall be well awaked by a sudden calamitie, they shall then feele how lanke and emptie they were; and that the opinion of fullnesse wherewith they were besotted before, was but vaine & deceitfull. For as the *hungry* which haue such *dreames*, are the more greeued by them; so the people who were falsly persuaded that all went well with them, shall be much more molested thereby, then if they had had no such conceit to possesse their heads; but had rather confessed their nakednesse and pouertie. This maner of speech seemes somewhat strange at the first, when hee saith, that the *multitude* of those which

fought against *Ariel*, should be as a *dreame*, &c. but we must resolue it thus: when the Iewes should falsly persuade themselves of deliuerance, as if the enemy were gone far off; they should then immediately feele how much they were beguiled; euen like vnto one that being hungry, and *dreames* he is filling his belly with good cheere; when hee wakes, is more strongly pressed with hunger, then if he had dreamed no such *dreame* at all. I see nothing heere then which any way appertaines to consolation: for hee goes on still with the same matter, and cries out against the obstinacie and contempt of the Iewes, whom hee could moue neither by any admonitions nor threatnings whatsoever.

Verf. 9. *Stay your selues and wonder; they are blind, and make you blind; they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drinke.*

THE Prophet holds on his purpose still, and sharply taxeth this grosse sottishnes of the people. Others translate, Be astonished: but I had rather take it in another sense, to wit, that albeit they stay long vpon this thought, yet notwithstanding they cannot auoid it, but that their mindes will be astonished in long thinking vpon it. In a word, he meant to say, that God would so ouerwhelme their thoughts, that they should find no euation nor issue, although they brake their braines neuer so much, in deuising how to find it out. And forthwith hee giues a reason why they should profit themselves nothing at all, notwithstanding they were so diligent in the matter, and had setled their resolution thereupon; to wit, because they should be like *drunkards*. His meaning is then, that it must be attributed vnto their sluggishnesse and benumbednesse, that they were not able to discern nor comprehend any of Gods workes.

Wee see the truth of this fulfilled at this day in many, who haue their senses so possessed and intoxicate with a spirituall giddinesse of braine, that they are as blind as moles euen in things manifest and plaine: and although God sets vp a most cleere light of his iustice and equity, they are so hoodwinked, that in regard of this their confused sight, they wax so much the more senselesse. Now such a blockishnesse is a iust punishment, whereby God auengeh himselfe vpon their infidelitie.

But that we may apply this sentence to our vs, we are to obserue that the Prophets words are not to be taken here, as if hee commanded them to stay and to aduise longer vpon it; but rather as I haue said, taxeth (and withall derides) their sottishnesse. It is as much then as if he had said; Thinke vpon it as long as you will, you shall vnderstand nothing. For his meaning is, that they are destitute of sound iudgement and vnderstanding, and therefore doe in vaine consider of Gods workes: so that as the mole receiues no benefit by the light of the Sunne, no more is

Verse 7.

Verse 8.

This as I think, belongs to verf. 7.

It poſſible for thoſe that are ſpiritualle blinded to comprehend the glorious acts of the Lord.

When he calles them *blinde*, his meaning is, that we are created naturalle to haue reaſon and vnderſtanding whereby to conſider of Gods works: It is by accident therefore (as we ſay) if we be blind; ſo that if ſuch a giſtineſſe be fallen vpon vs, ſo heaue a iudgement ought iuſtice to be imputed to our own vnthankfulnes. He oppoſeth *ſtaggering* of ſpirit, to a quiet and peaceable minde; for he meanes ſuch a diſquietnes as cauſeth the vnderſtanding to ſhake and reele.

Verſ. 10. *For the Lord hath covered you With the ſpirit of ſlumber, and hath ſhut vp your eyes: the Prophets and your chiefe Seers hath he covered.*

THAT he might the better ſhew the cauſe of this blinding, he attributes it vnto the iudgement of God, who by this meanes a- uenged himſelfe vpon the peoples impietie. For as it belongs to him to giue eyes to ſee cleerely, and to enlighten a mans vnderſtanding with the ſpirit of iudgement and reaſon, ſo belongs it to him alone to put out all the light thereof when he ſees that by a peruerſe and obſtinate hatred of the truth he willingly deſire darknes. Are men blinded then, and that principallie in things that are moſt euident and plaine? Let them acknowledge that this proceeds from Gods iuſt ſeueritie.

He addes alſo, that the people are deprived of the helps and meanes which ſhould bring the light of knowledge vnto them, and ſhould be guides to direct them in their way. For to this vſe are *Prophets* ordeined, which he notes out by theſe two words *Nebiim* and *Hachozim*. In a word, his meaning is, that not thoſe who only are endued with reaſon and vnderſtanding, ſhall be deprived of common ſenſe, but euen the Doctours and Teachers themſelues who ſhould be lights vnto others ſhould become as ignorant as beaſts, ſo as they ſhould haue no knowledge of the right way: yea, they ſhould be ſo farre off from governing others, that they ſhould not be able to gouerne themſelues.

Verſ. 11. *And the viſion of them all is become vnto you as the words of a booke ſealed vp, which they deliuer to one that can reade, ſaying, Reade this, I pray thee: and he ſhall ſay, I can not, for it is ſealed.*

12. *And the booke is giuen vnto him that cannot reade, ſaying, Reade this I pray thee: and he ſhall ſay, I can not reade.*

THE Prophet expreſſeth that more cleerely which he touched before, namely, that the Iewes ſhould be ſo blinded, that they ſhould conceiue nothing, although the Lord ſhould enlighten the by the manifeſt brightnes of his word. And this he ſhewes ſhould

not happen to the common people only, but alſo to their guides and leaders, whoſe office it was to haue been ſo learned, that they might haue ordered thoſe that were out of the way. To be ſhort, this blindnes ſhould ſeize vpon all eſtates: for he declares that both the *ignorant* and *learned* ſhould be ſo dizzie and blockiſh, that Gods word ſhould be vnto them *as a booke ſealed vp*, in ſo much that they ſhould be able to diſcern no more thereof then of letters faſt cloſed. He teacheth (albeit in other words) the ſame which he taught in the former Chapter, to wit, that the word ſhould be vnto them precept vpon precept, line vnto line, becauſe they ſhould alwaies remaine in the firſt rudiments, and ſhould neuer attaine to the ſolide doctrine. For in the ſame ſenſe he here ſheweth, that none from the higheſt to the loweſt ſhould gather any fruite from the word of God. He ſaith not then that the word ſhould be taken from them; but although it were amongſt them, they ſhould notwithstanding be ignorant of the true meaning of it.

The Lord puniſheth the impietie of men two waies; for ſometimes he whollie takes away the vſe of the word; ſometimes he lets them haue it, and yet in the meane while deprives them of the ſound vnderſtanding of it, ſo as in ſeeing they are ſtarke blinde. Firſt then he deprives them of the *reading* of it, by taking away the bookes of holy Scripture through ſy tyrannie of the wicked, as it often comes to paſſe: or, by a falſe perſuaſion of men, who thinke they were not giuen to be read of all: Secondly, albeit he ſuffers vs to reade them, and to haue the bookes in our hands, yet becauſe we abuſe them, becauſe we are vnthankfull, and aime not at the glorie of God, therefore we are blinded, and ſee no more, then if we had neuer been enlightened with ſo much as one ſparkle of the word.

We are not to boaſt then that we haue the outward preaching of the word, for that ſhall do vs little good if it become not fruitfull in vs, by clearing our iudgements and vnderſtandings. It is as if he ſhould ſay then, I grant that in regard of the Couenant made by the Lord with your fathers he will let you haue the two Tables of this Couenant, Deut. 4. 20. 37. & 7. 6. but they ſhall be vnto you as a booke cloſed vp, for you ſhall vnderſtand nothing at all.

When we ſee that ſuch things did indeed befall the Iewes, according as *Iſaiab* foretold, and that we alſo conſider the eſtate of this people whom God had choſen and adoped, me thinke it can not but make vs tremble in our ſelues for feare in beholding ſo horrible a iudgement. For notwithstanding they were inſtructed both by the Law and of the Prophets, and enlightened with a wonderfull cleare brightnes, yet they fell into horrible ſuperſtitious, and deteſtable impieties, for the ſeruiſe of God was prophaned, Religion was whollie defaced and ouerthrowne, themſelues were diuided and ſorted into diuers and monſtrous ſects. Laſtly, when the Saduces, which were the wickeddeſt of all, had got the preheminance, faith, and all

Chap. 18. 13.

Chap. 6. 9. 10.

We are not to boaſt if God continue the externall preaching of his word: for he can do that, and yet for our vnthankfulnes deprive vs of that fruit which we might othe wiſe reape by it.

If God ſpared not the naturall braches, take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee. Rom. 11. 21.

Mat. 22. 23. Mar. 12. 18. hope

It belongs only to God to open and ſhut vp our vnderſtandings.

Luk 10.27.
Act. 13.8.

hope of the resurrection, yea the doctrine of the immortalitie of soules was vtterly abolished: how could it bee I pray you; but the people must become like beasts or swine? For take away the hope of the eternall and blessed life from men, and what shall we make of them? And yet it sufficiently appears by the testimonies of the Euangelists, that such they were when our Lord Iesus Christ came into the world. For at that time these things were truly accomplished, according as our Prophet foretold; to let vs see that these things were not vttered by him at random, but that they assuredly came to passe, though the wicked no doubt in his time made light account of his words.

Their incredulitie and blindnes therefore fully appeared when this true light came to lighten the world; to wit, Iesus Christ the onely light of truth, the soule and spirit of the law, and the end whereto all the Prophets aimed. Then, I say, the Iewes especially had a vaile laid ouer their eyes; which was figured before in *Moses*, when the people could not indure to behold him, because of the brightness of his countenance. But this is truly fulfilled in Christ, to whom it appertaines to take away and abolish this vaile, as *S. Paul* teacheth, 2. Cor. 3.16.

Exod. 34.30

Vntill Christ then, the vaile remained ouer their hearts vntaken away in reading of *Moses*: for they reiected Christ, to whom *Moses* ought to haue been referred. Now in this place vnder the word *Moses*, the whole law is to bee vnderstood; which being referred to Christ, the true end thereof, this vaile shall then be taken away. These iudgements of God we ought so to behold, that wee at this day, acknowledge him to be the same Iudge he was wont to bee, and that the same vengeance is prepared for vs, if we giue not care to his holy admonitions.

In that he expressly mentions them that are *learned and ignorant*, obserue that we comprehend nor the mysteries of saluation by the quicknesse of our wits, or because wee haue bin well trained vp in schooles; for this could not priuiledge such from the imputation of being *blind*. Gods word then must be embraced with our whole affection, if wee mind to bee freed from this vengeance, wherewith not the rude and *ignorant* alone are threatened, but those also which are *booke learned*, as they say.

Verf. 13. *Therefore the Lord said; Because this people come neere vnto mee with their mouth, and honour mee with their lippes, but haue remoued their heart farre from mee; and their feare toward mee was taught by the precept of men;*

THE Prophet shewes that the Lord shall haue very iust occasion to correct his people so seuerely, albeit it was an hard and horrible punishment, that their mindes should bee so besotted by Gods reuenging

hand. But as men are bold and rebellious, so they are easilie drawne to plead with him, as if he dealt ouer rigorously with them: the Prophet declares that God hath performed the office of a Iudge; & that the cause thereof rested wholly in men, who stirred him vp by their impietie & rebellion. Also he shewes that the people haue well deserued this chastisement; but especially by their hypocrisie and superstitions.

Hee notes their hypocrisie, in telling them that they *draw neere with their mouth and lips*: for so I expound the verbe *Nagish*, which I take to bee most probable, although others are of a contrarie opinion: for which cause some translate, To shut vp; others To magnifie ones selfe: but the **antithete* (to wit, the verbe to *withdraw*) which is added by and by after, shewes that this is the true exposition, which also is most receiued.

But he taketh their superstitions and idolatries, when hee saith, that their *feare which they had, was taught by the Commandements of men*. Now these two things are for the most part ioyned together. Nay, more then that, for *hypocrisie* is neuer without *impieitie* or *superstitions*; and on the other side, *impieitie* & *superstition* is alwaies accompanied with *hypocrisie*.

By the *mouth and lips*, he means the external profession, which is common both to good and bad: but they differ in this, that the wicked haue onely a vaine outward shew, thinking themselues discharged, if they haue opened their *lips* in Gods worshippe and seruice; but the good present themselues before God in the truth of their hearts, & in yeelding him obedience with all their power, they acknowledge and confesse how far off they are from performing their duties as they ought to doe.

Hee vseth then the figure called *Synecdoche*, a thing very frequent in Scriptures; when a part is taken for the whole. But hee made choice of that part which was verie fit for his purpose; seeing men are wont to make most shew of godlines by the tongue and lips. The Prophet then comprehends all the other parts of Gods worship, whereby hypocrites are wont to counterfet and deceiue, for they are euerie way bent to lying and vanitie.

We need seeke no better expositor of these words then Iesus Christ, who vpon the speech of washing of hands, (wherewith the Pharises reprobud the Disciples, because they had omitted so holy an act in their conceit) that he might conuince them of hypocrisie, saith, *Isaiah* prophced well of you, O yee hypocrites, saying, This people honours me with their lips, but their heart is far off from me: *Matth. 15.7.8.* To the *lips and mouth* therefore the Prophet opposeth the *heart*; the integritie whereof God chiefly requires of vs. For if we want that, hee reiects all our workes, earie they neuer so goodly a shew in the eyes of men. For as himselfe is a Spirit, so also will he be adored and worshipped of vs in heart and spirit: at which end, if we begin not, we may doe what we will in outward shew, but it shall

Hypocrisie

*That is, opposition

Superstition

Hypocrisie & superstition goe commonly together.

The difference between true worshippers and false.

Ioh. 4. 23, 24

cuary

euery whit bee accounted nothing elſe but vaine oſtentation.

Hence we may eaſlie iudge, what eſtimation the religion of poperie ought to haue amongſt vs, who put all their truſt of God in ringing, piping, ſinging, mummings; in ſetting vp candles, in copes, cenſings, croſſings, and a thouſand ſuch fooleries: for wee ſee that God not onely reiects theſe things, but alſo deteſteth them.

Now for the ſecond point : when God is ſerued according to mens inventions, he condemnes this ſuperſtitious feare, albeit men in- deour to couer the ſame with a faire pretext of religion, deuotion, and feare. Hee giues a reaſon why this is *in vaine*; to wit, becauſe this people was taught it by the precepts of man. For I read the word *Melunmadab*, (which ſignifies *taught*) paſſiuely, becauſe the Prophets meaning is, that all order is ouerthrowne, if mens precepts (and not the rules of Gods word) bee taken for the right manner of his ſeruite, For the Lord would haue our feare, and the honour which we giue him, to be ſquared according to the rules of his word, and demands nothing but a ſound obedience, by which wee diſpoſe of our ſelues and all our actions, according to this rule, without turning either to the right hand or vnto the left. Whence it ſufficiently appeares, that all thoſe who are taught to ſerue God after mens traditions, are not onely ſenſelle, but do alſo wearie themſelues in a pernicious labour: for what do they elſe but prouoke Gods wrath againſt them, who cannot more plainly diſcouer how much hee hates theſe worſhips, then by this ſo heaue a puniſhment?

Fleſh and blood I grant thinks it ſtrange that God not only makes none accout of this traſh, but alſo ſeuerely puniſheth mens in- deours, who through error and folly, take much paines to appeaſe him. But wee are not to wonder if hee maintaines his owne authority after this ſort. Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe expounds this place, ſaying; In vaine doe they ſerue me, teaching for doctrines mens precepts : Math. 15. 9.

Some would ſupply a coniunction thus; And precepts: as if the ſenſe were not other- wiſe cleere enough. But it appeares he meant another thing; to wit, that they take a wrong courſe, who follow mens commandements for the rule of their faith and life.

Verſ. 14. *Therefore behold, I will againe doe a meruailous Worke in this place, euen a meruailous Worke and a wonder: for the wiſdome of their wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the vnderſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid.*

HE not onely threatens the ignorant and common multitude with blindneſſe, but alſo the wiſe, who drew the people into an admiration of them: now by this puniſhment we may iudge how odious and deteſtable this ſinne of hypocriſie is (before God) of which

he ſpake in the former verſe. Is there any puniſhment more to be feared then *blindneſſe* and *giddineſſe of ſpirit*? Men commonly perceiue not the greatneſſe of theſe miſchiefs; and yet it is of all other the greateſt and moſt woſull. He ſpeakes not of the rude ones then, but of the teachers themſelues, who ought to be in ſtead of eyes for the people. For the multitude are alwaies blind of themſelues, as the reſt of the common fort are: but if the eyes be blind, what ſhall become of the reſt of the parts of the body? If the light, as Ieſus Chriſt ſaith, be turned into darkneſſe, how great is that darkeneſſe? Math. 6. 23. This is added therefore by way of amplifying this iudgement.

From this place alſo we may gather, how fooliſh and vaine the boaiſting of the Papiſts is, who think they haue put all the world to ſilence, if they once alleadge the authoritie of their Biſhops, Doctors, and Priests of the Apoſtolicall Sea. It may be they think they haue better knowledge then the Iewes. But whence haue they drawne it? They will ſay, from God. But wee ſee the Prophet ſpeakes not here of the wiſe, among the Caldean, or Egyptians: but of that order of Prieſthood, which God himſelfe had ordaind; yea, of the Teachers and chiefe heads, and of the ſtandard bearers of the elect people, and of the onely Church of God in thoſe times. In a word, of that high Prieſt who was a figure of the Sonne of God, Chriſt Ieſus. For vnder this name of *the wiſe men*, hee comprehends whatſoever was excellent and in account among the people.

The Papiſts thinke they haue put all the world to ſilence, if they but once mention the authoritie of their Biſhops and the Apoſtolicall Sea.

Verſ. 15. *Woe vnto them that ſecke deepe to hide their counſell from the Lord: for their Workes are in darkneſſe, and they ſay; Who ſeeth vs? and Who knowe: h vs?*

THE Prophet once againe ſets himſelfe againſt the wicked and prophane contemners of God, whom before he called mockers; who thought themſelues wiſe in nothing more, then in ſetting light by the word of the Lord. For religion was become a thing too baſe for them: and therefore they ſhrowded themſelues vnder their craftie inventions, as in a labyrinth; by reaſon whereof, they boldly contemned all the admonitions & threatenings of the Prophet; yea, not onely that, but euen the whole doctrine of ſaluation. It ſufficiently appeares by this verſe then, that this plague (which afterwards ſpread it ſelfe further) was then in the world; to wit, hypocrits were wont pleaſantly to ſerne God in their hearts, and to deſpiſe the prophecies. Iſaiab cries out againſt them therefore, and calles them *Hammaamim*, that is to ſay, Diggers: euen as if they digged themſelues caues and hiding places, thinking thereby to deceiue Gods ſight.

Chap. 28. 22.

Hypocrits haue vſed of old to ſerue both God and the pro- pheties.

The words following of *hiding their counſels*, may ſerue vs for an expoſition. Some expound this verſe as if the Prophet condemned the curioſitie of ſuch who are too bolde

With what tripperies the Papiſts would ſeeme to honor God.

How deteſtable the ſin of hypocriſie is before God.

in diuino into the secret iudgements of God: but this exposition liath no good foundation. The Prophet makes it cleare enough of whom it is he speaks, when he addes their scoffing speeches, in that they thought to commit their wickednes so courtlie and priuile as if none were able to discouer them: now this *hiding of their Confels* signifies nothing else but a bold perswasion of escaping Gods hand. And thus the wicked obscure the light, by putting their mists before it, left their secret peruerstie should be espied.

Thence proceeds this shamesfull question of theirs, *Who seeth vs?* for albeit they seemed in outward appearance to serue God, yet they thought themselves able not only to put the Prophets to silence by their shifts and deuices, but euen to overthrow the iudgements of God. I grant they did not this openly, for such will alwaies hold an outward shew of profession, that they may the better deceiue others thereby: but in their hearts they acknowledge no God; but that which themselves haue forged in the shop of their owne braine. *Isaiah* then compares these subtle practises of the wicked, in which they so much please and flatter themselves, to *dennes* or caues, for they thinke themselves to be so couered ouer with a vaille that euen God himselfe can neither see nor surprize them in their wickednes.

Now in regard that the great ones are for the most part tainted with this vice, I thinke the Prophet meant speciallie to taxe them: for they thinke themselves too too simple and dull witted, vnlesse they can despise God, and reiect his Law, beleeuing no more thereof than that which likes their owne humors. They dare not for shame reiect Religion whollie, but are constrained whether they will or no to subiect themselves to some one worship or other. But this they do only because they thinke it will bring them in some profit and commoditie; but are neuer touched inwardlie with any true feare of God at all.

This impietie discouers it selfe in too many in these times, but especially since the Gospell was reuealed. We see how easilie men might be brought to be at one with God vnder the Papacie, for had not the Pope forged such a god as would change his shape according to mens euery all dispositions? what man was there amongst them that had not a deuice by himselfe to purge his sinnes; and diuers seruices wherewith to appease his god? wherefore it is no maruell if grosse impieties appeared not then, seeing they were hidden vnder such couerings; but now they be removed and taken away, men haue plainly shewed what they were before.

In the meane while the euill whereof *Isaiah* complained in his time is no lesse incident to those of our age: for men thinke that God sees neuer awhit when they haue put their shifts betweenc, as if all things were not naked and bare before his (all seeing) eyes, or as if any were able to hide themselves out of his sight, or to deceiue him. You see the cause then wherefore the Prophet for a more ample

declaration saith, that their *works were done in darkenes*, referring it to the vaine confidence wherewith the wicked are bewitched, who haue their sight so dazeled (notwithstanding the light before them) that in not seeing it, they labor to flee from the presence of God. Nay, which is worie, they promise themselves freedome fro all punishment, and giue themselves the raines to all disorder, as if God lay so closely hid, that he could be no way able to finde them out.

Hereunto appertaines that which they say, *Who shall see vs?* Not that the wicked utter such words with their mouths, as hath been said, but because they thought or spake thus in their hearts, as their boldnes and vaine confidence witnessed, for they were so plunged in iniquities, that they reiect all admonitions, euen as if they should neuer haue had any thing to do before Gods iudgement seate. The prophet then we see had to deale against such wicked ones, who albeit in outward shew they seemed to haue some knowledge of God, yet they denied him by their works, and persecuted the pure doctrine with all extremitie. Now thus to speake, what is it else but to affirme that God is not the Iudge of the world, and so to pluck him downe from his throne of Iudgement? for he can not be knowne but by his word, which being once suppressed, or reiected, it can not be but himselfe, who is the author of it, must also therewithall be forsaken and reiected.

Vers. 16. Your turning of deuices shall it not be esteemed as the potters clay? for shall the worke of him that made it say, he made me not? or the thing formed say of him that fashioned it, he had none understanding?

THis verse is diuerslie expounded; and there is also some difficultie in regard of two Hebrew particles, *Im*, and *Ci*. *Im* is often taken for an interrogation, sometimes for an affirmation, which is the cause that some take it for Truly. Moreover, they take the word *Haphae* for Subuersion, as if he should say, Your subuersion shall be esteemed as the clay. Others, for Thought, that is to say, for the counsels which are working in the braine. But the exposition most receiued is, to take this word for Subuersion or destruction: as if he should say, It will be no more maistrie for me to roote you out, then for a potter to turne his clay in his hand: for you are like vnto it, in regard that I haue formed you: yet because the Prophet seemes to oppose the two foresaid particles one to the other, I encline to another opinion, but so, that I reiect not the former exposition, which in it selfe containes a very profitable doctrine. Thus I vnderstand it then, Your turning, or removing; that is to say, the counsels and deuices which runne to and fro in your minds, shall they not be esteemed as the potters clay? for is it not as if the vessell should say to him that made it, Hast thou formed me? Your pride is strange therefore, for you do as if your selues

See Chap. 45
9.

were

Hypocrites
acknow-
ledge no
God in their
hearts, but
what they
haue forged
in their owne
braine.

were your owne Creators, and as if you had all things at your beck. But it is my proper office to appoint what I thinke good : and if you dare vſurpe my right and authoritie, be it knowne vnto you, that you haue forgotten your condition, no leſſe then if you thought your felues goddes rather then men.

This diuerſitie of expoſitions alters the Prophets meaning nothing at all; whoſe purpoſe was to confirme the doctrine of the former verſe : for hee againe reproues theſe proud ones, who attributed ſo much power vnto themſelues, that they would by no meanes be brought vnder Gods yoke, being in ſuch wiſe bewitched with a falſe opinion of their owne wiſdome, that they contemned all good admonitions, as if they had bene ſomes pettie goddes. Thus you ſee how it is ſaid, that they denied God that formed them: for whatſoever it bee that men attribute vnto themſelues, therein they rob God, and take away that honour which belongs vnto him.

The expoſition ſhould be a little differing in the firſt member onely: thoſe which take the particle *in* affirmatiuely, draw this ſenſe; Certainly I will breake you, as if a potter ſhould breake the pot which he hath made. But becauſe the Prophet had to deale againſt great ones, who ſought couerts to hide themſelues from the Lord, I rather take it by way of an interrogation, as if he ſhould ſay; Are you ſuch ſubtile headed fellowes indeed, that by the turnings and diſcourſes which you plot in your minds, you thinke you can bring this and that to paſſe, as the Potter doth his clay, who by turning it vpon his wheele, makes it receiue what ſhape it pleaſeth him? But let euerie man chuſe which ſenſe he likes beſt: for mine owne part, I haue followed that which I thinke to be moſt probable.

Verſ. 17. *Is it not yet but a little while, and Lebanon ſhall bee turned into Carmel? And Carmel ſhall be counted as a forreſt?*

NOW the Lord ſhewes that hee will let theſe wicked ones ſee what they are: as if he ſhould ſay; You rocke your ſelues aſleep in your pride; but I will wake you ere it bee long. For men are wont to take libertie to themſelues to doe euill, till they feele the heauie hand of God: for which cauſe, the Prophet threatens that his iudgements are readie to ſeiſe vpon ſo brutiſh a boldneſſe. Vnder the names of *Lebanon* and *Carmel*, he meant to expreſſe a reuening of the world as it were, and a change of things therein. But the doubt is, to what end: in which regard, the expoſitors diſagree much one from another: for mount *Lebanus* being replenished with trees and forreſts, and *Carmel* being a fat and fruitfull ſoile: many thinke that the *Iewes* are compared to Carmel, becauſe they ſhould become barren: and the *Chriſtians* to Lebanon, becauſe they ſhould bring forth great plentie of fruit. This opinion hath a goodly ſhew, and men are vſually very much

Men much delighted

tickled and delighted with the like deuices: with vnapt but we find a like place to this in the end of ^{expoſitions.} 32. Chapter, verſe 5, which will make it manifeſt, that the Prophet doth here by way of comparison, ſet forth the greatneſſe of Gods fauour: for when he ſhall begin to bleſſe his people, the abundance of all benefits ſhall be ſuch, that *Mount Carmel* ſhall loſe the report that it had for fruitfullneſſe. He ſaith then, *that he will make Lebanon to be like Carmel: that is to ſay, of a woodland, it ſhould bee made paſſurage to ſow corne in:* ſo as they ſhould gather as much fruit of plowed land, as if their preſent eſtate being compared with that which it ſhould be afterwards, it might well be eſteemed barren and deſert. But this manner of ſpeech ſhall be more fully expounded when we come to the 32. Chapter.

Others take Carmel for a noune appellatiue: but I had rather take it for a proper noune: for his meaning is, that theſe ſo fruitfull fields might well be counted barren and deſert, in comparison of this new and extraordinary fruitfullneſſe. Others expound it allegorically, and take Lebanon for the proud, and Carmel for thoſe of meane eſtate: which is too far fetched; and for mine owne part, I affect alwaies to follow the moſt natural ſenſe; and that is it which I haue touched before. Moreouer, to the end the faithfull might not be discouraged, he deſcends from threatnings to mercy; aſſuring them that after they ſhall haue ſhewed their obedience of faith in bearing the Croſſe, which for a time was to bee impoſed vpon them, they ſhould behold a ſudden change to approach, which would cauſe them to reioyce. And yet in taking away this hope from the wicked, he ſignifies that vengeance is then neceſſary vnto them, when they thinke leaſt of it, and whileſt they promiſe themſelues all proſperitie: for when they ſhall ſay, peace, peace, then ſhall ſudden deſtruction ouerwhelme them, as *S. Paul* ſaith, 1. Theſſ. 5. 3.

Verſ. 18. *And in that day ſhall the deafe heare the words of the booke: and the eyes of the blind ſhall ſee out of obſcuritie, and out of darkneſſe.*

HE promiſeth, as hath been ſaid, that the Church of God ſhall continue ſafe in the miſſet of theſe ſtormes: for albeit the world ſhould be ſhaken with infinite tempeſts, and laid on heapes, as if heauen and earth went together, yet the Lord would conſerue a little flocke, and raiſe vp his Church againe, as out of the miſſet of death. This place ought greatly to reſreſh the wearie ſpirits of the Saints, and to confirme their faith: for is it not a miracle of miracles, that ſo ſmall an handfull of the faithfull (amongſt whom remains the one and the ſame religion, worſhip, faith, and meanes of ſaluation) ſhould be conſerued among ſo many wrackes of Empires which happened here and there?

But it ſeemes that *Iſaiab* contradicts himſelfe; for before he ſortold that Gods people ſhould be ſo beſorted, that they ſhould haue

none vnderstanding: ver. 11, 12. and now on the contrarie hee saith, that the *deafe* shall *heare*, and that the *blinde* shall *see*. His meaning is then, that the Church must first be chastised and purged; not after an ordinarie or common fashion, but so strangely, that shee should seeme as good as vtterly extinct.

And therefore he saith, *In that day*: that is to say, after God hath punished the wicked, and cleansed his Church, hee will not onely enrich *the earth* with store of fruits, but with the reuening of the face thereof, hee will also restore *hearing* to the *deafe*, and *sight* to the *blinde*, to the end they may vnderstand his *law*. For men had neither eyes to see, nor eares to heare withall, as long as so horrible a iudgement lasted: for all were so terrified and amased, that none could vnderstand. But when the plagues & miseries should cease, then the Lord would open the eyes of that y were his, to the end they might see & embrace y goodness of God. For this is the true way to effect the restoration of the Church; namely, in giuing *sight* to the *blinde*, and *hearing* to the *deafe*: which Iesus Christ, as we know, not onely effected vpon mens bodies, but especially vpon their soules: John 9. We through Gods infinit mercy haue had experience hereof euen in our times, who haue been drawne out of that grosse darknesse of ignorance into which we were plunged, and hath brought vs our into the true light: for our eyes haue received sight, and our eares, which before were close stopped vp, haue been opened to vnderstand, because the Lord hath pierced them, to fit vs for his seruice.

True it is that the blessing which he mentioned in the 17. verse, concerning the reuening of the earth, was vnto them a good testimonie of their reconciliation: but the *illumination* whereof he now speaks, is much more excellent; for without that, all the gifts of God will not onely vanish away, but will also turne to our ruine and destruction. Now the Lord iustly attributes to himselfe alone, so excellent and great a worke: for it is not possible that those which are blind and deafe, should recouer their sight and hearing by their owne power. It appears therefore that this is promised in particular to the elect onely; because the greatest part of men doe alwaies lie wallowing and weltering in darknesse.

Verf. 19. *The meeke in the Lord shall receive ioy againe; and the poore men shall reioyce in the holie one of Israel.*

Then the *humble* shall againe bee glad in the Lord. I translate this place thus: whereas others expound; The meeke shall continue to reioyce: for the Prophet speaks not of the continuance of ioy, but rather of a new ioy. As if he should say; Notwithstanding they be heauie and forrowfull now, yet I will giue them cause of gladnesse, that they shall bee once againe filled with ioy.

He speaks of the *humble*: in which, note

that we are prepared by afflictions to receiue Gods grace: for the Lord casts vs downe and humbles vs, that hee may afterwards raise vs vp. When he corrects his children then, we ought not to bee discouraged; but rather to meditate on this and the like sentences, and to hope full aboue hope. And to conclude, that after we haue suffered a litle while, God will in the end giue his Church ioy and consolation. Moreouer, we hence gather that which I haue touched before, to wit, that the grace of illumination is not common to all indifferently: for albeit all dranke of the same cuppe of affliction, yet affliction *humbled* but a few, to make them truly poore in spirit.

Afflictions prepare vs to receiue Gods grace.

Heauinesse may induce for a night, but ioy comes in the morning.

All receiue not benefit alike by afflictions.

Verf. 20. *For the cruell man shall cease, and the scornefull men shall be consumed: and all that hastied to iniquitie shall be cut off.*

Now he expounds that more fully, which was said in the former verse; to wit, that the restoration of the Church should consist in rearing vp those that were *humbled*, and in shewing compassion to the *poore*. But first of all that purgation of the Church wherof we haue spoken, was necessarie: for as long as God defers to execute his iudgements vpon the wicked, that are mingled among the good; they beare all the sway in the Church, all things are corrupt and out of order, God is neither worshipped nor serued as hee ought, and religion it selfe is trodden vnder foote. When the wicked then are either taken away, or repressed, then the Church recouers her first beauty; and the faithfull feeling themselves disburthened of so manie miseries and calamities, doe begin to leape for ioy.

In the first place he calles the *cruell*, *Arifim*: which word is diuersly expounded: but the Prophet, as I thinke, makes a distinction betwene those who were not ashamed to commit their wickednesse openly; and such, who although they had some shew of goodnesse, yet in the meane while were no better then the rest, because they despised God in their hearts. It may be also that he giues them two differing titles, in regard that as theues among men, they spoiled, oppressed, and vexed, giuing themselves leaue to commit what them listed. And thus they were not restrained by any feare or awe of God, because they esteemed of religion but as a fable. He also comprehends other wickedneses in adding, that they *rose betimes to doe euill*: for he speaks not of the Caldeans or Assyrians, but of such as would bee held to be of the number of the faithfull, and boasted, that they were the children of Abraham.

Verf. 21. *Which made a man to sinne in the word, and took him in a snare: which reprovned them in the gate, & made the iust to fall without cause.*

WE haue told you heretofore with whom the Prophet had to deale; namely, with

It is an happy thing when tein-parall blifings and inward re nouation go together. Men are not so fit to receiue colort in the day of distresse, as when the storme is ouer.

Wherein the true meens of the Churches restauration consist.

Psal. 40.

All Gods benefis will turne to our ruine, without we be borne anew.

*Or, Then the, &c.

with hypocrites, and prophane contentners, who esteemed all the reprehensions & threatenings of the Prophet but as wind, and had forged to themselves a god of their own devising. For such who only sought libertie to lue as they listed in their lusts and wicked courses, were vterlic vnable to beare the sharp reproches of y^e Prophets, neither would they bee touched nor repressed by their good wiles. For which cause they were diligent in noting and obseruing their words, either to snarle at them, or to wrest something or other to their purpose. Neither do I doubt but he here taxeth the wicked who were offended at the plainnes of the Prophets, and with their sharp and vehement rebukes, as if they meant to bring the necks of the people, princes, and priests vnder their girdles.

1 Thence it is that these calumniationes and
2 false accusations are raised vp against the
faithfull seruants of God at this day; thence
is it also that such doubtfull and curious ques-
3 tions are propounded vnto them, euen as
nets and snares to put the innocent in haz-
ard of their lues, or else to plunge them in-
to some imminent danger. And we see that
the Scribes and Pharises did the like euen to
Iesus Christ himselfe, *Mith.* 21. 23. and 22. 17.
Iohn 8. 6. The last member of the verse which
is added by way of exposition, shewes, that
this is not to be vnderstood of slanders and
other cunning deuises in generall, by which
the subtle are wont to intrap the simple: for
the Prophet rather more plainly condemnes
the wicked conspiracies by which the vnbe-
leeuers indeuor to exempt themselves from
all reprehensions and censures. Now in re-
gard that their assemblies were kept openlie
for giuing sentence in iudgment, and that
the gates were alwaies replenished with peo-
ple, the Prophets tooke opportunitie from
thence to reprove all sorts, so as they spared
not the Iudges themselves. For the matters
of life and death at that time were in the
hands, of such wicked and godles wretches,
that it was needfull to rebuke them very
sharplie. But in stead of making any good vse
of these admonitions to come to amendment
of life, they became so much the worse, and
raged against the Prophets, and laid snares
to catch them, for as *Amos* saith, They hated
him that reposed in the gates, and abhorred
him that spake vprightlie, *Amos* 5. ro.

This appertaines to all, and especially to
Iudges and rulers in Common-wealths, who
are the most impatient, and wil by no means
abide the least reproofe. They loue to reigne
as Kings, and would be so esteemed of others
also, albeit they be worse iudged then the
meaneſt good subiect.

The expositors agree not in the exposition
of the verb *tekoſhūn*, which signifies to spread
nets: for some take it to chide, others, to do
wrong, as if the Prophet accused the male-
pertnes of those who gaue ouer themselves
to violence, and by means thereof banished
such out of their presence as should any way
touch the in their reputations. But as I hope
the readers will approue of that reading
which I haue followed:

He also saith that the *iust* was overthrowne
without cause, for they did what they could by
craft and wicked practises to bring the iust
into hatred, as if they had been the only wicked
men in the world: but after they haue
borne their scottes and reproach for a while,
their enemies at length shall come to destruc-
tion. For this is the consolation which the Lord
giueth the faithfull, to wit, that he will not suffer
the wicked to scape so sent-free but they also shall
snare for it, and in the end shall be suppressed, how-
soeuer for a time they had the world as will. But
we must haue patience to wait for the accom-
plishment of these and the like promises.

Verſ. 20.

Let patience
haue her
perfect
worke.

Verſ. 22. Therefore saith the Lord un-
to the house of *Iacob*, euen he that redee-
med *Abraham*: *Iacob* shall not now be
confounded, neither now shall his face be
pale.

This is the conclusion of the former sen-
tence, for he comforts the people, to the
end they should not despair in this poore
and wofull estate into which they should be
brought. It is also needfull to note the time
vnto which these things ought to be refer-
red, to wit, to the time of the captiuitie when
the Temple was overthrowne, the sacrifices
abolished, so as it seemed religion was whole-
lie rooted out, and all hope of deliuerance
taken fro them. There was great cause there-
fore why the hearts of the people should be
sustained and ypheld by these prophesies, to
the end that the wrack and ruine of all things
being come vpon them, they might haue this
planck (as it were) to saue themselves from
Ship-wrack, vpon which if they kept them-
selves firmly, they might by means thereof
come safe to y^e shore. By this let vs be warned
also to embrace the like promises by faith, and
when all things shall seeme desperate, yet let
vs rest vpon them with our whole hearts.

Now he speaks of the house of *Iacob*, in
which we are to note, that the vertue of Gods
word is perpetuall, and of such efficacie, that
it brings forth fruit as long as there is a peo-
ple in the world which adores and stands in
awe of him. For there are alwaies some whom
God reserves, because he will not suffer the
race of the faithfull to perish. Hath the Lord
spoken it then? let vs beleue him, and doub-
tlesse the time will come in which we shall reape
the fruit of our faith. For as his truth is firme
and stable in it selfe, so if we rest constantlie
vpon him, wee shall neuer be destitute of
comfort.

Doubtlesse
there is an
end, and thy
hope shall
not be cut
off. *P. ou.* 27.
18.

None that
trust in him
shall be con-
founded.
P. I. 34. 22.

It is not without cause also that he addes,
that God who now promiseth to be mercifull
vnto *Iacob*, saith, that he redeemed *Abraham*:
for he therein brings the people to the be-
ginning of the Church, that considering Gods
power, which from time to time was manife-
sted by so many famous examples, they might
haue no occasion at all to call his truth into
question. If so be then they gloried in that
they were the children of *Abraham* they were
also therewithall to thinke from what place
the Lord did first deliuer him, to wit, from the

Abrahams
deliuerances.
x

seruice of idols which he and his father wor-
 1 shipped: Iosh. 24. 2. But he redeemed him of-
 ten besides that; to wit, when he was in dan-
 3 ger in Egypt and in Gerar: Gen. 12. 17. & 20.
 4 14. Also when he discomfited the Kings: Gen.
 14. 16. Lastly, when God granted him issue
 cued at the time when hee was past power to
 beget: Gen. 21. 2. For albeit the Prophet
 had a speciall respect to Gods adoption, when
 he commanded him to goe out of his fathers
 house: yet vnder this redemption, he compre-
 hends also all the benefites which God be-
 stowed vpon him: for we see that *Abraham* was
 not redeemed onely once: that is, from ex-
 trem dangers and perils of death. Now if the
 Lord raised vp his Church in the onely per-
 son of *Abraham*, and that in such a time as he
 had lost all strength to beget any children to
 conserue the same after him; will not the
 Lord preferue it for the time to come, when
 in mans iudgement it was as good as for-
 lorne? What a miserable waste was there of
 the Church, at the coming of Christ? How
 many enemies were there which opposed the
 same? Yet did he set vp this his kingdome in
 despite of them all: the Church flourished and
 made all the world to wonder at the glorie of
 it. Let vs not doubt then but that the Lord
 will in his due time manifest his power both
 in auenging himselfe vpon the enemies of his
 Church which oppress it, and in restoring of
 her to her first beaurie.

A singular
 consolation.

When he saith, *Iacob shall not be confounded*;
 we often see that the faithful are constrained
 to hang downe their heads with shame, as *Je-
 remie* witnesseth; I will put my mouth in the
 dust: Lament. 3. 29. Also *Micha* saith; The time
 is come, in which the wise shall put their
 hands vpon their mouth, and like the dust:
 for when the Lord corrects his people so
 sharplie, the faithfull must needs bee *con-
 founded* therewith. But the Prophet after-
 ward shewes, that this shall not indure for e-
 uer. Let vs not dispaire then in aduersitie: for
 albeit the wicked make vs their laughing
 stocks, and lade vs with all the indignities
 in the world, yet will the Lord in the end
 draw vs out of this *shame and confusion of
 face*.

Mich. 7. 16.

Harken to
 this O thou
 troubled
 soule, and
 know it for
 thy selfe.
 Iob. 5. 27.

Yet the Lord therewithall shewes, that
 this fauor belongs not vnto such proud ones,
 who either are obstinate, or oppose their
 hard heads against Gods blowes that hee
 laies vpon them; but that it onely belongs
 vnto the humble, who are bowed with shame,
 walking humbly with their heads bowed
 downe.

Obiect.

But may some object, how can it bee said
 that *Iacob shall not be confounded*, seeing he was
 dead long before? it seemes hee attributes
 some feeling to the dead, and then they know
 what we doe in this world: thence the Papists
 argue, that the dead know all that we doe. I
 answer, there is here the faining of a person;
 which is often found in the Scriptures: in
 which sense *Jeremie* saith; That a voice was
 heard in Ramah, *Rachel* weeping for her chil-
 dren and would not be comforted for them,
 because they were not: Ier. 31. 15. For in that
 place he sets forth the destruc^{tion} of the Tribe

Ans.

of *Beniamin*, by the lamentation of *Rachel*,
 which was the grandmother as it were. So
Isaiah brings in *Iacob* couered with *shame*
 and *confusion*, in regard of the vices and wic-
 kednesses of his posteritie. For as a wise sonne
 is the glory of his father, so a foole is an hea-
 uiness to his mother: Prou. 10. 1. Although
 mothers doe cocker their children most, yet
 are they *ashamed* when they see them offend.
 How much more fathers then, whose loue be-
 ing guided by discretion, are chiefly careful
 for the well ordering and instructing of their
 children. Must they not needs be much more
 grieved, in seeing them wax wicked and dis-
 solute? But the Prophet meant here to touch
 the people to the quicke, in setting *Iacob*
 their father before them; who being adorned
 with such rare graces, of God, was now disho-
 noured by his successors: so as if himselfe had
 been present to haue seene them, it would
 haue constrained him to *blist for shame*. He
 therefore tareth the vnthankfulness of the
 people, who in stead of honouring, dishono-
 red their father.

Verf. 23. *But when hee seeth his
 children, the worke of mine hands in
 the midst of him, they shall sanctifie
 my name, and sanctifie the holie one
 of Iacob, and shall feare the God of
 Israel.

*Or, for who
 he shall see,
 &c.

The particl *Chi*, is here to bee read in its
 proper signification; to wit, For; because
 the Prophet giues a reason why the shame of
 Israel should be taken away: that is, he should
 haue children raised vp vnto him againe, as it
 were from death to life. In that the Lord calls
 them the *worke of his hands*; I nothing doubt
 but he therein meant to expresse the admira-
 ble worke of their redemption: for he makes
 those *new men*, (as it were) whom hee adopts
 and ioines vnto him for his children; as it is
 said, P[sa]. 102. 19. *The people that shall be created,
 shall praise the Lord*: in which place the holie
 Ghost doth in like manner speake of the re-
 stauration of the Church. For there is no 7.

See chap. 43.

mention here of that vniuersall creati-
 on of mankind, vnder which all good and
 bad are comprehended, as wee haue often
 said: but he now brings vs to the knowledge
 of his power, to the end we should not iudge
 of the saluation of the Church, by viewing
 her present estate. Here therefore wee must
 note diuers oppositions: first, betweene the
 deformitie of the Church, and her beaurie or
 excellencie betwene glorie and shame: se-
 condly, betweene the people of God, and o-
 ther nations: thirdly, betweene the worke of
 Gods hands, and the worke of men; (for
 the Church can no way be reestablished but by
 the onely hand of God:) fourthly, betweene
 her flourishing estate, and that miserable waste
 by which she was pittifully rent in sunder be-
 fore. For he calles the *midst* of her a perfect
 restauracion; by which the people shall be so
 reunited and ioyned together, that she shall
 not onely possess the borders of the land, but
 the

the middeſt and the chiefe place thereof alſo. Laſtly he ſhewes what the end of our redemption is, which he ſaith, That they ſhal ſanctifie his name: for we are all created to the end Gods goodnes may be magnified amongſt vs. But becauſe the moſt part of men doe than this end, God hath choſen his Church, in which his praifes do found and continue, as it is ſaid in the Pſalme 65. 2. Praise waitech for thee O God in Zion. Now becauſe many therep in the flock grow corrupt, the Prophet aſſignes this office to ſanctiſull, whom God miraculouſlie had preferred.

Moreouer, becauſe the hypocrites honour God with their lips, and are farre from him in their hearts, as we haue ſcene verſe 13. Iſaiah addes feare to praifes: ſhewing by this, that praifes are of no account with God, vnleſſe they truly are of no account with God, vnleſſe we truly and with our whole hearts doe ſubiect our ſelues vnto him: neither yet, vnleſſe our whole life teſtifies for vs that we take not vp his holie name ſainedlie nor hypoeticallie.

Verſ. 24. Then they that erred in ſpirit ſhal haue vnderſtanding, and they that murmured ſhall learne doctrine.

HE yet againe repeates this promiſe which he touched in the 18. verſe: for whilſt mens vnderſtandings are poſſeſſed with igno-

rance and blindnes, deſtruction beſegeth and enuirones them about, although they otherwiſe flow in abundance of all worlde wealth. The Lord therefore minding to prepare for the reſtauration of his Church, be- gins to cleare and enlighten the vnderſtandings of thoſe who before erred in darknes by the light of his word. And this he doth by the ſecret inſtinct of the Holy Ghoſt: for it is to little purpoſe to be taught by the externall miniſtrie, vnleſſe he vouchſafe to teach vs by his working inwardlie in our hearts.

In the ſecond member ſome tranſlate detractors; others vagabonds: but the word ſignifies, that thoſe who reſiſted the Prophets before, and could not beare their reprooſes, ſhould now become teachable and obedient, and therefore I haue turned it *murmurers*. By this we ſee how admirable Gods mercie is, in that he thus brings ſuch home into the right way, which deſerted no ſuch fauor: and not only that, but makes them partakers of his greateſt benefits. But let euery one lay this to his owne heart: for which of vs is it that hath not ſometimes or other *murmured* againſt God, and deſpiſed his holy doctrine. Yea, if God ſhould not pacifie our murmuring thoughts and affections by ſtilling and ſitting them for his ſeruiſe, the moſt of vs would periſh in our owne follies.

Externall teaching will be to little purpoſe, vnleſſe God works inwardly in vs by his holie Spirit.

THE XXX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. Woe to the rebellious children, ſaith the Lord, that take counſell but not of me; and cower with a cowering, but not by my ſpirit, that they may lay ſinne vpon ſinne.



HE Prophet heere denouceeth a woe againſt the Iewes, who being impatient in ſuffering the aſſaults wherewith the Aſſyrians and other enemies preſſed them, did ſtraightway runne downe into Egypt to require help of them. But this reprehention may ſeeme ſomewhat too ſharpe, if we ſhall only conſider how lawfull it is for the diſtreſſed and weak to aſke help euen of the wicked; eſpeciallie when they are vniuſtlic vexed: for it is naturall to all men to ſeek protection and defence in time of danger. But if we looke vnto the firſt cauſe of this, we ſhall find that the fault which the Iewes committed in this behalfe, was not ſmall, nor yet to be endured. For firſt of all it is not a light ſinne, but rather a wicked rebellion for a man ſo to be the gouernour of himſelfe, that he deſpiſeth and contemneth to be vnder the yoke of Gods government. Now the

the Egyptians, of which there were two principall cauſes.

The firſt was general, and likewiſe had reference to other nations, with whom the Lord would not haue his people to conuerſe, nor to make any confederacies with them, leaſt they ſhould be corrupted by the ſuperſtitious of the Gentils. For it often fallies out (I know not how) that by little and little we learne the vices of thoſe with whom we conuerſe and ate familiar. And as we naturallie imitate their vices rather then their vertues, ſo are we by and by infected therewith, and afterwards the infection growes to ſpread it ſelfe inſtandlie. This is come to paſſe in this realme of France, which hath conuerſed with other nations: for hauing been too diligent in framing themſelues to follow their euill example, they haue now fraughted themſelues full of filthineſſes. Yea, this inordinate deſire of leagues & confederacies hath opened the dore for the Turks to enter into Aſia, and now hath giuen him paſſage into Europe: and howſoener they ſtill retainie their wonted frugalitie in meates and drinks, yet nothing remaines to all countries which they haue ouercome by force, but the villenies and pollutions which they haue left behind the. The ſame may well be ſaid of our countrie of France, by hauing familiaritie with diuers other nations.

The other cauſe was ſpeciall and peculiar to this people onlie: for the Lord hauing deliuered them out of Egypt, meant that they

Exod. 23. 32. & 34. 15.

Deut. 17. 2.

Two principall cauſes why God forbid the Iſraelites to haue any familiaritie with the Egyptians.

We ſooner imitate others vices, rather then their vertues.

France corrupted by hauing conuerſation with other nations. Turks.

The ſecond reaſon.

Cc 4 ſhould

The end of our redemption noted.

Praise waitech for the Lord, but it is in Zion.

Praifes are of no account with God, vnleſſe they proceed from a true eate ſeare of his Maieſtie.

Certaine reaſons why the Prophet denouceeth this woe againſt the Iewes.

Nature teacheth vs to ſeek reliefe in time of danger.

The firſt reaſon.

Exod. 13. 17. Lord had ſtraightlie forbidden them to haue Deut. 17. 16. any familiaritie, or to make any leagues with

should euer retaine the remembrance of so great a benefit, and for that end gaue them in charge to haue no familiaritie with the Egyptians, fearing lest if they should fall into league with them, the memorie of so famous a deliuerance might easilie slip from them: by means whereof also, they might bee in danger to lose that freedome, in continuing to be thankfull for the same, which thankfulness was iniointed them by God. Was it not an vnworthy thing then to entertain friendship with so prophane a nation, and that to the dishonour of the Almighty? But especially seeing it was his will that his people should acknowledge him alone sufficient to preferre them in safetie, they should haue relied vpon this his promise, & freely haue disclaimed all other helps. You see then that it was a very horrible sin thus to defraud God of the honour which to him belonged, and to labour after acquaintance from all parts with all prophane nations; for had they satisfied themselues with Gods onely protection, they needed not to haue bin so readie to run downe into Egypt.

They were therefore iustly to bee conuincd of their infidelitie, in that they bestowed so much paines this way, and made such a stir in procuring their helpe. Neither is it to be doubted, but that the Prophet also was the more quicke and sharpe in speech against so sacrilegious a sinne; because thereby they bearead God of the praise of his almighty power, in trotting thus vp and downe to get succour at the hands of strangers: for which cause the holy Ghost in an other place compares this lust to an inordinate loue; yea to most brutish whordomes. For *Ezechiel* shewes that their conjunction with the Egyptians in this behalfe, was no lesse then if a mans wife in her excessiue heate of lust, should not onely runne after adulterers, but should euen desire to haue companie with Asses and horses.

I grant our Prophet doth not simply condemne all leagues with idolaters in this place, but hee respects that prohibition which was expressed in the very law of God it selfe; to wit, that they should haue no association with the Egyptians at all. Hee is thus moued to indignation against the Iewes therefore, chiefly in regard of this prohibition, because it could not bee but Gods dishonour must of necessitie be ioyned with this their running downe, as desperate men into Egypt.

This is the cause why hee calles them peruerse and rebellious children, which phrase wee haue expounded in the first Chapter. His meaning is, that eicher they were men sunke deepe in their obstinacie, wittingly and willingly reuolting from God; or that they were so rooted in obstinacie, that there was no foundnesse nor integritie left in them. In the very entrance then hee chrageth them that they were men giuen vp to their owne counsels, and therewithall did cast off the Lord. Although some expound, To spread the effusion or shedding; and that it agrees with the Prophets meaning: yet others in mine owne opinion, haue turned it better; to wit, who

couer the secrets: and this reading I haue followed. The reason is, because he speaks here of counsels and priuie plors, by which, in thinking to deceiue the Prophets, their meaning was indeede to flee from Gods presence.

Those which translate, That they may couer themselues with a couering, are grossly mistaken: for albeit the Iewes sought to the Egyptians for securitie; yet doth the Prophet rather aime at their wile plottings; of which I spake erewhile, and both the expositions come all to one sense.

Now hee repeats one and the same thing by three phrases of speech: first, that they couered their counsels from God; secondly, that they asked not counsell at his mouth: and thirdly, that they would not be governed by his Spirit. For those that are caried away with a conceit of their owne wit, doe willingly giue themselues to cunning deuices, whereby they may couer their infidelitic and rebellion: and for as much as it was not their meaning to obey Gods word, therefore they neuer craued the direction of his Spirit. Thence comes that sorrowfull and wofull euent; for it cannot be auoided, but those counsels and determinations which the Lord gouernes not, must come to a miserable and fallall end. What wisdom is there but that which proceeds out of his mouth? Let vs seeke vnto it then; that is to say, let vs aske counsell of his word; so shall wee also haue the direction and gouernement of his Spirit, from whence proceeds all wisdom and counsell.

But wee are to note that the word and the Spirit are matched together: which crosseth those fantastical spirits, who leaue the word forsooth, to aspire to Oracles and secret reuelations. And thus they would come vnto God, but they will not keepe the Kings high way, as they say, nay, rather despising it. What doe they else then, but strue to flie without wings, as the prouerbe is? Let vs therefore hold vs fast to this principle, that whatsoeuer we consult or enterprise in the whole course of our life, without warrant from Gods word, will in the end deceiue vs, because we begin at the wrong end; for that onely ought to be our guide. And surely if we doe but well be-thinke vs of our owne ignorance, or rather our great brutishnesse, wee may easilie bee brought to confesse that our madnes is worthy to be condemned; to wit, if we shal thinke our selues so wise as not to vouchsafe to inquire at Gods mouth.

If any object, that all things are not comprehended in the holy Scriptures; neither doth it in euerie small circumstance resolve our doubts: I answer, all things whatsoeuer that concerne the well ordering of our life, is fully contained therein. Let vs then once conclude in our selues, that the word of God shall haue the rule ouer our thoughts and actions, and that wee seeke to square them according vnto that; then may we be sure that God will neuer suffer vs to hang long in suspense, but will giue vs a way and passage out of all difficulties and incombrances. And yet it may be wee shall wait long for the accomplishment of this worke; but in the end it is certain

Exod. 13. 7.
8. 14.

Verse 2

Ezech. 16. 26.
Ier. 5. 8.

Deui. 17. 16.
Exod. 13. 17.

Chap. 1. 4.

1
2
3

Counsels that are not directed by God, must needs haue a fallall end. They that like counsell from Gods word, shall be sure to be directed by Gods Spirit.

Prouerbe Principle.

Obiect.

Ans.

If we will yield our selues to be ruled by Gods word, he will not suffer vs long to linger in our doubtings.

certaine the Lord will deliuer and draw vs out of them all, if we be willing and ready to obey him. But therefore that we are carefull in laboring & ſeeking after ſuch meanes as may ſerue Gods providence: yet muſt we alwaies nourish this meditation in our breſt, to wit, that we begin nothing, till we be aſſured that the thing is well-pleaſing and acceptable in his ſight.

The Prophet we ſee then condemnes the boldnes of ſuch who ſeek to ſuccour themſelves by vnlawfull courſes, thinking that way to proſper beſt, when they uſe all meanes, be it right or wrong, euen as if they meant thereby to be their owne ſauours. Now it is certaine that this proceeds from infidelitie and diſtruſt, becauſe they thinke God to be insufficient to ſaue them, vnleſſe they yet runne to ſeek help of ſtrangers, although it be ſtatlie forbidden them. From thence comes thoſe vnlawfull contracts and craftie conuoyances, by meanes whereof men thinke their affaires ſhall haue better ſucceſſe, then if they walked honeſtly and vprightly one with another. Wee for our parts doe ſee infinite examples of this vnbeliefe in all the parts of mens liues: for they thinke themſelves as good as vndone, if they ſhould make it their reſolution to be content with the only bleſſing of Almighty God, and to deale truly and iuſtly with men.

But let vs know that we are not only caſt off and forſaken, but *empted* of God, as ſoone as we bend our ſelues to ſeek deſcence from vnlawfull helps. Let all our enterpriſes, counſels and ſtudies therefore begin at Gods reuealed will. It is our dutie alwaies to waigh with our ſelues what he commands or forbids, that ſo being whollie deuoted to his ſeruiſe, and to the obedience of his Commandements, we may ſuffer our ſelues to be guided by his Spirit, which if we reſuſe to do, then ſhall our preſumption coſt vs the ſetting on, as they ſay.

He ſaith, that they *laid ſinne upon ſinne*, becauſe the Iewes did nothing elſe by their goodly preparations wherwith they thought to furniſh themſelves, but daſht their foot againſt the ſame ſtone, and of one euill made twaine, which was too great a readie: for the fault is much more blame-worthie and to be condemned when by vnlawfull ſhifts we labor to ſlee from vnder the hand of God.

But we are here to obſerue one thing more ſpeciall as touching the Iewes, who by the help of the Egyptians would put the Aſſyrians to flight, and yet themſelves had called the Aſſyrians to help them againſt the Iſraelites and Syrians. *Aſſhu* preſſed the Iewes very ſore, and doubtleſſe it was a iuſt puniſhment of God vpon them for their incredulitie, who ſought for help of men rather then of God. And this we ſee hath been the praſtiſe of many others alſo, who haue not ſtuck to ſeek help euen from the Turke. Well, the Iewes were ſo farre off from repenting themſelves of their ſinne, or acknowledging God to be iuſt in the puniſhment thereof: that they *added ſinne to ſinne*, as if the committing of one offence had made amends for the

committing of another. Theſe are the cauſes then why our Prophet deales ſo roughlie with them: for thoſe that goe on ſo in their wickednes, and do violently riſe againſt God himſelfe, and will not ſuffer themſelves to be brought into the right way, neither by admonitions nor corrections, are worthe to be puniſhed with the greater ſeueritie & rigor.

Verſ. 2. Which walke forth to goe downe into Egypt, (and haue not asked at my mouth) to ſtrengthen themſelves with the ſtrength of Pharaoh, and truſt in the ſhadow of Egypt.

WE haue told you before why the Prophet blames this *deſcent*, or *going downe*. But becauſe ſo groſſe a rebellion did much amplify their ſinne, he once againe repeats it, that they did this *without conſulting with his mouth*, nay expreſly againſt his inhibition. He alſo brings them to the fountaine of this euill, when he tells them that they did it to *ſtrengthen themſelves*, becauſe they relied vpon the ſtrength of the Egyptians. From hence then ſprung that peruerſe deſire of theirs to make a league with them, in which they ſufficiently ſhewed that they made ſlight account of Gods power, not much caring whether they truſted in him or not; and thus made their impietic manifeſt to all the world.

But ſome might obiect, that men are Gods ſeruaunts, and that euery man may lawfullie vſe their help when he needs the ſame. I anſwere, mans help muſt be vſed, yet ſo, that in the meane while we reſt and depend vpon the alone help of God. But there was a ſpeciall cauſe to blame the Iewes, in regard they knew well that God had forbidden them to ſeek for any help of the Egyptians: and therefore in this their fact they tooke ſo much from God, as they attributed to *Pharaoh* and his hoſt. It is not without cauſe therefore that our Prophet doth here make a flat oppoſition betweene *Pharaoh* and God: for the creatures are ſet as oppoſite againſt him in battell, either when they exalt themſelves againſt him, or when men abuſe them, and truſt in vnto, or deſire them more then is permitted vnto them.

Verſ. 3. But the ſtrength of Pharaoh ſhall be your ſhame: and the truſt in the ſhadow of Egypt your conſuſion.

NOW he ſhewes what the end of the wicked ſhall be that deſpiſed God and his word, and followed ſuch counſels as themſelves liked: to wit, that all their enterpriſes whatſoever ſhould turne to their ouerthrow. He alſo threatens them that they ſhall not not only be left fruſtrate of their hope, but that they ſhall alſo goe to ſeek that with great loſſe and conſuſion, which ſhould bring them nothing in the end but ſhame and ſorrow.

This muſt be alwaies the lot of the wicked, for howſoever for a time they ſeeme to be whollie at their eaſe, and that all things fall

Begin nothing till thou beſt aſſured that thou takeſt in hand is pleaſing to the Lord.

Men for the moſt part thinke themſelves vndone, vnleſſe they lue by vnlawfull meanes.

A third reaſon.

- 2. King. 16. 7.
- 2. King. 17. 4.
- 2. King. 18. 21.

Obiect.

Anſ.

It is lawfull to vſe the help of man, provided that we whollie depend vpon God for a bliſſing. *Deut. 17. 16. Exod. 12. 17.*

How God and his creatures are laid to fight one againſt another.

out according to their desire; yet in the end the same things shall turne to their ruine. This is the iust reward of their presumption, when they dare to passe the bounds of Gods word: for things attained by vnlawful means, shall neuer bring profite to the possessors. He speaks of the strength of *Pharaoh*, by way of yeelding or granting; as if hee should say; You verily thinke *Pharaohs* strength is your fabric: but be better aduised, for it shall bring you nothing but *shame* and dishonour. *The shadow of Egypt* vnder which you hope to shrowd your selues, shall cause you to be cast downe with confusion of face. These two words of *confusion* and *ignominie*, are to be taken both in one sense; but the latter is added by way of amplification, because it carries greater weight with it then the former.

Verf. 4. *For his Princes were at Zoan, and his Ambassadors came vnto Hanes.*

WE may see by the Prophets words, that the Iewes not onely desired the aide of the Egyptians, calling them to aide and succour them: but hee expresseth somewhat more, to wit, that they obtained not the same without *great cost and labour*. For it could not be auoided, but they must needs make *long iournies, take much paines*, and be at *extraordinary charges*, to goe laden with their presents to the furthest Cities of Egypt, which he here names. For they sent no common persons on these ambassages, but *Lords and great Princes*. The reprehension therefore is the sharper, because they had basely sought succour of the Egyptians, trotting vp and down like poore futers. We are also to note y^e antithesis here which we spake of before; to wit, that God was ready at hand, and neere to be found; so as they needed not to trauell far, nor to be at any great expences to call vpon his name: for he tied himselfe vnto them by this promise; This is my rest: *Psal. 132. 14.* and had told them that in that place hee would be found of them. But these poore wretches in despising God, did rather choose to vex themselves, by running to the vttermost parts of the world, then to inioy that present helpe which was offred them within the walles of their owne Citie.

Verf. 5. *They shall be ashamed of the people that cannot profit them, nor helpe nor doe them good; but shall be a shame and also a reproch.*

HE confirms the former sentence: for it was a wonderfull hard matter to perswade the obstinate sort amongst the Iewes, that all things which they tooke in hand without the expresse warrant of Gods word, should turne to their ouerthrow. Now to the end they might be the more seuerely punished, God suffered them sometimes to prosper in their wicked courses; that so, being

more and more seduced, they might in the end breake their owne neckes: for it came to passe by his iust iudgement, that Satan drew them on by litle and litle with his sweete baites, till hee had caught them fast in his nets. But in the end it was euident that they were not onely deprivied of that succour which they expected, but were also sharplie corrected for their presumption and indelicitie.

The Prophet threatens them then that the Egyptians shall not onely deceiue them, (as it often falles out that the wicked either giue vs the slip when we haue most neede, or doe treacherously betray those whom they haue set a gog with faire promises) but that they should stand them in no stead, although they did their best indouours to keepe that faith which they had promised. For let men do the vmost they can for vs, yet in as much as the issues of all things rests in the hands of God, we shall receiue no benefit thereby, vnlesse God bee pleased to adde his blessing. When the Prophet spake this, it was verie doubtfull and hard to bee beleeued, that so mightie a people should bee vnable to giue them helpe: but we ought to hold it for a sure principle, that all the comforts which the world is able to set before vs, shall turne but to smoke, vnlesse the Lord be fauourable and mercifull vnto vs.

Verf. 6. *The burthen of the beasts of the South in a land of trouble and anguish, from whence shall come the young and old Lion, the Viper, and fierie flying Serpent against them that shall beare their riches vpon the shoulders of the Coltes, and their treasures vpon the bounces of the Camels, to a people that cannot profit.*

HAVING inuicied against the consultations of the Iewes, in seeking helpe from the Egyptians, he now scornes them for the large expences, and great paines which they were at to bring this about: and therefore he denounceth the same curse which he did in the beginning of the Chapter; because they foolishly busied themselves much in transgressing Gods commandement. He mentions the *South*, because they passed thorow the South Country, wherein Egypt was situated from *Indea*. And in regard of the way therunto, he calles the *beasts*, and speaks to them: the rather to shame men, who were become senselesse, and would heare no admonitions at all. He therefore shewes that the effect of this prophetic shall extend it selfe to the very *brute beasts*; seeing men did shut their eares against it. For seeing this people did proudly contemne these threatnings, the Prophet doth for good cause direct his speech to the *Horses* and *Camels*, who though they were destitute of reason, yet should they perceiue that God spake not in vaine.

Furthermore, the Prophet shewes that *Egypt* (vpon which this people thought to build

Things attained by vnlawfull means, shall neuer bring profite to the possessors.

it is to make their downfall the greater in the end.

Men can do vs no good further than it pleaseth God to blesse their indouours for our good.

A Principle.

Men may sometimes prosper in bad and euill courses, but

build their perfect happineſſe) ſhould proue a land of ſorrowe and affliction, euen to the verie beaſts. The way was long and tedious, yet they ſpared no coſt to ſatiſſie their inordinate luſts : yea they were ſo violently ouerſwayed and caried away therewith, that no diſtance of place, nor length of way could poſſibly coole or abate the ſame.

Now Iſaiab threatens them with a ſpeciall iudgement, (beſides the former incumbran- ces) which ſhould catch hold vpon them; to wit, that wild and cruell beaſts, that is, the young and old Lion, ſhould meeete them. Which was no new nor extraordinary accident vnto them that trauelled betwene Iudea and Egypt. Therefore hee heere notes out ſome thing more rare and dangerous; to wit, that beſides the fore trauale, diſcommodities, and charges which they ſhould be at, God in his iuſtice would meeete them with ſuch miſfor- tunes, that in the end they ſhould miſerably periſh. This doctrine ought to be applied vnto vs, who are too much wedded to the verie ſame vice: for as ſoone as any ſhew of danger ariſeth, wee by and by haſten to vnlawfull ſhifts, imagining that they ſhall doe vs good, albeit we know they be condemned of God. Is it not great reaſon then, that if wee will needes partake with this people in their ſin, that wee alſo ſhould ſhare with them in their puniſhment, vnleſſe we preuent the ſame by reſſing our ſtubburneſſe and vnbeliefe by Gods word? We ought alſo to obſerue and take heede of this folly, which carries vs away in ſuch wiſe, that we care for no coſt, nor re- fuſe any paines whatſoever, to ſatiſſie and accompliſh our great ſond and furious luſt. Whileſt we were captiues vnder the Pa- pacie, we had too woſull experience hereof, trotting hither and thither, and made long and wearifome pilgrimages to diuers Saints, when as yet the moſt tedious iournies were eaſie and light vnto vs : but now when wee ſhould yeeld obedience vnto God, and beare the light yoke of Chriſt, wee can indure no paines at all.

Verſ. 7. *For the Egyptians are vanitie, and they ſhall helpe in vaine. Therefore haue I cried vnto her: their ſtrength is to ſit ſtill.

THis verſe contains in it the expoſition of the former ſentence; for he denoun- ceth and repeats but the ſame thing as it were; to wit, that the Egyptians ſhall ſtand the Iewes in no ſtead, albeit they weary their bodies, and empty their purſes neuer ſo much in ſeeking helpe at their hands. As if hee ſhould ſay, Egypts ſtrength ſhall be vnprofitable vnto you, notwithstanding they ſhould do their vttermoſt, and imploy all their power to that end. Thus the Iewes ſhould be vtterly fruſtrated of their hopes; and to their great grieſe ſhould find themſelues much deceiued. The letter *Van*, here ſignifies For, or, Surely, as I haue tranſlated it.

In the next place he ſhewes that the Iewes haue nothing to ſay for themſelues, in that

they were thus giddy headed to runne into Egypt, and that they were vtterly vnworthy of pardon, in regard they would not repent, but wilfully and wittingly poſted downe thither, albeit they had been admoniſhed to tarry at home. For I reſer this crying *vnto Ieruſalem*, to the peoſ of God; wherein he com- plains that he did but loſe his labour, in ſeeking to reclaim them by ſo many and plaine admonitions : therewithall ſhewing, that it was not without good cauſe that he had fore- warned them to ſit ſtill; for he therein ſought to preuent the afflictions and calamities which otherwiſe he foreſaw would ſurely fall vpon them. But whence, I pray you, ſprang this vnquietneſſe? Truly from this, that Ieruſalem would not beleue the word of the Lord. In a word, he ſhewes that meere rebel- lion of heart pricketh them forward to trot into Egypt. Why ſo? becauſe they might haue liued in ſafetie, if they would haue taried at home.

The verbe to *crie*, ſignifies that they were not onely admoniſhed by words, but alſo by ſtripes: whence it appears, that their obſtinate and rebellion was the greater. He takes ſitting ſtill here, to remaine and to reſt quietly in the houſe: for he will ſhew afterward, that it had been their parts to haue been of a quiet ſpirit. See now the fountaine from whence this vnquietneſſe and ſtirring, yea, this their madneſſe and giddineſſe of head ſprang. Oh! They thought that the Lord was too weake for their defence, vnleſſe the ſtrength of Egypt were alſo added therunto. For it is the propertie of infidelitie, to ſolici- cite the hearts of ſuch as giue not honour enough to the power of God, to be in continuall vexation of ſpirit, without anie reſt at all.

The nature of infidelitie

Verſ. 8. Now goe, and write it before them in a table, and note it in a booke; that it may be for the laſt day for euer and euer.

HAving convinced the Iewes of manifeſt incredulitie, now he would haue it ſigned and ſealed as it were vpon perpetuall record for a witneſſe vnto all poſteritie, to the end thoſe which ſhould ſucceed might know both how obſtinate & rebellious this people were; as alſo how iuſtlic God inſiſted his puniſhments vpon them. We haue told you before that the Prophets were wont to gather their Sermons into certaine chiefe heads, and afterwards to faſten them vpon the gates of the Temple: which being read and viewed of all at leiſure, the Miniſters tooke them thence and laid them vp ſafely in Cheſts in the Temple: and thus the booke of the Prophets were conſerued, and afterward gathered orderlie into volumes. But when among the reſt there was ſome rare and excellent propheſie and worthe of memorie; then the Lord commanded that it ſhould be written in greater letters, the better to draw the people to y reading of it, that they might mark it the more diligentlie. The Lord now com- mands

See chap. 8. 1.

Men will take great paines to fulfill their owne luſts, but none at all in yeelding obedience to the Goſpell.

*Or, Surely.

mands the Prophet to doe the like, thereby shewing that this was no ordinarie matter, but the whole to be carefullie written, and very attentiuely read. Yea, that it should not only be read, but also so ingrauen as it were in mens memories, that it might neuer be raced out.

No doubt but the Prophet got great hatred of all hands by this prophesie, in regard he was not afraid to bring them thus vpon the open stage, not only to shame them among those that then liued, but among the posteritie also, and that from generation to generation. For what can men lesse endure, then to haue their wickednesses published, or that the same should stand as it were vpon record in the minds of men? oh! they can not abide that; they detest and abhorre it, accounting it a most vnworthie fact. Yet the Prophet notwithstanding was to goe thorow with it, and to yeeld obedience vnto God, albeit he thereby got the hatred of men, yea and it may be put his life also in danger: which constancie of his we are carefullie to obserue, in regard that he nothing feared the feare of men when the question was of his obedience to his God, and the discharge of his dutie. Then he contemned hatreds, enuie, hurlic burlies, threats, false alarums, and all dangers, that so he might the more freely and boldly performe that charge which was imposed vpon him. In which respect it is our parts to follow and imitate his worthie example if we meane to giue eare and to follow Gods call.

Before them.] Others translate, with them. But the word Before, agrees best, for he meant to prouoke the Iewes *in the sight of all*, by setting forth this prophesie written in a Table. And hence may we gather that wicked men ought to be senerelie reprehended, and that *in the presence of all*, albeit they storme neuer so much at it; as being a thing which at no hand they can away withall: for howsoeuer such reprehensions and threatnings doe them little or no good, yet others peraduenture may be warned thereby, when they shall see them so branded with perpetuall shame and infamie.

That which is recorded elsewhere, to wit, the sinne of Iudah is written with the penne of a diamond, and grauen vpon the table of their hearts, shall be fulfilled in them. Neither ought they once to imagin that they shall escape, albeit they contemne the prophesies by stopping their eares at the publishing of them: for their wickednes shall be manifest to the view of men and Angels. Furthermore, in regard they did neuer willinglie repent themselves, nor were ashamed of their finnes, the Lord commands a spectacle of their infamie to be erected, and set vp before the eyes of all: for as they were wont to engrauce victories, or some notable things in tables of brasse, so would God haue their shame noted in publike tables, which the Iewes notwithstanding labored to hide and couer by their cauls. For this was an ordinarie matter as I said erewhile, that the Prophet was charged to defame his own

nation by so solemne an edict, for which cause it is added, that it should be for the *last day*, that so they might be had in detestation for euer; or, because that when the great Iudge shall appeere and sit in Iudgement, and that all bookes shall be opened, then the finnes of the wicked shall be truly discovered: for then the things which before lay hid and buried as it were in obscure darkenes, shall be discovered and brought to light.

Let vs heere obserue diligentlie that the prophesies were not written for the men of one age alone, but also for their children and all posterities which should be instructed, to the end they might learne to eschew that hardnes of heart which was in their forefathers, Psal. 78. 6. 7. 8. and 95. 8. And that which S. Paul saith of the whole Scripture, that it is profitable to teach, to admonish & comfort, agrees also to this prophesie: for we know that these points are needfull to be knowne in all times, 2. Tim. 3. 16. Let vs reiect then the imaginations of those franticke spirits and bad companions, who affirme, that this doctrine was fit for that time, and not for this. Let vs faithfull, I say, learne to stop their eares at such blasphemies, and to driue them farre away from them: for albeit our Prophet be now dead, yet must his doctrine still liue and bring forth fruit amongst vs. *

Verf. 9. * *That it is a rebellious people, * Or, F. lying children, and children that would not heare the law of the Lord.*

The particle For, serues as an exposition, in regard the Prophet now explains that which the Lord would haue published to all posteritie, namely, that the obstinacie of this people was past cure, because they would not suffer themselves to be brought into any good order, notwithstanding they were dayly taught and instructed. Besides, we may from their vaine bragges gather how much these goodly Epithites did pierce and gall vs hearts as well of small as great: for they gloried they were the holie posteritie, and how they issued out of *Abrahams* loines, as if Gods adoption had serued for a vaile to couer all their grosse and palpable wickednesses, though they were neuer so manifest. Nay, God meant to lay them open, and to publish their wickednesses with sound of trumpet, as it were. For in accusing them to be such as refused to heare the law of the Lord, he therein opens the fountain whence all presumption flows, to wit, the contemps of the word, which discovered their impieitie in despising euen of God himselfe: for they lie who say they will serue God, and yet will not be in subiection to his Commandements.

Isaiah also aggravates their offence for rejecting the medicine that should haue cured their maladies, which medicine was offered them in his (whole some) doctrine. For this cause he calles them *rebellious*, vntamed, or wild; as also *liars*, or disloyall, in regard that whosoever will not submit himselfe to Gods word, doth openly turne his back vpon him, no lesse then if God plaid the tyrant in exacting

Note that the prophesies were not only written for them of former times, but to instruct vs and our posteritie after vs.

He that refuseth to submit himselfe vnder the censure of the word, exeth God of tyrannie, is bewitched of Satan, and hates integrity.

Isaiah constancie worthie to be obserued & followed.

Wicked persons must be sharplie reproued, though they flame neuer so much at it.

Iere. 17. 1.

adding some unreasonable thing at his hand : and therewithall doth also shew, that hee is bewitched with the illusions of the duell, and giuen vp to the vanity of his own heart, so as he hates all integritie.

Verf. 10. *Which say vnto the Seers, See not ; and vnto the Prophets, Prophecie not vnto vs right things : but speake flattering things vnto vs ; prophetic errors.*

THE now in plainer termes, sets forth and shewes as in liuely colours, what that obstinacie & contempt of the word is, whereof hee spake before : for the wicked not onely scorne all instruction, but doe also furiously resist it; yea, they with it were vterly abolished and buried in cuerlasting forgetfulness. This is it which *Isaiab* meant to say ; to wit, that they did not onely turne their cares, eyes, and all their senses from holy doctrine, but could very well haue found in their hearts that it had been vterly extinct and abolished : for the wicked are euermore pricked forward with such rage, that they would haue no mention at all made of that which they cannot abide to heare of. For the power and efficacy of the word so galled and stings them, that they shew themselues to be no better then furious wild beasts in rage and crueltie. Faine would they escape, but they are compelled in despite of them to heare God speake; yea and to tremble before his Maiestie.

Now it vntually fallies out that after this bitterness against the word, in the next place they fall to hate the Prophets that haue bin the Ministers of it : and not onely that, but to lay snares, and to vex them with persecutions, banishments, and oft times with death it selfe. By means whereof, they thinke vterly to roote out & race from off the earth, both the doctrine, and Doctors also that teach it. For, men had rather heare dreaumes and fables, then to bee faithfull taught.

The Prophet sets not downe here the verie words which they spake; to wit, as if they had openly pronounced them; but hee shewes what was in their hearts : for hee had not to deale with such foolas as would goe blaze their impieties to the whole world : no, they were growne to the height of hypocrisie. For they made the world belecue, they were such as serued God deuoutly, and therefore complained as if the Prophets did them great wrong, so to diffame them. But *Isaiab* pluckes off this visard wherewith they couered themselues, and lets the world see what they were indeed; seeing they would not he brought to giue place to the truth. For whence (I pray you) proceeded their murmurings against the Prophets, but that they neither could nor would hearken to the voice of God?

The Prophets were called *Seers*, because the Lord reuealed that vnto them, which they were afterwards to reueale vnto others: for they were as beacons set vpon an hill, and as watchmen, thence to discouer a farre off

tidings either of that good or euil which was by and by to insue. But the people could not abide to heare of troubles; and therefore they hated the Prophets, who by laying their sins close vnto their consciences, were therewithall proclaimers of Gods vengeance which was ready to seaze vpon them. To this appetaines these words, *see not, prophetic not right things* : not that they vttered these things indeed, as we haue shewed before; but because they thought thus in their hearts, in which they wished the Prophets would be lesse seuer. For it went against the haire (as they say) to bee so sharply dealt withall. Doubtlesse none of them would once shew themselues so impudent, as in plaine termes to desire they might be seduced; or to say, that they would resist the truth : for in outward profession, they made the world beleue they sought to promote the same with all diligence, as all our aduersaries the Papiests doe at this day: but they denied that the sermons of *Isaiab*, or of the other Prophets, were the word of the Lord. They were not afraid to tell *Jeremias*, that he was a liar; and not onely that, but gaue him threatening words saying, Thou shalt not prophecie in the name of the Lord, lest thou die by our hands: *Ier. 11. 21.* Thus we see the publishing of the truth was to them a thing intollerable. Now in turning their eares from it, what could they elsse beleue but lies? See then how they sought to be seduced and deuiued willingly.

But hee discouers the fountaine from whence all this sprang, when hee saith, they desired to be *flattered*. For they would haue been most readie to haue heard and receiued flattering words, and could well haue found in their hearts that their eares might haue been tickled in the name of the Lord forsooth. What is the reason then why the world is not onely subiect to bee gyled by impostures, but also that it earnestly seekes and receiues the same? Surely because all men naturally desire nothing more, then that they might be suffered to rot in their slithernesse, through flatteries. But the messengers of God must of necessitie bee sharpe in their reprehensions for all that, if they meane to approue themselues vnto God. Whence it followes, that worldly men cauill foolishly and childishly when they say, we could bee content to bee Gods disciples with all our hearts, if hee would not deale too seuerelie with vs. Which is all one, as if for their sakes they would cause him to alter his nature, and to denie himselfe : as also *Micheas* saith, that the Iewes cared for no Prophets, but such as would prophecie vnto them of wine & strong drinke: *Mich. 2. 11.*

Verf. 11. *Depart out of the way : goe aside out of the path : cause the holy one of Israel to cease from vs.*

THE summe is; that when the Prophets are despised, God himselfe is therewithall despised and reiected, so as he hath no more audience. Thus the wicked cunningly dissimble

ble, because they are ashamed to confesse so great a wickednesse against themselves: but it goes neuer the better with them for all that. For God wil be heard by those to whom he hath giuen comandement to speake vnto vs, and to publish that doctrine which is contained in his word. Ought he then to be heard: Is any reuerence due vnto him? Let vs shew it in imbracing his word, as it is contained in the writings of the Prophets and Euangelists. Which I wish should be well noted, to vphold the credit of the word: for those that reject it, doe as much as if they denied God to haue any being.

Againe, the cause of such impietie is here touched, which doubles the fault; to wit, because you flatters vs not in our finnes, but performs the office of a good and expert Physician. Men desire to be flattered, and cannot willingly indure that God should threaten them: thence proceeds this hatred and refection of the word: thence comes that furious war which they raise vp against the Prophets, whose threats and reprehensions they can by no means indure. For what cause should men haue to reuolt from God, and from vnder his rule and government; were it not that they please themselves with the mists of errors, and hate the right way? The Prophet therefore fitly ioynes these two things together: first, the contempt of heauenlie doctrine: secondly, the hatred of vprightnesse.

Verf. 12. *Therefore thus saith the holy one of Israel; Because you haue cast off this word, and trust in violence and wickednesse, and slay therenpon:*

HE adds the chastisement of this impiety; to wit, that they should not escape unpunished, because they refused to heare the Lord speaking vnto them: which conceipt he expresseth the more fully by the verbe to Reiect, or, to discharge. He calles it *this word*, vsing therein a word demonstratiue, in regard that men willingly forge vnto themselves a word agreeable to the manner and course of their owne life: but they will giue God no audience when he speaks. Afterwards he opposeth Gods milde summoning of them, and an exhortation to a quiet rest, against their turbulent enterprises, saying; *You trust in violence and slay therenpon.* The word *Oleg*, signifies rapine and extortion, in things appertaining to mens substance: others translate, Riches ill gotten: others, Slander, or, misreporting: but they expresse not the Prophets meaning sufficiently. For mine owne part I refer it not to Riches gotten by wicked practises: but rather to the pride and rebellion, wherewith this people were punished vp.

The word *iniquitie*, afterwards added, is not to be restrained to iudgement; because as I thinke, it hath a larger scope: for by these two words, the Prophet meant to set forth the inuidencie of the wicked, who proudly and unolently exalted themselves against

God. Why so? Because they would alwaies do what them listed, and withstood him and his sacred will. And as the Poets foined that the Giants made war with God, so these resisted him when he threatned, perswading themselves that they were able to make his force to recoile by their pride and ouerweening.

A fiction of Poets.

Verf. 13. *Therefore this iniquitie shall be vnto you as a breach that falleth, or a swelling in an high wall, whose breaking commeth suddenly in a moment.*

THIS is the sentence touching their punishment, which *Isaiah* sets forth by a goodly similitude: for he compares the wicked to a wall that is cracked or swollen. Now as the swelling of a wall, shewes that it is readie to fall, because it cannot long stand vpright, vnlesse all the parts be equally knit together; so the pride and insolencie of the wicked, is an infallible signe & token of their present destruction: for the more they are puffed vp, the more sudden shall their downfall be. And as they are full of wind, so it is not possible, but being overcharged therewith, they must forthwith breake in sunder. Hee bids them therefore to exalt themselves and to behaue themselves maliciously against God, if they will: but in conclusion, hee will quickly ouerturne your pride & presumption; for it is nothing else but a bubble full of wind. Hence we are to be admonished, that there is nothing better for vs, then that wee wholly submit our selues vnder God: and so to gather in all our spirits, that we bind our selues perpetually to doe him seruice. For whosoever hee be that shakes off this humilitie, and grows proud, must needs breake in sunder with gathering in ouer much wind. The Lord indeed for a time suffers the wicked to swell, and make their great risings and ouerflowings appeare, that in the end they might pull ruine and destruction vpon themselves, by their pride and vaine boastings.

Verf. 14. *And the breaking thereof is like the breaking of a Potters pot, which is broken without pittie: and in the breaking thereof, there is not found so much as a shard to take fire out of the hearth, or to take water out of the pit.*

WHEN a wall falleth downe, yet there remains some remnants of the ruines thereof; and besides, the stones will serue for some good vses; yea, that which is fallen may be reedified. But our Prophet prophecieth here, that those which shall behaue themselves thus rebelliously and proudly against God, shall perish in such sort, that they shall neuer be heald; so that the remainder shall be reuerly vnpreservable. He therefore vseth a similitude taken from an earthen vessel, whose broken peeces can neither be made vp, nor gathered together againe. Which threatnings

Would wee obey God? let vs shew it by our obedience to the Just iudgement of the P. o. p. h. e. s. and Apustles.

Violence and wickednesse.

ought

ought greatlie to moue vs to embrace y^e word of God with all reuerence, when we heare that ſo horrible punishments are prepared for thoſe which deſpiſe the ſame: for the Prophet ſhewes that they ſhall be whollie deſtroyed and vicerlic confounded, and takes away all hope of their reſtauration. And good reaſon: For wee ſee how the contempters of God ceaſe not dayly to ſet vp their Creasts, notwithstanding they haue had the foile three or ſoure times: Why ſo? Becauſe nothing is more difficult then to pluck from out of their hearts that falſe confidence which was faſt rooted therein.

Verſ. 15. *For thus ſaith the Lord God the holie one of Iſrael, In reſt and in quietnes ſhall ye be ſaued; in quietnes and in confidence ſhall be your ſtrength: but yee would not.*

Here the Prophet ſhewes one ſpeciall touching the contempt of God. For when hypocrites are generally admoniſhed, it toucheth them little or nothing at all: the Prophets therefore vnto their generall doctrines adde particular applications; touching in a ſpeciall manner the conuiciſation of thoſe with whom they had to doe, and ſo alwaies aimed at ſome certaine maik, or end. For his aduerſaries might thus cauill and ſay, Wherefore doeſt thou accuſe vs of ſo great an impietic, as if we meant to reiect the word of the Lord?

This particular therefore is alledged to preſſe vpon their conſciences, and to cut off all occaſions of vaine cauillations. As if he ſhould ſay, Did not the Lord tell you that in *reſt and ſilence* ſhould be your confidence? Why ſtaid you not vpon this counſell of God? To what purpoſe haue you kept ſuch ſikings to and fro? Thus the Prophet conuinceth them with ſuch forcible argumets, that without extreame impudencie they were vnable any way to excuſe themſelues: or if they did, yet he went away with the victorie, as they ſay.

He calles the Lord *the holie one of Iſrael*, the rather to reproach them the more for their vnthankfulnes, that ſo they might the better know what ſuccour they might haue had from him who would haue been their gardian, and as their protector. But hauing once deſpised him, their diſtruſt caried them away to ſecke help of the Egyptians; which queſtionles was a wickednes vicerly ſupportable. This Epithite then contains vnder it a bitter complaint, in regard they had ſtopped vp the paſſage againſt the Lord, who drew neere vnto them for their good.

Some tranſlate the word *Shunah* Repen- tance; others, whom I had rather follow, *Reſt*: for I thinke the Prophet meant often to tell the people that the Lord required nothing of them but to *reſt themſelues quietly* in him. Neither is it ſuperfluous that he recites one and the ſame thing in two words: for of ſet purpoſe he hath put theſe words *reſt and ſilence* together, that he might the better re-

prooue the diſtruſt and incredulitie of the people.

Moreouer this ſentence contains two parts, to wit, a Commandement, and a promiſe: for he commands the people *to ſit ſtill*; in the ſecond place he promiſeth an aſſured deliuerance. In regard the people gaue no credit to this promiſe, they therefore obeyed not the commandemēt: tor how ſhould they obey him, in whom they belecue not, or vpon whole promiſes they *reſt* not themſelues? We need not maruell then if they be deprived of peace and *reſt*, which without faith can haue no place; neither can faith be without the promiſes: which being receiued, then, and not before, the troubled and perplexed minds come to be quieted. Infidelitie then only is it that begets this trouble, and therefore the Prophet hath iuſt cauſe to reprove it, ſhewing, that it is the fountaine from whence all their miſerie ſprang.

Now albeit our condition be not altogether like to that of the Iewes; yet God would haue vs *quietly* wait for his ſuccour, to the end we ſhould not be troubled or perplexed, but to hope in his promiſes. This doctrine ought to be common to all the faithfull, for Satan inuets nothing elſe but how to trouble and vex them, and to cauſe them to fall from that happie eſtate in which they are. *Moses* long ſince gaue this admonition, *ſtand you ſtill*, and the Lord ſhall fight for you, *Exod. 14. 14.* Not that he meant they ſhould fall aſleepe, or be idle, but he only required they would keepe this peace in their hearts, *Coloſſ. 3. 15.* which if we inioy, we ſhall finde by experience that it alone will ſuffice vs for our ſuccour; but without it we ſhall be ſure to be puniſhed for our lightnes and preſumption.

Verſ. 16. *For ye haue ſaid, No, but we will flee away vpon horſes, therefore ſhall yee flee: Wee will ride vpon the ſwiſteſt, therefore ſhall your perſecutors be ſwiſter.*

He ſhewes how they would by no meanes quietly wait for the ſaluation of y^e Lord, for they choſe rather to haue help from the Egyptians. But there is heere a goodly meeting together of words, whereby he turnes againſt themſelues their owne ſpeeches that were ſo full of vaine confidence: for in the firſt place he takes the word *to flee*, to eſcape, and in the ſecond place, to take their *flight*. The Iewes ſaid it was much better for them to prevent the preſent danger in fit and convenient time, and therefore promiſed themſelues good ſucceſſe if they vſed the aid of the Egyptians. Truly ſaith *Iſaiah*, I denie not but you ſhall *flee*, yet not for your ſafetie; for you ſhall turne your backs vpon your enemies, and ſhall be purſued of *horſes much ſwiſter then your owne*.

But wee ſhall perceiue yet more cleerly what vice it is which *Iſaiah* here taxeth the Iewes withall, by their preſumptuous answer, *No*: to wit, that they obſtinacie reſuſed to yeeld obedience to that counſell which God gaue them by his Prophets, and thought it

A Commandement, and a promiſe.

I
In theſe words, Shall ye be ſaued. No obediece without faith. No peace without faith. No faith without a promiſe. Only faith quietes perplexed conſciences. Infidelitie the moſt effectiue feares and diſtractions.

This doctrine belongs to vs.

A peaceable and quiet conſcience will give ſufficient comfort in all diſtreſſes.

The prophets are wont to defend from generall doctrines to particular applications.

Horrible preſumption to oppoſe our no, to Gods yea.

faser for them to prouide for their owne defence by some other meanes. Thus in contemning God, they esteemed the false conceit touching the meanes of their saluation, which they had forged in their owne heads, (before that which he had prescribed them.)

Let vs in any wise therefore turne away our eyes from beholding present things, and from relying vpon humane helps, that so we may wholly depend vpon God; for then wee shew whether we trust in him or no indeede, when outward meanes faile vs. I grant it is verie lawfull for vs to vse the things of this life: but alas, wee are of such a crooked nature, that in vsing of them, for the most part wee leaue and forsake God, and wholly abuse those his good gifts. Besides, we are to obserue how wofull their end is, who trust more in outward helps then in God. For all things must needs goe backward, and fall out against their expectations: for example, wee see that whilst these Iewes imagined to *saue themselves*, they are constrained to *flee away with shame and disgrace*, and in the meane while did themselves *no good at all*. It may so fall out, I grant, that things may haue some outward shew of good successe in the beginning; but it is onely to the end, that the change when it comes, might bee the more cumbersome and heauier to beare. *Isaiah* denies not but Egypt might afford them some helpe: but withall he telles the Iewes, that God would finde meanes enough to to crosse and ouerthrow that helpe, that they should no way escape his hand. For though the whole world should doe their utmost, yee shall they neuer be able to defeat God of that which he hath determined.

Verf. 17. *A thousand as one shall flee at the rebuke of one: at the rebuke of five shall yee flee, till yee bee left as a shippe mast vpon the toppes of a mountaine, and as a beacon vpon an hill.*

BEcause the Iewes trusted in their strength, in regard of their multitude, (which men are apt to do when they see and behold their power) the Prophet plainly telles them, that all the strength they are able to make at home, shall doe them no more good, then if it were far remote from them. Why so? Because the Lord would to breake and so daunt their courage, that all their forces should stand them in no stead. For to what purpose serue weapons or an host of men; yea what good can garrisons or fortresses doe, when mens hearts are appalled in them with feare? Alas! all our power is but weaknesse, except the Lord fortifie and strengthen vs with the power of his holy Spirit. This sentence is often found in the law; to wit, that when they haue forsaken the Lord, many of them shall bee put to flight before a few of their enemies: Deut. 28. 62. But the diuersitie betweene the Law and the Prophets, is this; the Prophets apply that to some particuler vse, which

Moses deliuered generally, as we haue shewed elsewhere.

Wee haue therefore to note three things here. First, that we shall haue no more strength then that which is giuen vs of God. For if he sustaine vs not by his almightie power, wee shall forthwith be out of heart. Secondly, it comes to passe by Gods iust iudgement, that men should make vs afraid, when hee cannot obtaine so much of vs, as to write his feare in our hearts. For it is equall that mens words and threats should quail vs, when wee despise the voice and threats of the Lord. We may also note in the third place, that the Lord hath no neede of any great preparations to correct vs; for if he lift vp but his least finger against vs, we are forthwith vndone: he needs not an host of men to ouerthrow vs, bee we neuer so well fitted and furnished to withstand him. Moreouer, he telles them that their calamitie shall last vntill they be brought to nought: so as there shall onely remaine some small markes of Gods mercy, amidst so great a waste and destruction of the land.

Where he saith, *as the mast of a ship in the top of a mountaine*, it may be expounded two waies. Some thinke the similitude is taken from a wood or Forrest cut downe: for when men do so, they leaue certaine faire and high trees standing, which may serue for ships. But the word *Har*, is taken for a rocke, or rocky place against which ships vse to wracke themselves; after which, there is espied a mast, or some such thing, as witness of that shipwracke. The Prophet yet addes another similitude taken from the signes of viclorie, which are vsually erected and set vp after the discomfiture of the enemy. In a word, hee shewes that there shall bee so small a remainder of men, that it shall much resemble a generall waste and desolation. As if he should say; This great multitude now dazles your eyes, but there shall come such an ebbe and scattering of them, that there shall not bee left so much as the face of any people. By this are we admonished, how humble, modest, and mecke wee ought to bee notwithstanding our great riches and strength: for if we lift vp our hearts, the Lord hath skill to take vs downe by and by, and to make vs become more dastardly then women or little children: so as we shall not dare to looke one of our enemies in the face; and if wee doe, yet all our forces shall melt away as snow (before the sunne.)

Verf. 18. *Yet therefore will the Lord wait, that hee may haue mercy vpon you: therefore will he be exalted, that hee may haue compassion vpon you: for the Lord is the God of iudgement. Blessed are all they that wait for him.*

THE Prophet now addes a consolation: for hitherto hee hath so terrified them, that all the faithfull amongst them might haue been driuen to dispaire. His meaning is therefore, to comfort their hearts; that so hauing tasted how pitifull and gracious the Lord

To trust in God while outward helps faile vs, manifests that we haue faith.

A hard matter to vse this world as if we vied it not.

All things must of necessitie succeede ill with them that trust more in the creature, then in the Creator. An heritage is hastily gotten at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

Pro. 20. 31.

It is iust with God to feare vs with the wordes of men, when we will not tremble at his voice.

The first Simile.

The second Simile.

As a beacon

Let not the strong man glory in his strength. Ier. 9. 3.

No strength but from the power of Gods holy Spirit.

The difference betweene the Law and the Prophets.

Still the Lord in wrath remembers mercy. Hab. 3. 2.

Lord is in the middes of these their calamities they might notwithstanding possesse their soules in patience, and vphold their faith by the power of the promises. This *waiting* hee opposeth then to that ouer-great *haſt*, against which hee cried in the beginning of the Chapter. For there hee reproofed the people for their posting downe into Egypt, and condemned therein their infidelitie: but now contrariwise to their reproach he tels them, that the Lord will not render like for like, albeit they haue much dishonored him; neither will he hasten to punish them. Others expound, He commands you to wait; or, He will make you wait. But as I thinke the sense which I haue giuen agrees best.

Now that we may the better cleare this sentence, we must lay this foundation, to wit, that God alwaies keeps a measure in his corrections: the reason is, because he is inclined to mercie, which we gather from the word *Judgement*: for the Prophets meaning therein is, that the Lord not only chastiseth, but also euermore vsed a moderation in his chastisements, according to that in *Ieremiah*, Correct me o Lord, not in thy wrath, but in judgement, lest I be consumed and brought to nought, *Iere. 10. 24.* Also in another place, I will not utter it cut thee off, but will correct thee in judgement, *Iere. 30. 11.* Thus *Judgement* is opposed to severity; the Lord so moderating his blowes in smiting the faithfull, that he cuts not off from them all hope of their saluation, for of that he alwaies hath a most tender respect. And therefore as *Abacuc* saith, In the middes of his wrath he euermore remembers mercie. He is not like one of vs then, to take the advantage presentlie, and to flie vp vs. Alas! so we should be brought to nought by and by. No, he attends vs with patience.

Moreover, it is a confirmation of no small weight, when he addes, that God will shew a *ſigne of his glorie* in pardoning his people. Where I haue translated, *He will be exalted, that he may be mercifull*; others turne it, When he shall be mercifull. But I thinke the first translation ſutes best. It seemes to vs sometimes that the Lord either ſits idle in heauen, or ſleeps when he permits the wicked to offer violence to his people: and the ordinarie phrase of the Scripture is, that he ſits still, or is farre off when he defends not his Church. When therefore he had let loose the raines to the Chaldeans to oppresse the Iewes, they might haue thought he had beene aſleepe. Wherefore the Prophet saith, that the Lord will *exalt* or raise himselfe againe, and wil goe vp into his *Judgement ſeat*. What to doe? That he may shew you *mercie*.

Where he saith, *Blessed are all those that wait for him*, this flowes from the former part of the sentence, wherein he called the Lord the *God of Judgement*. When the Prophet speaks thus graciously of him, it is that he might perswade and exhort the Iewes to hope and patience, for the people were full of diffidence, and were tossed to and fro with a nauicellous vnquietnes, and vexation of spirit: Why so? *Their infidelitie pestered them so misfe-*

rable, that they were not able with quiet minds to wait upon God. Well, to remedie this vice, he exhorts them to wait, that is, to hope. Now hope is nothing else but the performance of faith, when we peaceable wait for the accomplishment of Gods promises. Where he saith, *Those shall be blessed that wait for him*, on the contrary he signifies, that such as suffer themselves to be outswayed with impatientie, and haue their refuge to wicked things, shall be *accursed*, and in the end shall perish: for without hope in God, there is neither saluation nor happines.

Verſ. 19. Surely a people shall dwell in Zion and in Ierusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will certaintie haue mercie vpon thee at the voice of thy crye: When he heareth thee, he will answer thee.

HE confirms the former sentence, to wit, that the people shall indeed be afflicted, but yet that in the end they shall *returne vnto Zion*. But this was a matter very incredible, especially after the ruin of Ierusalem and the whole land, for then it seemed that all the people were consumed; yet the Prophet giues them a promise that the Church shall continue safe. He begins at *Mount Zion* where the Temple was erected, and saith, that the Lord shall yet be there *called vpon*: then he addes, that it shall be also in *Ierusalem*: thereby vnderstanding the spreading and increasing of the Church; together with the restoration of such things as before were ruined. In the meane while he aduerteth them that Ierusalem shall be repeopled, because God had his dwelling there.

When he addes, *thou shalt weep no more*, it is to shew that their lamentations should not last alwaies. The Church, that is, all the faithfull, should be in great heavinesse while ſt they remained in so miserable and in so wofull an estate; but *Iſaiah* tels them y^e this their sorrow shall haue an end: and in this sense is it said in *Psal. 126. 5.* that those which loen in teares shall reape in ioy. The Lord often suffers vs to be pressed with wonderfull anguiſhes, but in the end he will relieue vs, and giue vs matter of gladnes, to wit, when he turnes the *captiuitie of Zion*: for this is the true ioy of the faithfull. Moreover, in as much as it is a thing very difficult to reioyce whilst the tokens of Gods iudgements present themselves to our view on euery side, the Prophet sets the cause of ioy before vs in his *mercie*: for we may assure our selves that all ioy and reioycing shall returne and abound as soone as Gods anger shall be appeased towards vs, according as we haue before alledged that famous saying of the Prophet *Abacuc*, that in the middes of wrath the Lord remembers mercie: and neuer so farre afflicts his Church, but he limits, moderates, and measures his blowes by iudgement.

Our Prophet likewise shewes by what meanes we may obtaine this grace, in saying, it shall be when God shall haue the voice of ioycy. For in these words hee incites and pro-

A definition of hope.

If they be blessed that wait for God, those must needs be accursed that flee from him. Without hope, no happines nor saluation.

We must dwell in Zion and in Ierusalem if we will haue our requests heard and granted.

The returning of Zion spirituallie, the matter of our true ioy.

Our ioy flowes from Gods shewing of mercie.

Though God be most ready to shew mercie, yet will he be sought vnto.

Ezek. 35 37.

On: God will not render like for like. *Psal. 103. 10. 12. 13.*

God keeps a measure in his corrections, because he is inclined to mercie.

God not onely chastiseth, but keeps a moderation in his chastisements.

Judgement is opposed to severity.

The Lord is patient towards vs because he would haue none of vs to perish. *a. Pet. 2. 9.*

Hope and patience.

To demand pardon of God without sense of sin, is the next way to deprice vs of this mercy here promised.

No looking for succour without the affliction of prayer.

wokes the faithful to prayers, and ardent sighs and groanes : for if wee aske pardon of God, and be not touched with repentance and remorse for our finnes; whence indeed this cry ought to proceed, we are viterly vnworthy to haue any mercy shewed vs. Would wee then haue the Church deliuered from death, and restored vnto a prosperous estate, no lesse then if the were raised vp out of her graue? Oh let vs cry vnto the Lord that hee may heare the voice of our cries, sighs, and groanes. For alas! if wee can be void of the affliction of prayer, how can wee looke for any succour of him?

To answer here signifies nothing else but that God will cause vs to feele by experience, both his helpe and fauour : for the Lord answers vs not by voice, but by the effects. And yet let vs not thinke he will forthwith answer our cry. Why so? Many times there is much weaknesse of ours mingled with them; so as they be disordered by reason of our vnbridled passions : he will assist vs when it shall be expedient for vs; so as wee shall proue by experience that hee hath respected our saluation.

Verse 20. *And when the Lord hath given you the bread of aduersitie, and water of affliction, thy raine shall be no more kept backe, but thine eyes shall see thy raine.*

Hee continues on his former speech, confirming the hearts of the faithfull, lest they should faint: for patience alwaies begets hope of a better issue. He therefore instructs them patiently to beare the chastisement to come, because they should onely feele Gods wrath therein for a time; but soone after, the storme shall be blowne ouer; hee promiseth them that ioy and deliuerance shall be at hand, because God will turne his anger away from them.

I expound the latter *Van*, After that : as if hee should say; After you haue been thus afflicted, then the Lord will blesse you; for hee will change your mourning into ioy. Whereas some take the word *Raine*, for Instructor, it agrees not with the text: for albeit the principall fruit of our reconciliation with God, stands in the inioying of faithfull Teachers, yet because the common people had suffered much want, *Isaiah* fitting his speech according to their weaknes, giues the therein a taste as it were of Gods fatherly goodness in mentioning great plenty of all things.

By the words *bread* and *water*, hee signifies an extreme pouerty and want of outward things: and therefore hee addes *aduersitie* and *affliction*. Now in stead of this penurie hee promiseth to send them fruitfull increase, which hee expresth vnder the word *Raine*. For hee takes the cause for the effect: as if he should say; The earth shall be exceeding fruitfull : in which phrase of speech, the Prophet also had respect to the situation of that Country; which waited for no other meanes to make it fruitfull, but the *raine* which fell from hea-

uen; for it was not watered by the overflowing of riuers or fountaines, but onely with raines. *Isaiah* therefore shewes that the Lord will send abundance of those fruits, which otherwise he could haue diminished or taken away by barrenesse. In any wise therefore let vs learne to comfort our soules with these and the like promises, when wee shall in anie sort feele the hand of our God heaue vpon vs.

Verse 21. *And thine eares shall heare a voyce behind thee, saying; This is the way, walke yee in it, when thou turnest thee to the right hand, and when thou turnest thee to the left.*

The fruitfulness of the land, whereof hee spake before, ought to be esteemed a good blessing of Good. But behold here the chiefest cause of ioy and gladnesse; to wit, when God vouchsafes vnto vs the wholesome & sincere milke of the word (for our soules.) For there is no famin of bread that ought so much to affect vs with feare and perplexitie, as the famin of Gods blessed word. And indeed looke how much more precious the soule is then the body, so much the more ought we to feare that famin about all other famins; as also another Prophet telles vs: Amos 8.11. Our Prophet then promiseth vnto the Iewes a benefit, about all benefits the greatest. What is that? They shall now be fed with the word of God, which had been exceeding scarce amongst them before. The false Prophets I deny not will boast, that they also haue the word; yea with greater boldnesse many times then the faithfull Teachers themselves. They tosooth will be taken and held for good guides, euen whilest they lead men into error, and at last, plunge them with themselves into euerlasting perdition. But the word which shewes vs the direct way, comes of God alone. And yet if he did not therewithall promise to giue eares to heare it, the word of it (else should little auail vs: for so he should indeed speake but to deafe eares, neither should we perceiue ought but a confused sound.

When he saith therefore that hee will be behind vs as a guide, wee may thereby perceiue, that God will not suffer his word to be spoken to vs in vaine, but will so worke inwardly vpon our iudgements and affections, that they shall be bowed to a true and willing obedience. For all of vs naturally are vnteachable, so that we stand in need to be wholly reformed by the worke of the Spirit. And therefore the word, *shall heare*, is of great weight in this place.

Now he compares God to a schoolemaster, who sets his schollers before him that hee may the better teach them, and keepe them in order: wherein vndoubtedly, hee shewes the great affection and exceeding care which he hath ouer vs, in that he contents not himselfe to goe before vs, but also to watch vs at euery turne with his gracious eye.

Moreouer, the Prophet shewes, that those which

The famin of Gods word a famin of all famins.

But the inioying of it a benefit of all benefits. False Prophets would be taken for the onely Doctors of the Church.

True doctrine if selfe shall auail vs nothing at all, unless God giue vs eares to heare it.

Patience begets hope of a good issue.

See Hof. 14.5

Psal. 30.5.

God not onely vouchsafes to teach vs, but to watch and attend vs with a gra-

ciouſ eye
whither
ſocuer we
goe.

which follow God, ſhal neuer goe out of their way. For by the verbe exhortatiue, *waſce yee in vs*, hee addes ſome reliefe to helpe our perſeuerance leſt ſome difficultie or other might ſlake our courſe, as it often fallies out.

But that which he addes of the *right hand and the left*, may ſeeme abſurd, in regard that when *Mofes* ſhewed the people the way in which they ſhould walke, hee therewithall forbid them to turne either to the right hand, or the left: Deut. 5. 32. & 17. 20. For that way is ſtraight, and no man ought to ſeeke out any by-waies. What might be the meaning of our Prophet then? I anſwere, hee mentions the *right hand and the left* in this place, in another ſenſe then *Mofes* doth. For it is taken here for all ſorts of counſels which wee ought to aduife of; which are diuers in regard of the diuerſitie of occaſions that we meeete withall: and according as euery one meeetes with ſundry difficulties, and agreeable to his affaires and occaſions, heis to take aduice and deliberation.

Thus hee calles *right hand and left*, all the actions of life whatſocuer; to the end that in all our enterpriſes, wee might haue the Lord for our guide, and that we might put nothing in execution, till wee haue called vpon his name, *whether we turne to the right hand, or to the left*. Hence we gather an exceeding comfort and conſolation; to wit, that the Lord will be with vs in our enterpriſes, and will direct our way before vs, whither ſocuer wee turne, provided that wee willingly ſtray not out of that path which he hath laid before vs.

Verſ. 22. *And yee ſhall pollute the covering of the images of ſiluer, and the rich ornaments of thine images of gold, and caſt them away as a menſtruous cloth, and thou ſhalt ſay vnto it, get thee hence.*

Hence it appeares, that this direction which God will giue vnto his Saints, ſhall not be in vaine: for hauing abandoned their falſe worſhip, they ſhall giue themſelues to the true. And the Prophet plainly mentions their externall profeſſion of pietie, when they ſhall make it appeare vnto all, that they haue renounced idols, and all idolatry. For ſeeing images are instruments of idolatry and ſuperſtition; therefore thoſe who are truly conuerted vnto God, muſt needs abhorre and deteſt them: yea, and as much as in them is, prophane and pollute them; as we read *Iehu* did, who prophaned the Altars of *Baal*, and made a iakes of his Temple: 2. King. 10. 27. Faithfull Princes and Magiſtrates ought to follow his example, and ſuch as haue done the like, if they will giue any true teſtimonie of their ſound conuerſion. I grant repentance hath his ſeat in the heart, and hath God for a witneſſe of it; but wee can diſcerne it no way but by the fruits. And here vnder one kind, *Iſaiab* comprehends all. For in general hee toucheth one note of true repentance: to wit, when men make it appeare, that they

count all things cōtrary vnto Gods true worſhip abominable.

When he ſaith, that the idols are *prophaned*, That canoe be eſteemed holily, which is erected to Gods dithonour; which alſo pollutes men with the filthineſſe of it? But in regard that men (being beſotted with a falſe opinion) attribute ſome holineſſe vnto them, therefore he ſaith, they are *polluted*, and that they ought to be reiected and caſt away as filthy things of no worth.

Alſo in calling them *images of gold and ſiluer*; he therein ſhewes, that the faithfull ceaſe not to abhorre idolatry, what loſſe or diſaduantage ſo euer come vnto them thereby. For many are loth to abandon idolles, becauſe they thinke thereby they ſhall loſe *gold, ſiluer*, or ſome ſuch like things; and therefore had rather retaine them, then to ſuſtaine the leaſt incommodie. Couetouſneſſe ſo holds & hampers them, that they thinke it ſafer wittingly to offend God, and to deſtroy themſelues with ſuch abominations, then to loſe the pating of this or that triſtle. But we ought to prefer Gods pure worſhip and ſeruice, before the moſt pretious things in the world. Let vs deſpiſe *gold* let vs caſt pearles ſtr vs, & abhorre whatſocuer is deere vnto vs, rather than to luſe for our ſelues to be polluted with ſuch vile traſh. In a word, there is not y thing to be named for price & excellencie, which we ought not to eſteeme baſe & vile, when wee are to ouerturne the Kingdome of Satan, and to ſet vp the Kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, which conſiſts in his pure worſhip. For this ſhall wee indeed make it maniſeſt to all the world, whether the loue of true religion hath takē any place in our hearts yea or no; namely, when hauing indeed the wed our deteſtation againſt our owne peruerſe ignorance, we be alſo prouoked to put far away from vs all pollutions and deſtings.

Gods pure worſhippe muſt be deere to vs then the moſt pretious thing the world can afford vs.

Note.

How wee maniſeſt that the loue of the truth is truly ſetled in our hearts.

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Verſ. 23. *Then ſhall hee giue raine vnto thy ſeede, when thou ſhalt ſow thy ground; and bread of the increaſe of the earth; and it ſhall be fat and as oyle: in that day ſhall thy cattell bee fed in large paſtures.*

24. *The oxen alſo and the young aſſes that till the ground, ſhall eate cleane prouender, which is winnowed with the ſhouell and with the fan.*

AGaine he ſhewes by the effects, how deſirable a thing it is to be conuerted vnto God; ſeeing this is the fruit of true repentance, that God will receiue into his fauour the repentant; and will ſo bleſſe them, that nothing ſhall be wanting: nay, rather they ſhall be ſatiſfied to the full with all ſorts of bleſſings. For as miſeries and calamities proceed from the wrath of God, which we ſet on fire by our finnes; ſo when he is at one againe with vs, all things fall out well, wee are enriched euery way; a. wee may plainly ſee in

Our finnes the matter that ſeis Gods wrath on fire.

Obiect.

Anſ. What is meant by the right hand and the left in this place.

Images instruments of idolatry. Such as be truly conuerted vnto God, muſt of neceſſitie abhor and deteſt idols. Faithfull Princes ought to imitate *Iehus* example, in polluting & prophaning idols and idolatry.

the Law, Deut. 28, Leuit. 26.

He spake before of the *raie* which should make the earth fruitfull, but because he observed no order in beginning with earthlie and temporall benefites, therefore he now adds to that doctrine which concerned the spirituall life, those things which appertaine to the vse of our naturall and corruptible life. For albeit godlines hath the promise both of this life and of that which is to come, yet in the first place it first aspires to the kingdome of God.

1. Tim. 4. 8. Mat. 6. 33.

Our prosperities in all things depend vpon Gods blessing.

Nothing shall be wanting to the converted.

The earth would neuer be wanting to vs in bringing forth her fruit, but that we close vp her womb by our misbehaviours.

When God is angry with men the ponde dumb creatures fare the worse: but being reconciled with man, they all fare the better by it.

Deut. 28. 11.

Hence let vs learne, that men do but lose their labour in tilling the earth, vnlesse the Lord send his *raie* from heauen. It is he that must water the labours of our hands, and adde increase thereto, or otherwise we shall but tire and vexe our selues in vaine. From his blessing only must our *raie* come, and to it must wee ascribe the abundance of the fruites of the earth which from time to time we receiue.

Let vs further note that nothing shall be wanting vnto vs, but we shall reape the fruites of our labors in most ample manner, if we conuert vnto God. Let vs also know that our sinnes make vs often suffer want, because we by our owne rebellion repell and beate back Gods blessing. Let vs no more then attribute the cause of famine and the barrennes to any thing else but to our owne vnthankfulness. For the multitudes of people can not be so great, but the earth will be able to nourish and feed them: but we shut vp her womb by our misdemeanours, which without them would be opened to giue vs all fruits in abundance, so as we should liue both peaceable and happilie.

That which he addes of the *Castell*, serues much to set forth the goodnes of God, for he sheds forth the same vpon the very brute beasts. How much more thinke we will he do it vpon men, whom he hath created after his owne image? Now we neede not maruaile that beasts ordeined for the vse of man do indure famin as well as their masters: and that on the contrarie they fare well when God is fauorable to men being reconciled vnto them, which the Prophet repeats and likewise confirms in the words following, in promising that *oxen and asses shall ease cleane prouender*. For this sentence is taken out of the Law: and the Prophets vsuallie do so, that in the cuill plight & death of Cattell, we might behold Gods wrath: and fro the sight thereof might be stirred vp so much the more earnestlie and speedilie to be at one with him, that our houses might be filled with his liberalitie.

Verf. 25. And vpon every high mountaine and vpon every high hill shall there be riuers and streames of Waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towres shall fall.

the life of man: for they could not otherwise expresse the true felicitie of Gods children vnlesse they had done it by setting the same before vs in the image of those things which are subiect to our senses, by which men are wont to measure out an happie and flourishing estate. The summe then is, that such as obey God, and submit themselves to Christ their King, are happie people. But we must not iudge of this happinesse by the abundance of outward things, whereof the faithfull many times haue little enough, and yet cease not to be happie notwithstanding. But these kinds of speech are allegoricall, by which the Prophet applies himselfe to our capacite, that by the things which our senses can comprehend, wee might conceiue somewhat of those things which are beyond our comprehension, which being of such an excellent nature, our vnderstandings are too shallow to conceiue the least part of them.

Happie people that submit themselves to Christ their King. The faithfull cease not to be happie though they suffer want.

Heauenlie things are of that supernaturall excellencie, that they can not now be comprehended of vs but vnder borrowed speeches.

When he saith the *riuers in the mountaines*, it is further to set forth this ouerflowing of Gods liberalitie, wherewith will God enrich his chosen. *Waters* vsuallie issue not out of the tops of mountaines, where nothing is seene but barrennes: I grant that valleys are moystned & watred with y springs; but you shall seldome see *fountaines in the tops of hills*, yet the Lord promisseth to bring this to passe, howfoener it seemes a thing vnpossible: But by this phrase of speech he meanes y we shall be most happie that liue vnder the kingdome of Christ, so as there shall be no place whatsoever but he will replenish the same with all sorts of benefites: Nothing so barren, but he by his goodnes will make it fruitfull, so as felicitie shall abound in all places. Our eyes should see the performance of this promise if Christ might haue the full government ouer vs, for wee should behold his blessing on every side if wee obeyed him with a pure and perfect heart. All things would then fall out to our wish: the world, and the vtmost bounds thereof should be subiect vnto vs: but because wee are farre off from such a kind of obedience, therefore we receiue but a small taste of these benefites, and so much thereof doe we inioy, as we feele the growth of the new man in vs.

Happie men and women that liue vnder Christes kingdome.

Note.

Our sparing obedience prouokes God to be sparing in bestowing benefites vpon vs.

By the *day of the great slaughter*, he signifies and sets before them another signe of Gods fauour. How? Hee will maintaine those that are his in safetie, against the rage of the enemies: and thus the Prophet goes about to procure credit and authoritie to his former prophetic: for otherwise it had been almost incredible, that poore banished exiles should haue inioyed so many benefites. Hee speaks here then of the *slaughter* of the wicked: as if he should say; The Lord will not onely doe you good in sauing you, but hee will also *destroy your enemies*.

All the expositors almost thinke the Prophet speaks here of the discomfiture of that wicked King *Senacherib*, when he came to besiege Ierusalem: but when I weigh all things aduisedly, I had rather refer it to the destruction of Babylon. For albeit there was a great slaughter when *Senacherib* was with shame put

The prophets in describing Christes Kingdome

When the Prophets describe the kingdome of Christ they are wont to borrow similitudes from things appertaining to

to flight: yet this people was not at that time deliuered. By this we are admoniſhed, that we bee not heartleſſe, though our enemies bee many in number, and haue greater ſtrength, fortrefſes, and more garrifons then wee: for the Lord can eaſily deſtroy them, and yet coſerue his Church, although for the time he ſuffer them to triumph & to haue al things at their will. Let neither their power nor rage daunt vs then: neither let our hearts faile vs, though we be but a ſmall number: for neither their munitions nor fortrefſes, neither yet their furie nor pride ſhall bee able to ſaue them from falling into the hands of the Lord.

Verſ. 26. *Moreover, the light of the Moone ſhall bee as the light of the Sun; and the light of the Sunne ſhall be ſeven fold, and like the light of ſeven daies in the day that the Lord ſhall bind vp the breach of his people, and heale the ſtrokes of their wound.*

THE Prophet contents not himſelfe to deſcribe an vſual or ordinarie ſtate of happineſſe, except thereunto he adde ſomewhat that is extraordinary. For hee ſaith, that the Lord will worke far above the order of nature, in this his liberalitie. Wee neuer read that the *light of the Sunne* was augmented, vnleſſe it were when it ſtaid it ſelfe in the daies of *Iſhna*, that hee might haue leaſure to purſue his enemies: *Ioh. 10. 13.* Also in the daies of *Hezekias*, at whoſe requeſt the Diall went backe ten degrees: *2. King. 20. 11.* But our Prophet alludes now to none of theſe miracles. Nay, more then that, he meddles not with the lengthening of the courſe of the Sunne vpon our Horizon; but of the augmentation of the *light* thereof vnto *ſeven fold more*. For he ſhews what the ſtate of the faithfull ſhall be vnder the raigne of Chriſt: otherwiſe, we know that the Lord makes the Sunne to ſhine, no leſſe vpon the wicked then vpon the good: but the queſtion is here, of ſuch a felicitie as the wicked cannot attaine vnto. There is difference between Gods liberalitie, which extends it ſelf vnto all, and that which is onely proper and peculiar vnto the faithfull; as it is ſaid in *Pſal. 31. 20.* Great are the benefites which thou haſt laid vp for thoſe that truſt in thee.

Iſaiah ſpeakes of this particular fauour: which that he might the better expreſſe, he takes ſimilitudes from things comon to euerie mans eye. And thus ſhews, that God will *inlighten* the faithfull with ſuch a light, that the *beames of ſeven ſunnes* put together, ſhall be far inferior thereunto. But to the end the ſharpeſſe of their miſeries, wherewith this people were ſoone after ouerwhelmed, might not leſſen the authoritie of this prophecie, he adde yet another promiſe; to wit, that God will (as a good Phyſician) bind vp, or heale the *ſtroke* of his childrens wounds. Where it folowes, that there was a neceſſitie of this correction, that fo by theſe roddes, the people might be prepared to come to repentance: yea, it was neceſſarie that they ſhould be *bru-*

ſed and broken, till they were in a manner brought to nothing.

He mentions their *ſtroke* then, to ſhew that the wound ſhall be great; for the people reſembled a body hurt with many wounds. If at any time then the Lord deales more roughly with vs then hee is wont, thinke, I pray you, vpon theſe prophecies: for the Lord will *bind vpon our wounds*, which may otherwiſe ſeeme mortall and deadly. Now if any aſke why the Lord deales thus ſeuerely with his children: I anſwer, wee ſeldome profit in his feare, when he vſeth vs mildly: for our vices are ſo rooted in vs, and cling ſo faſt to our bones, that they cannot bee cut off, vnleſſe God whet his razor verie ſharpe and keene.

Verſ. 27. *Behold, the name of the Lord commeth from ſarre, his face is burning, and the burthen thereof is heauie: his lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is as a deaouring ire.*

HEE foretels the deſtruction of the Aſſyrians, which were then the principall enemies of the Church. I grant the Iewes had almoſt no neighbours that were borderers, but they were againſt them: notwithstanding in reſpect the Aſſyrians were the richeſt and mightieſt of all others, the Prophet ſcarcelly mentions any but them and the Babylonians, who had bin Monarks ouer nations: although ſometimes by a figure called *lyne doche*, the Caldeans are ſignified vnder the name of the Aſſyrians.

By the *name* of God, he means God himſelfe: but he vſeth this circumlocution, in regard the Aſſyrians and the reſt of the nations ſerued goddes of gold and ſiluer. For they mocked the Iewes, as if they had worſhipped a God in name onely. Why ſo? Be- cauſe they reprented him not forth by ſome ſhape or image: as we read of a certaine prophane Poet, who vſed to ſay of them in ſcorn, that they worſhipped the clouds, and a diuinitie that was ſhut vp in heauen. See how infidels and prophane perſons iudge of God according to their outward ſenſes: but our Prophet brings the faithfull to this *name* of God. As if he ſhould ſay; This God which hath maniſeſted himſelfe vnto you by his *name*; this God whom you neither touch nor ſee, *ſhall come*, and ſhall auenge the wrongs done vnto you.

From *ſarre*.] He adde this by way of yeelding or granting ſo much as it were vnto the idolaters. For as long as the wicked feele not the hand of God, they thinke him far off; and in the meane while deride the faithfull, as if they truſted in vanitie. The prophet therefore ſpeaking according to the opinion of the vnbeleeuers, ſhewes that that ſame God whom they eſteeme ſo far off, *ſhall come*: or rather that hee is already come, and is hard at hand. This he ſignifies by the particule *Behold*; which he oppoſeth to the word *ſarre off*: and therein admoniſhing the faithfull alſo to paſſe ouer all impediments, that they may come

Though the enemies of the Church be in my and mighty, yet Gods power will eaſily overcome match them.

Queſt.

Anſ.

A prophane Poet.

The God whom wee neither feele nor ſee with outward ſenſes, is ſufficient to auenge the wrongs done to his church.

come to the hope of this promised redemption.

His face is
burning.

- 1 Now to shew that Gods name is not worshipped in vaine nor without fruit in Iudeah, the Prophet sets before them his fearefull power, which he will manifest for the overthrow of the enemies of his Church. For when he speakes to the faithfull, he sets him forth gentle, louing, patient, slow to anger, and pitifull, to put life as it were into them:
- 2 but to the vnbeleueers he proposeth nothing but horrors and terrors. So that where the wicked tremble at the very naming of God, the faithfull being allured by the sense of his bountie & goodnes, do sweetlie repose themselves vnder the shadow of his wings, and are not oppressed with such feares. Hence we are taught alwaies to keepe our hearts in a reuerent awe of God, lest we finde him such a one to vs, as the Prophet here describes him to the wicked.

Quest.
Adi.

Where he saith, *the burthen of the Lord is heauie to beare*, his meaning is, that God will bring such heauie calamities with him when he comes, that the wicked shall sinke vnder them: for by this *weights*, he vnderstands the strokes which they shall receiue. He also expresseth the same thing in mentioning *the lips and tongue*. But wherfore did he rather name them then his hands? Surely the wicked mock at all the threatenings which are published vnto the out of Gods word, and esteeme whatsoever y^e Prophets say, no better then fables. But they shall feele one day to their cost that this sound which proceeds out of Gods sacred mouth is no vaine word, neither yet a thunder which only strikes the eares, but they shall in the end feele the force of this word which they haue despised.

Verf. 28. *And his spirit is as a riuer that ouersoweth vp to the neck: it denieth asunder to fanne the nations with the fanne of vanitie, and there shall be a bridle to cause them to erre in the charrets of the people.*

First similitude, of a deepe Riuer.

Second similitude, of a Fanne.

HE goes on with the denunciation which he began in the 27. verse, as if he should say, The Church in deed must passe vnder the rod: yet so, as the Assyrians in the end shall vtterlie come to nought. For he saith, that they shall be *swallowed vp of the Spirit of the Lord*, which he compares to a deepe riuer. Others take the word *Spirit* for Breath, so as it should be an allusion to the whirlwind, or to some boisterous tempest. In the next place he vseth the similitude of a *fanne*, which is very frequent in the scriptures; and saith, that he wil *fanne* the Assyrians to shake them out, and to scatter them. For this cause also he addes the word *vanitie*, that is to say, an vprofitable Fanne, which cannot retaine or keepe any thing, but loseth whatsoever is put within it. For we know God is wont sometimes to sift and *fanne* his owne deere children, but it is to gather the into his floore as good wheate.

The third, of a Bridle.

The third similitude is taken from a *bridle*, whereby the Lord vseth sometimes to tame

the pride and fiercenes of the wicked: in a word, to shew that he is their Iudge. Denie not but he also *bridles* and curbs his seruants and children, but it is to bring them to tractableness: for the wicked, he raises them vp so hard that he tumbles them into perdition, and that is the meaning of this clause where he saith *it is a bridle so cause them to erre*. For fierce horses are tugged this way and that way by their riders; and the more they wince the more they spurre them: God likewise keeps the wicked short, and handles them so roughlie, that they *erre* at euery blow hee giues them, as *Dauid* well describes it, *Psal. 32. 10.* Now the end of these similitudes is to teach vs, that there is no dallying with God. For albeit he forbears vs for a time, yet at the last we shall prooue the Prophets words true, to wit, that his *spirit* or breath shall be enough to *swallow vp* the wicked, and suddenlie to consume them, no lesse then if a *flood* had passed ouer their heads. To conclude, seeing he shewes that the nations were to be fanned in the *fanne of vanitie*, let vs feare lest if the Lord find nought in vs but chaffe, he also cast vs vpo the dunghill. Note also the difference betweene the children of God and the wicked, both are chastised alike, but yet diuerslie. How so? The one to be kept and preferred as pure gold, the other as drossie to be burnt vp and consumed.

The end why the Prophet vseth these similitudes.

The wicked and the godly corrected alike: but the one as drossie to be burnt vp, the other as pure gold to be preferred for the Lords vse.

Verf. 29. *But there shall be a song vnto you as in the night when a solemne feast is kept: and gladnes of heart, as he that commeth with a pipe to go vnto the mount of the Lord, to the mightie one of Israel.*

HE shewes, that all the euils wherewith he threatened the Assyrians should turne to the saluation of the Church. Why so? Because God would no lesse feuerly punish the iniuries done to his children, then if they had beene done to himselfe. And thus he sets forth his fatherlie loue and his inestimable good will towards vs, in that he vouchsafes to take armes euen in his owne person as it were for our defence. Whence we may gather, that all the menaces so frequent in the holy Scriptures, serue much for the consolation of the faithfull.

Threatnings pronounced against the wicked in the holy Scriptures serue greatly for the comfort of the faithfull.

In the next place he saith, that this shall be an *holie song*; and compares it to those that were vsed in *sulemne feasts*: the rather to stirre the faithfull vp to thanksgiving, and to teach them how to order their ioy and reioicing. For it is not enough to reioyce, vnlesse our ioy be directlie in the Lord, whose glorie should alwaies be the marke and end we aime at therein: otherwise, our ioy should neither be good, nor acceptable vnto him, but rather prophane and vaine.

If our ioy be not in the Lord, it is a vaine and profane ioy.

Now because the Iewes began their feast daies at the sun setting, and therefore began to celebrate them as soone as it was evening, he saith, that this song shall be *as in the night*. And he yet further expresseth the manner of their ioy; to wit, that they shall not leape nor skip after the custome of prophane persons;

The Iewes vsed to begin to celebrate their feasts the evening before.

but

but ſhall liſt vp *their hearing* vnto God reſting in him alone, whom they ſhall acknowledge the ſole author of all benefits.

By the *mount*, he means the Temple which was built vpon it. He calles God the *ſtrength of Iſrael*, becauſe the Iewes receiued their redemption from his out ſtretched armes alſo becauſe they dwelt in quietneſſe vnder his mighty protection: herein aduertizing them, that they could haue no ſaſetie for the time to come, but by putting their truſt in his ſtrength. For alas! as ſoone as we perſwade our ſelues that we haue any ſtrength of our owne, we forthwith bereaue God of this title; which indeede, none but the humile & meeke eni gnaue vnto him, who are ſtripped of all their owne ſtrength and power.

Verſ. 20. *And the Lord ſhall cauſe his glorious voice to bee heard, and ſhall declare the lightning downe of his arme, with the anger of his countenance and flame of a deuouring fire, with ſcattering and tempeſt, and haile ſtones.*

HE confirms that which he ſaid before of the iudgement of God againſt the Aſſyrians, and deſcribes it vnder a figure, as hee and the reſt of the Prophets are wont to do. For whileſt God ſeemes to hold his peace, and plagues not the wicked forthwith, either we thinke he ſleepes, or that he wants ſufficient power: and thus wee are diſtracted with diuers and doubtfull thoughts. And albeit he ſhewes vs ſome one example of his iudgements, yet by reaſon of this ſottihneſſe, or rather vnthankfulneſſe, which naturally poſſeſſeth vs, we wittingly put a vaile betwene, by one deuice or other, to darken the glory of God. For either we attribute it vnto fortune, or to the policies and ſubtile inuentions of mans braine: ſo as we will neuer in good earneſt aſcribe the ſame wholly vnto God, vnleſſe he conſtaines vs vnto it by force. This is the cauſe why the Prophet contents not himſelfe to haue once affirmed, that Gods vengeance ſhould fall vpon the Aſſyrians, but alſo in this place is diligent to paint out the ſame in liuely colours, repeating the ſame thing with greater vehemence.

His meaning is then, that this deſtruction of the enemy ſhall bee ſo ſinuous, that men ſhall be conſtrained to *heare the voice of God*: that is to ſay, to acknowledge his iudgements, and to confeſſe that this deſolation indeede was from his hand, euen as if himſelfe had vntered the ſame from heauen with his liuely voice in all mens hearing. The ſum is then, that the matter ſhall bee ſo euident, that all ſhall confeſſe this deſtruction came from the mouth of God; to wit, from his ordinance.

He begins with the *voice of God*, to the end we might know that he gouernes whatſoever is done in the earth. And therewithall he extolles the efficacy of his doctrine, in which the people were to reſt, till it ſhould bring forth theſe effects in the appointed time. But

for as much as the effect incontinently follows this ordinance and voice of God, therefore the Prophet adds, the *lightning downe of his arme*. For theſe two things muſt alwaies be ioyned together, it being vnlawfull once to imagine that God is like vnto men, who ſuddenly taking a thing in hand, in the end leaue it vnperfected. No, looke what he ordaines, that he executes: for his hand or *arme* is neuer ſeparated from the words of his mouth. On the contrary, hee neuer doth any thing raiſily, but that which hee hath ordained before: ſo as all the croſſes which hee ſends, are ſo many documents to vs of his equall and iuſt dealing.

In the end of the verſe, hee ſets forth this vengeance of God vnder figures; that by the horrour thereof, the Iewes might raiſe vp their ſaith on high with ſo much the more courage: for it was a great conſolation vnto them (notwithſtanding the ſharpe ſcourgings which they felt) to know that their enemies ſoone after ſhould drinke off this cup, euen to the very dregs, but away with the dreames of the Rabbines, who from this place gather, that the Aſſyrians were indeede ſmitten with thunder; for ſuch a coniecture is moſt friuolous. The Prophet keeps his ordinary courſe, and by theſe ſimilitudes deſcribes Gods fearful iudgements, in regard that wee are too ſlow; yea altogether vnfit to comprehend them. Therefore to awaken our dulneſſe, we had neede to heare of *deuouring fire, of thunders, floods, and deuours of water*; which becauſe they are things abhorring to nature, they vſually touch vs the more to the quick: in which reſpect the Prophets doe the more willingly draw their ſimilitudes from them, to the end wee may apprehend the tearefull reuenging hand of God againſt the wicked.

Verſ. 31. *For with the voice of the Lord ſhall Aſhur be deſtroied: which ſmote with the rod.*

HE adds this for two cauſes: Firſt, to ſhew why the Aſſyrian was to be broken. For ſeeing hee behaued himſelfe cruelly and ſauagely towards others, it was good reaſon he ſhould receiue like for like. This we know is the vſuall courſe which God takes with tyrants, as our Prophet will tell vs, Chap. 32. Woe to thee that ſpoiledſt, when thou waſt not ſpoiled, &c. Secondly, the Aſſyrians power ſeemed too great to be vanquiſhed. But albeit he was eury way ſo well fortified, that he was not only able to defend himſelfe, but alſo to annoy others; yet y Prophet tells him, Gods onely *voice* ſhall ſhake him in peeces. By this wee may learne, how vaine the confidence of the wicked is, who haue nothing to truſt vnto but their outward forces; altogether deſpiſing God as if they were not liable to the ſtrokes of his hand. But the Lord needs no better weapons then his *voice* to ſcatter all their munitions; for hee will conſume them with the very becke of his countenance. Neither are wee to doubt but the Prophet alſo meant by this meanes, to withdraw the

words voice, in the ſignifying a voice, ſuch as the voice of the voice.

The ſe of the former ſimilitudes.

The mightie one of Iſrael.

senses of the faithfull from looking to these helps, lest they should stand to inquire how it might come to passe, but should onely content themselves with Gods promise, who is of power sufficient to execute his counsels as soone as he hath spoken the word.

Verf. 32. *And in euerie place that the staffe shall passe, it shall cleaue fast, which the Lord shall lay vpon him with sabrets and harpes: and with battels, and lifting vp of hands shall bee fight against it.*

His meaning is, that the Assyrians will trie all meanes to flie from Gods hand, but all in vaine; for it shall pursue them whithersoener they shall turne them, bee it forwards or backward. Touching these words of the *staffe digging*; I willingly consent to their opinion, who thinke it to bee a similitude taken from those that haue laid on so long, till the traces and prints thereof appeare a great while after: as if a whip or staffe had been let into the flesh. Vnlesse any had rather vnderstand that the plague should cleaue fast to the backs of the Assyrian, euen as a foundatiõ is laid fast into the earth. For that which is not rooted in the ground, may be taken away and transported to another place: but hee shewes that this staffe shall cleaue so fast, that there shall bee no removing of it; neither shall any be able to plucke it away. For God suffers the weight of his wrath to fall vpon the reprobates which vtterly ouercharge them: and lest they might dreame of any starting holes, the Prophet cuts off all hope thereof in this word *euery place*. For so ought the text to be resolved; to wit, *wherefoener the staffe shall light, it shall cleaue fast*.

When he mentions the *sabrets*, it is to shew, that the issue of the war shall not bee vncertain, as it is when forces are of equal strength, but his meaning is, that the Lord shall haue the victory. Why so? Because he shall no sooner vndertake the war, but hee brings that with him y shall do the deed. For *sabrets, harpes, and hands lifted up*, doe signifie the ioy which they shall haue gotten the conquest, which they cry, victorie, victorie.

Some refer that to the host, which he addes in the feminine gender, *shall fight against it*: but the truth is, hee meant to expresse a greater thing then it; to wit, Babylon, the head Citie of the Kingdome, opposing it to Ierusalem, which hee had noted out before by a like relative, verf. 29. From whence we may gather, that the wicked must needs be consumed at the last, notwithstanding the great shew of meanes which they haue to escape the same: for which way soeuer they turne them, or whither soeuer they flee, yet the *staffe* of the Lord shall pursue them, yea and cleaue fast to their backs: they shall neuer bee able to shun his hand, nor beat backe his blowes.

Wee also are now and then corrected by this hand of God, but his blowes shall not alwaies cleaue vnto vs; our wounds shall bee

mollified and eased, and our sorrow shall bee turned into ioy. Moreouer, the Lord so fights against the wicked, that they are not able to make their party good, nor yet gaine anie thing by their resistance. He fights with the, but as one that is sure of the victory before he giues the first blow: sometimes hee giues them a little scope indeed, but he takes down their pride whensoever it pleaseth him. If we then fight vnder his ensigne, wee may assure our selues of a prosperou. victorie: for vnder his leading, we shall be safe from danger, and shall haue certaine hope of conquest in the end.

Verf. 33. *For Topheth is prepared of olde: it is euen prepared for the King: hee hath made it deepe and large: the burning thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord like a riuer of brimstone doth kindle it.*

Isaiah continues his description of Gods severe punishments, wherein he shewes, that the wicked shall not onely haue their portion of plagues in this life, but shall bee vexed therewith for euer and euer. Why so? Because hell is prepared and made ready for them; not for the poorer sort alone, but for those in great places, euen for Kings & Princes. By *Topheth*, no doubt he meanes hell: nor as though we should imagin there were some place where the wicked are shut vp after their death as in a prison, there to suffer the torments which they haue deferred: but hee thereby signifies their miserable condition and extreme torments. In the booke of the Kings, this word *topheth* is taken for the place where the Iewes sacrificed their sonnes to Moloch: 2. King. 23. 10. whereof *Jeremiah* also maketh mention: Ier. 19. 6. Now this place was destroyed by *Iosiah*, in regard of the horrible murders and superstitions which were there committed.

For mine owne part, I am out of doubt that the Prophets meant to apply the name of this place, to those exquisite torments which the wicked endure; to the end the faithfull might shudder and shake at the onely hearing of it: as also that euery one might learne to haue idolatrie in the greater detestation.

This very etymologie agrees to the word Hell: for the valley of Hannon was taken for hell it selfe, because of the execrable sacrilegies which were there committed. Now because we thinke the wicked shall escape free, when we see them prosper and haue all things at their wish, the Prophet to take away this conceit, saith, that before yesterday, that is to say, from the foundations of the earth, the Lord hath foreordained what punishments hee will inflict vpon the yngodly. For howsoeuer this decree be hid from vs for a time; yet it is stable and vnmoueable. Let vs not the iudge of the estate of the wicked by outward appearances, but let vs wait vpon our God, who will take them

*Or before yesterday.
*Or, his being is fire.

Let vs learne to make good vse of this doctrine.

I
2

well

If the Lord goe into the field, hee will surely conquer.

well enough in miſchiefs which they plot, and that in his appointed houre. In ſy meane while let vs not be ouer-haſte to thinke God hath forgotten to be iuſt, for he concluded that which he meant to do, and that long ere we had abilitie to thinke of it: neither can we poſſible be ſo ſwift in wiſhing the ſpedie cutting off of the wicked, but the Lord hath prevented our thoughts and deſires long before, becauſe he hath concluded in himſelfe from the beginning what paines and tormētis he will lay vpon them.

Some thinke this place ſhould anſwere to that in the Hebrews, Chriſt yeſterday, and to day, Sc. Heb. 13.8. But for mine owne part, I ſimply oppoſe yeſterday here to our thoughts, to the end we ſhould not take out ſelues wiſe enough to foreſee & prevent God: for none of his Councils are conceived raiſie, but were eſtabliſhed and grounded in himſelfe from all eternitie. Now he ſpeakes as I haue already ſaid of the tormēts to come, where-with the wicked ſhall be plagued; beſides thoſe which are iuſtified vpon them in this life. In which regard we may iuſtly wonder how the Saduces ſhould be ſo befotted and blockiſh as to reſtraine the rewards and due puniſhments of ſinnes to the afflictions of this life preſent, as if Gods iudgements reached only to this life preſent. For thus, the phraſes of ſpeech which follow would not agree to bodilie and temporall puniſhments: and the name of *Sophiſts* taken by a figure, ſhould only extend it ſelfe to ſome extreame curſe of God.

Saducee.

Now he ſhewes that euen Kings themſelues (whom men commonlie thinke to be priuiledged in regard of their maieſtie and power) ſhall not be exempt from this puniſhment. Their Greatnes dazles the eyes of the ſimple, but this ſhall be no ſhelter to keepe them from Gods iuſt reuenging hand in plaguing them according to that which they haue deſerued. He ſaith, they ſhall be caſt into a *deepe* place, to giue vs to vnderſtand that they ſhall be ſate enough for euer crawling out thence. He alſo calles Hell *Large* to teach vs, that whoſoeuer they be that conſult together in miſchiefe ſhall periſh, although their number be infinite: for the Lord will not waxe weary in puniſhing of the, neither ſhall he be ſtreighted of ſufficient room to ſhut vp all his enemies in.

His heape is fire. Vnder a figure he ſpeakes of the ruine of ſy wicked, becauſe we can not otherwiſe ſufficiently comprehend the ſame: as on the other ſide, without ſome borrowed ſpeeches, we were not able to conceiue of that bleſſed Immortalitie which is referred for vs in heauen; by ſuch ſimilitudes theſe things muſt be applied to our ſenſes. Whence it appears how ſondie and ridiculousſie the Sophiſters deale, who goe about too ſubtille to diſpute *torſooth* of the nature and qualitie of this *fire*, and buſie their braines very much to make it appeere what it ſhould be. But let vs reiect ſuch groſſe imaginations, ſeeing we know that the Prophet ſpeakes here figuratiuely, as hereafter we ſhall ſee that to this *fire* he ioynes the worne that neuer dyes, Chap. 65. 14.

Sophiſters ridiculous in diſputing about the qualitie of this *fi*.

THE XXXI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Woe vnto them that goe downe into Egypt for help, and ſtay vpon horſes, and truſt in charrets: becauſe they are many, and in horſemen becauſe they be very ſtrong: but they looke not vnto the holie one of Iſraell, nor ſeek vnto the Lord.*



ENow returns to that which he handled in the beginning of the former Chapter: for he liſts vp his voice againe againſt ſy Iewes, who were accuſtomed whē they were in any danger to flee rather to *Egipt* for ſuccor then to the Lord. We haue declared before why this was ſo diſpleaſing a thing in Gods ſight. And to be ſhort, there are two reaſons wherefore the Prophet doth ſo ſharply reprove this ſinne. Firſt, becauſe it is vnpoſſible wee ſhould put our truſt in creatures and in God together, touching the means of our ſafetie: for as ſoone as we once fixe our eyes vpon them, it follows by good conſequence that we therewithall turne them away from God. Beſides, God had ſtraightlie forbidden them to make any con-

tract or league with the Egyptians. Thus there was rebellion mixt with a diſloyall confidence, as if they meant wittingly and willinglie to prouide for their owne welfare, by deſpiſing and forſaking of God. It behoues vs therefore to conſider from whence this ſinne ſprang if we would vnderſtand the Prophets meaning aright.

Here is a ſecond reaſon which is more particular (which we haue touched before) why the Lord would not haue the Iewes to be acquainted with the Egyptians, to wit, leaſt ſo vnlawfull leagues might in the end abolith the memorie of their deluerance out of *Egipt*; as alſo leaſt they ſhould marre and corrupt themſelues with the ſuperfluſions and Idolatries of the Egyptians. But theſe reaſons could beare no ſway with them: Gods inhibiting of them could not hinder them from running downe to their confederates, prouiding a buckler thereof to runne againſt the hand of God. In which reſpect it is no maruell that our Prophet is ſo earneſt in rebuking of them for ſo monſtrous an outrage. Their very going downe into *Egipt* ſimple conſidered in it ſelfe deſerued a ſharpe rephrenſion, becauſe God had forbidde the ſo to do, Deut. 17. 16. 28. but the offence was much more intoilerable through a falſe truſt they had in betraying

therewith turne away from the Creator. Rebellion mixt with their diſloyall confidence.

Two reaſons ſhewing why the Prophet is ſo ſeuere in reprouing this ſinne of the Iewes.

We can no ſooner relie vpon creatures, but we

Ec God

God of that glorie which appertained vnto him, to giue it vnto mortall men.

Now that hee might the better shew how God was robbed of his right by this their fact, hee not onely accufeth them that they leaned and staid themselves vpon the Egyptians, but also hee reproacheth them on the other side, that they *looked not to the holy one of Israel*. Whence we may more evidently perceiue the cause wherefore *Isaiab* doth so sharply taxe this disloyaltie of the Iewes. For otherwise the Lord forbids vs not to vse lawfull meanes; as bread, & other sorts of meates, which he hath appointed to serue for our vse. And thus if a man being in danger, shall seeke those helps which are not forbidden, but ordinary and lawfull, such a one deserues no reproofe, if so be hee therein derogates nothing from Gods power. But it is vtterly abominable and damnable, if we suffer our selues to be intangled in these outward helps, as thereby vterly to neglect *seeking vnto God*: and in distrusting his gracious promises, to desire to trust in vnlawfull meanes.

The word *to looke*, signifies often in the Scriptures, This trust and confidence; because we are wont to looke wishly towards them, from whom we looke for succor: *Act. 3. 5.* To be short, we are here taught to put the trust of our saluation in none but in God alone: that so wholly resting our selues vpon his promises, we may goe with boldnesse, and aske whatsoever is to be desired. He permits vs lawfully to vse all things which he hath ordained for our good; yet so, that all the powers of our soules doe stay vpon him alone.

In calling him *the holy one of Israel*, hee sets forth the forwardnesse and vnthankfulnesse of this people, that being receiued into Gods faithfull protection, they cared not to contemne so gracious a protector and guardian of their saluation, but chose rather to runne after the lusts of their owne hearts. In adding forthwith the name of God; hee shewes that they could not bee kept in awe, neither by the power nor goodnesse of so louing a Father. Now since it pleaseth him at this day to allure vs by no lesse fauourable kindnesse to come vnto him, wee shall play the rebels egregiously, if we looke any other way, or if we refuse to rest in him onely. Looke whatsoever it is then that turnes the eyes of our mindes from looking directly vnto God, shall bee the same to vs as Egypt was to the Iewes,

Verf. 2. *But yet hee is wise. Therefore hee will bring euill, and not turne backe his word: but hee will rise against the house of the wicked, and against the helpe of them that worke vanitie.*

Here he calles God *wise*, hee adorns him not with a perpetuall epithite, but taxeth the craft and subtiltie of those whom hee saw to please themselves in their

wisdom more then was meete. Hee told them a little before, that they digged deepe to couer their counsels, when by their close and secret practises they thought to fle; and yet to blear the eyes of the Lord. Now in taunting wise hee derides their follie: as if hee should say; No doubt but you thought your selues to be iollie wise men in so doing; yea, but you haue to deale with a God that hath *wisdom* also to eipie your plots well enough. Wherein hee priuily taxeth them for such as imagined that God could not charge them with any thing, or as if hee had bin one that was vtterly vnacquainted with their doings. In a word, it is as much as if hee should haue said; What will become of this goodly *wisdom* of yours in the end; will it bereaue God of his Spirit? Nay, contrariwise in reproving you for your deceit and vanitie, he will shew by the effects, that hee catcheth the wise in their craftinesse: *1. Cor. 3. 19.*

Hence wee may gather a doctrine that is well enough knowne; to wit, that whosoever they be that couer their doings by crafty and close prauses, shall be so far off from benefiting themselves any thing at all thereby, that they shall to much the more inflame the iust displeasure of God against them. An euil conscience alwaies flees from the iudgement of God, and seekes out corners wherein to burie it selfe (if it were possible) out of his sight. The wicked deuise many waies to defend their finnes, and to make their partie good against God; pleasing themselves in their wisdom and subtilties, albeit in so doing, they haue no cloke or maske to hide themselves vnder that is of any value. Others being blinded with their owne greatnesse, are bold to despise God and all his threatnings. And therefore when the prophet saith, that *God is wise also*, he toucheth the soare to the quicke, to the end they might nourish no such good conceit of their craftie deuices, as if they could thereby ouertreach the Lord.

Now in regard they were vnworthy that *Isaiab* should stand ouer-long to pleade the case with them: therefore he tels them flatly, that God hath store of arguments ready to snare these politike heads withall. For first of all, they imagined that God tooke little or no heede how things went in the world, because they, forsooth, were left to sinke or swim (as they say) in the midst of so many dangers. And secondly, they esteemed his menaces to be nought else but so many scarrowes. Taking it as a thing granted therefore, that it was lawfull for euery one to provide for his owne safetie: from hence sprang this headines to run any way; and that boldnesse to bee still plotting new deuices. The Prophet shewes then that God will avenge the wrongs which were done vnto him, and that all things are in a readinesse for the execution thereof: moreover, that his word could not bee violated or ouerthrowne by no deuices nor subtilie practises of men.

Hee calles them *workers of vanitie*, because they indeuored to fortifie themselves against Gods vengeance, with a vaine and vnlawfull defence: that is to say, with the helpe of the Egyptians.

It is lawfull for thee to vie those helps and meanes which God hath ordained for thy reliefe and comfort: but beware of Asa his sin, recorded in a. Chio. 16. 12.

In the last word of the verse.

*Or, wise also.

Chap. 30. 1.
An euil conscience alwaies flees Gods presence.

1
2

Egyptians. In the firſt claufe of this verſe he ſeemed after a ſort to yeeld them the title of wiſe men, becauſe hee offered thereunto the wiſdome of God: but now having diſperſed their milts, hee diſcovers to the whole world their iuſt ſhame and reproch. Hence wee are taught, that it is ſafeſt for vs to renounce our owne reaſon, and to ſubiect it onely to the will of God. Why ſo? Becauſe there is no ſtabilitie nor ſtedfaſtneſſe at all in the plottings of vnbeleeuers: nay, they rather wittingly incenſe and prouoke Gods wrath to beate againſt them by theſe their wittie deuices.

Verſ. 3. *Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horſes fleſh, and not ſpirit: and when the Lord ſhall ſtretch forth his hand, the helper ſhall fall, and they ſhall altogether ſiule.*

IT ſeemes that Iſaiah vtters nothing here but that which euery one knowes, neither would any man ſtand to call the truth thereof into queſtion. For who would be ſo mad as to affirme either that the Egyptians were God, or to denie that they were men? This was out of controuerſie; and therefore euery one would willingly aſſent vnto it for the generall. But to come to particularities; there, they were ſo blockiſh, or ſtood in ſuch a mammering, that they called that truth into queſtion, of which before they were tully reſolued.

Thus they waxed proud, taking themſelves to be no more men; and that they might vtterly free themſelves from yeelding obedience vnto God. For this cauſe we are often admoniſhed in the holy Scriptures, not to truſt in man, becauſe nothing is more vain than he: Pſal. 146. 3. Curſed be he (ſaith Ieremiah) that truſts in man, and makes fleſh his arme: Ier. 17. 5. Yet we ſee that all, none excepted, determine and conclude of matters in themſelves, as if they were able to bring their deſignes to paſſe an hundred yeeres after, which they haue plotted in their braine: yea, as if they could rule both heauen, earth, and ſeas, and could gouerne all things euen as they liſted. Seeing there is ſuch pride in all of vs, let vs not maruell that the Prophet proclaimeth, that the Egyptians are not God, but men. For the Iewes attributed that vnto them, which appertained vnto God. What is that? Euen the protection and ſafeguard of the Church; which he ſo reſerues to himſelfe, that he will haue none to meddle with this office. Iſaiah doth therefore tauntingly taxe the Iewes in this place with the contempt of God, and their falſe confidence wherewith they were puffed vp.

And thus we may ſee how great difference there is betwene God and men. Men can doe nothing of themſelves, but ſo far forth as God ſhall giue them power. Come we to ſpeake of the nature and excellencie of man, wee may well praife the great graces which he hath receiued of God; but oppoſe him once againſt his Creator, then muſt he be accounted leſſe

then nothing. For is it poſſible to attribute any thing vnto man, but wee ſhall thereby take ſo much honour from God? This is the cauſe why wee can neuer conſent vnto the Pap. ſts, when we come to diſpute of the cauſe of our ſaluation, of free will, and of the dignitie of merits and workes: for in as much as man and God, are in theſe things oppoſed one againſt the other, it muſt needs be, that what ſoever is attributed to man, is taken from God. But they part ſtakes in ſuch wiſe, as they giue part to God, and part to men: we on the contrary affirme, that the ſole & whole cauſe of our ſaluation, ought to be attributed vnto God: as alſo, that it cannot bee giuen to anie other, but we ſhall therein commit moſt abominable ſacrilege. In a word, let vs know that in this oppoſition, nothing can be left to man which is worthy of any praife.

By the word *fleſh*, he means imbecillity and weakneſſe: for what is in fleſh but onely corruption? He ſpeakes of *horſes*, but the ſame or the like weakneſſe agrees alſo to the Egyptians. As if he ſhould ſay; *They and all the forces they can make, are not worth a ruſh*. For albeit the Egyptians had a ſoule as well as a body, yet becauſe they were earthly creatures, and dwelt in houſes of clay, they muſt downe. As if hee ſhould ſay; I am ſure you haue no ſpirituall nor celeftiall power. To which purpoſe the Prophet ſaith, Pſal. 146. 3. Truſt not in Princes, nor in any child of man: for his breath departeth, and then all his thoughts periſh.

Now albeit this word *fleſh*, properly belongs to horſes; yet it is no maruell if men be ſent to take a view of the roſtneſſe thereof, there to learne their owne tranſitorineſſe. But from the threatening that is added, to wit, that this wickedneſſe ſhall not goe free; we may learne a generall doctrine. For the Lord will not indure to haue that giuen to the creature, which belongs to himſelfe: nor, that any ſhould reſoſe that truſt in men, which ought to be reſerued for him alone. He threatens then as well thoſe which ſhould giue their ſuccour, and ſhould be the cauſe of this vaine confidence, as thoſe which ſhould be ſuccoured, & ſhould ſtay the hope of their ſafety thereupon. Now if the Lord cannot abide this peruerſe truſt, as touching things belonging to our temporary ſaluation; how inſupportable are thoſe, thinke we, who to obtaine eternall ſaluation, forge diuers truſts, according to their owne fantaſie? For in ſo doing, they exalt the power of men, to ſet it vp in the place of God.

Verſ. 4. *For thus the Lord hath ſaid vnto me; As the lion and the lions whelpes roare after their pray; againſt whom if a multitude of ſheepbeards liſt vp their voice, they will not bee wounded, nor will humble themſelves at their cry: ſo the Lord of hoſtes will come downe to fight for mount Zion, and for the ſide of it.*

THE Prophet adds this verſe, to ſhew that the Lord is not minded to leaue his

Why there can be no pacifications betwene the Papills and vs.

God threatens both the ſuccourers and the ſuccoured.

If God cannot indure we ſhould lean vpon creatures for ſaluation in matters belonging to this liſe preſent, much leſſe can he indure vs to doe in things appertaining to liſe eternall.

The pride of mans heart intolerable.

The great difference that is betwene God and men.

God neuer forbids vs to trust in creatures, but he therewithall leaves sufficient a guarantee for our faith to relieue vp himself.

Church destitute of necessarie helps. For if whilst in forbidding vs to trust in creatures he should promise vs no supplie otherwaies, we might haue some cause to complaine, as if he offered vs matter of despaire rather then of comfort. For as we haue seene a little before, men are ouer-carefull, because they thinke themselves not halfe wise enough if they vterlie absteine from meanes forbidden, to content themselves with God alone. Seeing hee promiseth them *Gods faithfull protection* then, he takes away all excuse: for what pretext can serue vs if we despise that saluation which he of his owne accord offers vnto vs? It is all one therefore as if he had said, *It is the Lord that assists, and will still assist you; Goe not downe into Egypt when so seeke help there.*

The first similitude setteth forth Gods power, which is readie prest to preferre his Church.

But he vieth a very apt similitude, wherein he shewes both the power, and louing affection which was prest for their defence: for he compares himselfe to a Lion which is strong and greedie of his pray. Notwithstanding he insists vpon the second part, to wit, that the Lord takes hold of vs with great courage, keepe and preferres vs safe in his hands against all dangers. In the meane while the Prophet sets forth his power and might, against which no forces nor multitudes of men can resist. Moreover, similitudes hang not together in all points touching the matter in hand, neither is there any necessitie of it: but they must be applied so farre-forth, as the present occasion will permit. When we see then that the Lord loues vs so dearly, and hath so tender a care ouer vs, are we not more then mad if we despise him to seeke other helps, which will be so farre off from doing vs good, that they shall turne to our great hurt? It is not without cause that he addes the *side of Zion*, because the Temple in which God would be called vpon was situated there. Looke where Gods pure seruice is then, there we may be bold to expect assured safetie, for he cannot be called vpon in vaine. Let vs therefore be his people, and he will not faile to shew himselfe our God.

Verf. 5. The Lord of hosts will defend Ierusalem as the birds that flie: he will deliuer it in defending it, and in passing further he will save it.

The second simile setteth forth Gods tender affection towards his Church.

This is another similitude, in which the Prophet shewes the singular care the Lord hath ouer vs, and how diligent and watchfull he is to keepe vs. It is taken from *birds*, who are exceeding careful in preferring their yong ones: for they will starue themselves almost, and wil feare no danger at all, to yeeld succor and defence vnto them. *Moses* vseth the like similitude, Deut. 32. 11. where he reprocheth the Iewes for their ingratitude: he compares the Lord to an Eagle which flutts vp her nest, stretcheth out her wings, flutters ouer her yong, and beates them vpon her wings. Christ also takes vp this complaint ouer Ierusalem, Oh Ierusalem, Ierusalem, how oft would I haue gathered thee together as a hen gathers her chickens vnder her wings,

but you would not! Mat. 23. 37. The summe of this place is, *That the Lord will be strong enough Verse 4. to conserue his people, which he loues right dearly, Verse 5. and tenderly cares for them.* For *Isaiah* promiseth that God will alwaies performe that for his people, which *Moses* saith he did for them for a time, because he will neuer forsake those whom he hath once receiued into his loue. To the end therefore the Iewes might not thinke that Gods care only appertained to those of that time, he expresse saith that God will spread his wings ouer Ierusalem to defend it.

Verf. 6. O yee children of Israel returne you, for you are sunck deepe in reuolting.

This verse is diuerslie expounded, for the Hebrewes expound it thus, Returne vnto the Lord, for you haue multiplied reuolts. But as I thinke it should simple be read thus, Returne yee, in as much as you are sunck deepe in reuolting. His meaning is, that the greatnes of their disloyaltie should nothing hinder them fro hauing access to God, if they brought repentant hearts with them, and that hee would forgie them, notwithstanding they were *sunck very deepe* in rebellion; and yet he therewithall galles them to the quick with this spur, to prick them forward to a true sorrow, and hatred of their sinnes, to the end they should not bring a fained or halfe repentance as men for the most part doe. He stirres them vp then diligentlie to consider how violentlie they haue plunged themselves into perdition, that they might mourne according to the measure of their offences.

In the first place note that the Prophet extenuates not the fault of this people: for it is requisite that such as are to be drawne to the Lord should be touched home with the liuely feeling of their sinnes: for those that flatter themselves in their vices are farre off from hope of pardon, therefore we can not take a better course then to discouer at large the foulness of our sores, when the medicine is to be applied vnto them.

Such as flatter themselves in their vices, are farre off from any hope of pardon.

And yet lest mens hearts should quail within them, they must be cheered and comforted by setting the promises of life and saluation before them: for Satan aims at nothing more, then to steale from vs all hope of pardon. Therefore *Isaiah* tels vs that God is readie to forgie, albeit by their reuolt they had plunged themselves into the gulfe of hell: and therewithall we may see that the Lord at no time allures vs to repentance in vaine, but forthwith offers vs free remission of all our transgressions, which is the cause why the scriptures alwaies ioines promises of grace to such exhortations as these, to the end that when we are called to repentance, we might know that forgiuenes is also at hand.

The cyle of the Gospell must bee mingled with the biting wine of the Law, lest Satan should make vs his prey.

God neuer allures vs to repentance in vaine, but forthwith offers vs pardon. The Scriptures alwaies coupleth exhortations to repentance, and hope of pardon together.

Where wee haue translated you are fallen deepe, some expound the word *Anag*, which signifies, To be deepe, To multiply; as if it were a similitude taken from heapes, and so it should be read in this sense, As you haue heaped vp sinnes, so now returne. But the first exposition seemes to agree best. The word

Sarab

Iſaiab. ſignifies revolt: others take it here for forwardnes; but the other ſignificatiō agrees beſt. And therefore y^e Prophet ſummons thē to return to y^e Lord. He calls them *children of Iſrael*, not to honour them, but in reproach of their ingratitude. For they were *rebellious children*, which had turned away from that fidelitie and obedience which their fathers yielded: this title therefore contains in it a diſgracefull quipping of them. In the meane while, our Prophet means, that the Lord forgat not the covenant which he made with their fathers, although by their diſloyaltie they were far degenerate. For he teſtifies, that hee acknowledgeth them for the *children of Iſrael*, and will make them partakers of that which hee promiſed to *Abraham* and the reſt of the fathers, if they will *convert* vnto him with their whole hearts.

Vers. 7. For in that day every one ſhall caſt away his images of ſilver, and his idols of gold, the ſin which your hands haue made.

In the former verſe they were exhorted to repentance, in this verſe the Prophet manifeſts the fruits of their repentance. Repentance is inward in the heart: it muſt therefore diſcouer it ſelfe by outward actions, euen at the goodneſſe of a tree is knowne by the fruits.

HE continues on his ſpeech begun in the former verſe: yet there is this difference, that in the former he exhorted them to repentance; but in this, hee ſhewes the fruit of it: which manner of teaching is vsuall in the Scriptures. For repentance being a thing wrought in the heart, wherein it hath his ſeate, it muſt ſhew and manifeſt it ſelfe afterwards by the effects and workes, euen as the goodneſſe of a tree within is knowne by the fruits; repentance is ſet here forth by the effects.

Where he ſpeakes onely of *idols*, it is according to the cuſtome of the Scripture, which often takes a part for the whole. For there is no queſtion but the Prophet means the whole conuerſion of men: but becauſe it had bin too long for him to haue numbred vp all the parts of it, he briefly comprehends them vnder this one kind. Now the beginning of repentance is the change of the heart: in the ſecond place we muſt come to the outward fruits; that is to ſay, to the workes.

But about all, we muſt note the cauſe why he preached repentance; to wit, in regard the Lord had promiſed them a ſpeedie deliuerance: now to the end he might be capable of it, he exhorts them to conuert. Here alſo obſerue, that we reſiſt God by our wickedneſſes, when we goe on ſtill therein: and thus we hinder the courſe of Gods grace from deſcending downe vpon vs, ſo as hee cannot helpe vs. That his helpe may haue place in our miſeries therefore, he requires that we turne vnto him.

He mentions *idols of ſilver*, as we haue ſhewed before, becauſe thoſe that repent in good earneſt, are touched effectually with the ſenſe of their ſins. So as they cannot behold the traces of their ſuperſtitions in which God was diſhonoured, without great horror. They therefore abhor ſuch things, and are glad to ſuffer the loſſe of their gold and ſilver, to reſtore their vnſained faith & repentance. For

whoſoever hath truly renounced all his ſuperſtitions, will ſpare nothing to make profeſſion of Gods pure worſhip. And this is the Prophets drift when he mentions *gold & ſilver*, rather then wood and ſtones. Now the loſſe of any thing whatſoever, be it neuer ſo pretious, is infinite gaine when we are ſeparated and cleaned from ſuch curſed pollutions.

As for thoſe who ſtill retainē them, they ſhew themſelves to be intangled with ſuperſtitions, howſoever they ſeeme to profeſſe Chriſtianity; and thereby may we know, that their hearts doe as yet remaine vnreformed. Away therefore with the excuſes of hypocrits, who will not wholly renounce idolatry; to wit, what would you haue me doe? How ſhould I liue? Indeede I know that this gold, theſe reuenues are abominable before God, becauſe they procede from idolatry: but alas! we muſt liue ſome way or other. Away, I ſay, with ſuch childiſh excuſes: for where repentance is wrought effectually in the heart; there forthwith all things that cannot be kept without diſhonouring of God, muſt be caſt away.

Which your hands haue made.] The Prophet preſſeth them, that they might the rather acknowledge their ſinne. For when men are accuſed, they would willingly caſt the fault vpon ſome other, and are very loth to confeſſe their guiltineſſe: as for example, the common ſort are ready to accuſe the Priests, but few will lay the blame of their ſinnes vpon themſelves. Therefore the Prophet calles them the workes of *their hands*, that they might know that themſelves were the authors of ſuch abominations. And yet therewithall he lets them ſee how their inſidelitie hath cunningly ſeducēd them, whilſt they were the forgers of their owne goddeſſe. Hence we may gather, that God receiſes all our inuentions; neither can he accept in good part, that ſeruiſe whereof our ſelves are the authors. I take the word *ſinne*, appellatiuely: as if hee ſhould ſay; When you behold your idols, then looke vpon your *ſin*, acknowledge the ſignes of your diſloyaltie, and reuolt. If you be indeede conuerted vnto God, then ſhew it by the effects, in reiecting your idols, and in renouncing your ſuperſtitions: for this ſhall bee the true triall of your ſound conuerſion.

Vers. 8. Then Aſhur ſhall fall by the ſword, not of man: and the ſword ſhall deuoure, not that of man: hee ſhall flee from the preſence of the ſword, and his young men ſhall melt, or conſume away.

THE letter *Vau*, may better be translated into an aduerbe of time; Then Aſhur ſhall fall: that is to ſay, when you ſhall be conuerted vnto the Lord, and that your good conuerſation manifeſts your ſound conuerſion; then the enemy ſhall fall. For looke how the Aſſyrian was raiſed vp of the Lord, to puniſh

Why the Prophet mentions gold and ſilver, rather then wood or ſtones.

Their ſound conuerſion to be ſuſpected, they reſtore their ſuperſtitions for luces ſake.

Men are loth to confeſſe their guiltineſſe.

God receiſes our inuentions in his ſeruiſe.

See chap. 10. Verſ. 22.

Our good conuerſation muſt manifeſt our ſound conuerſion.

nith the Iewes for their wickednesse, and chiefe for their Idolatrie; so God also promifeth that this enemy shall be cut off when they shall cease to sinne and to serue Idols. Thus wee see that our obstinacie is the cause why the Lord addes plague vnto plague, and doubles his blowes in pursuing vs more and more. For we fill giue him new occasions of enflaming his wrath against vs. If we desire that God should strike vs more softly, and that our enemies might at once be destroyed and neuer trouble vs more; let vs studie by newnes of life to enter into his fauor againe; for he will by and by lay downe his rods, and take away the force and power of our enemies that they shall not hurt vs.

When it is said that it shall not be by the sword of man: the Prophet thereby means that the deliuerance of the Church is the peculiar worke of God: giuing the Iewes to vnderstand, that albeit there appeared no help in earth, yet Gods secret power should be sufficient to redeeme them. Are our enemies confounded then; is their force repressed? Let vs know that this proceeds from the hand of God. Indeed he repelleth the force and furie of the wicked diuers waies; but it is his onely hand notwithstanding whereby the Church is saued. For he so works by humane helps, that yet he keeps her chosen after a wonderfull and extraordinarie maner, as may be seene euen since the beginning of the world: and it is no lesse easie to perceiue it now, if we were not hoodwinked. And yet this lets not, but the Lord may employ some of his seruants in the deliuerance of his Church, but so, that still his owne hand especially shines in such a worke.

We know this prophesie of *Isaiab* was fulfilled when the host of the *Assyrians* was discomforted, and when *Sennacherib* fled. For men commonlie see not Gods hand therein, but the Lord manifests his power to the end we might know that he is the deliuerer of his Church. And when he freed *Ierusalem* from the siege which was after laid before it, he did therein as in a glasse present also vnto the Iewes an image of their spiritual deliuerance. It is he alone then which will destroy our spirituall enemies. In vaine therefore shall we seeke other helps and remedies, and in vaine shall we rest vpon our owne strength which is nothing: for we shall neuer ouercome nor be Conquerors but by the leading and help of our God.

His young men.] His meaning is, that the Lord will so manifest his might against the *Assyrians*, that the hearts of *young men* which are wont to be couragious shall quaille and melt as waxe. For in as much as young men haue lesse experience then those that are old, they are more rash and headie. But the Lord will

castie coole their heate when the houte is come in which he will deliuer his seruants. This is the cause why *Isaiab* made speciall mention of *young men*, as if he had said, the flower, or strength.

See to this purpose
Chap. 40. 20

Verf. 9. *He shall flee for feare into his fortresse, and his Princes shall be feared With the banner, saith the Lord Who hath a fire in Zion, and a furnace in Ierusalem.*

Now he speaks of *Sennacherib*, who being swallowed vp with feare, should shamefullie flee into his fortresse in *Nineue*, as into his nest. He addes, that his Princes who should encourage the rest of the fouldiours, shall be so surprized with astonishment, that they shall neither dare to take vp their weapons, nor to ioine issue, as they say, but shall flee the Standard. To conclude, he shewes that he is Gods Herald to proclaime this Edict, that the Iewes might in no wise doubt nor dispute of the euent as they were wont; also that they might not afterward forget so great a benefit; neither attribute it vnto fortune.

In the end of the verse, if we reade as some translate, Whose fire is in Zion, the sense will be, that God hath a power of fire to deuoure his enemies. Notwithstanding I thinke the relatiue *Asher* is superfluous: or ought to be translated in the nominatiue *Qui*, because God is properly called *fire*, in respect of the *Assyrian* whom he will consume. Now because he speaks of *fire*, some referre it to the Sacrifices: but this interpretation is farre fetched, neither hath it any good ground. For mine owne part I doubt not but his meaning is to say, That the Lord hath a fire to consume the *Assyrian*, or that God himselfe is as a fire, so as he closely compares the *Assyrian* to straw, or stubble.

He also saith, that this fire is kindled and maintained in *Zion*, and in *Ierusalem*, that is to say, in the middes of his people, to shew that the wicked shall not escape vnpunished, for persecuting the Church of God. For they shall one day feele him their Iudge, who stands in the middes of his Church, which for the most part is thought to be destitute of all help. The summe is, that Gods vengeance is prepared for the wicked which haue not ceased to molest his people, and that y^e Lord will not reuenge for his owne sake only, but for his elects sake also. Let vs reioyce in this consolation, and howiuever we seeme destitute of succor and exposed to all dangers, yet let vs euermore assure our selues that our God will be as a consuming fire against our aduersaries.

God will euermore be a consuming fire, to consume the aduersaries of his Church.

Reforme thy euil maners, and God will redresse thy miseries.

The redemption of the Church, a peculiar worke of God.

Note.

God vseth men as instruments in sauing his Church, yet so, that his owne power only shines in this worke.
Chap. 37. 36.
37.

Our help stands only in the name of the Lord that made heauen and earth.

THE

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. Behold a King ſhall reigne in right conſeſſe, and the Princes ſhall gouern in iudgement.



is meaning is to ſay, that God will yet bee good vnto his church; ſo as he will reſtore it vnto the former eſtate. Now the beſt way to bring it thereunto, is when ciuill policie is rightly adminiſtred, and all things ordered according to iuſtice and equitie. No doubt this prophetic belongs to *Hezechias*, and to his reigne; vnder whom the Church was reformed and brought againe into her firſt glory: for before ſhe was miſerably ſcattered. That wicked and curſed hypocrit *Ahaz*, had corrupted all after his own fantaſie, and had ouerthrowne both the ciuill and eccleſiaſtiſſall policie. The Prophet therefore promiſeth another King, to wit, *Hezechias*, who by his iuſtice and equitie, ſhould ſet thoſe things in order, which before were confuſed. In a word, he here ſets forth the happie ſtate of the Church, as in a glaſſe of which ſeing it cannot bee erected without Chriſt, it is therefore certaine that the things here ſpoken of, ought to be referred to him; of whom *Hezechias* was but a figure, both touching his office and Kingdome.

He mentions *iudice and iudgement*, according to the vsuall phraſe of the Scripture, which by theſe two words vnderſtands a well ordered gouernment: for *iudice* ſignifies equitie and moderation: and vnder the word *iudgement*, is comprehended that part of equitie by which the good are maintained and preferred from the violence of the wicked. It is very certaine that the effice of a good Prince, ſtretcheth it ſelfe further then *iudice and iudgement*; for he ought principally to vp-hold the honour of God, and the purity of religion: but the Scripture is wont to expreſſe the whole obſeruation of the Law, vnder the duties of the ſecond table. For if we abſtaine from violence, if (as much as in vs lies) we labour to releue the poore and oppreſſed, if we hold the band of peace one with another, wee therein giue good teſtimonie that the feare of God is in our hearts, from which ſuch fruits of faith doe ſpring forth. Vnder a part then the Prophet hath comprehended the whole.

But it is not without cauſe that hee mentions *Princes*. Why ſo? It is not enough that he himſelfe bee a good King, vnleſſe hee alſo haue good gouernours & counſellers about his perſon. For it often fallies out, that the people behaue themſelues leaudly vnder good Kings; as we reade of *Nero*, vnder whoſe raigne, euery one might doe as he liſted: ſo as

the condition of many was much worſe at that time, then in the daies of *Nero*; for the careleſneſſe of one onely, gaue occaſion to many to become wicked. Kings therefore ought to be furniſhed with good gouernours, which may be as eyes, eares, and hands to his body, in helping him to order things aright. If this bee wanting, a good King ſhall neuer be able ſo to aduance religion and iuſtice; but his officers will bee readie more or leſſe to foreſlow the courſe of good proceedings. And if there be not among the highſt, ſuch a harmonie and agreement touching theſe things, as is in a well tuned inſtrument of muſicke, the Church & Commonwealthe ſhall ſeldome proſper. The counſell therefore which *Ieſhu* gaue *Moſes* his ſonne in law, is to bee hearkened vnto of euery good King; let him chuſe for his officers ſuch as bee men of courage, fearing God, and hating couctouſneſſe; yea, let him appoint ſuch for his Captaines ouer tens, fifties, and hundreds.

But now aduaries, bawdes, ruſſians, flatterers, and ieſters, are for ſooth aduanced by Kings, to whom are assigned the chiefeſt dignities and places, as iult rewards of their flatteries and bawderies. Ate we to wonder then when wee ſee commonwealthe euery where almoſt fall to ruin, and come to nought, and all true adminiſtration of *iudice and iudgement* abandoned and reiected? No verily. For it is the iult puniſhment of our finnes; yea, and wee our ſelues deſerue to haue ſuch gouernours, becauſe wee will not ſuffer God to haue the gouernment of vs. How is it poſſible they ſhould inioy this ſo ſingular a benefit, which are knowne rebels, prophane or malicious hypocrits, who caſt the Lord and his heſts behind their backes, and will not indure the ſweet yoke of Chriſt, which would bring with it this happy and flouriſhing eſtate of the Church here promiſed?

Verſ. 2. And he ſhall be as an hiding place from the wind, and as a ſhadow from the tempeſt, as the riuers of waters in a dry place, the ſhadow of a great rocke in the deſert land.

IN this verſe hee lets vs ſee how exceeding needfull it is to haue a well ordered Commonwealthe, when hee calles this King an *hiding place for the wind*; and the *shadow* from the tempeſt. For the world is neuer in ſuch good caſe, as when euery one willingly abſtains from that which is euill, and when all quietly ſeek the benefit of one another, without conſtraint. For as much then as many take libertie to offer violence to their neighbours, by reaſon of their intemperancie and vnruſly paſſions, men ſhall be in continuall ſtrife and debate, if there bee not remedies at hand by law, and iudgement ſeates to ſtill and pacifie them: but becauſe many by their lordly au-

thority

The Churches glory begins at the eſtabliſhing of a well ordered ciuill policie.

This prophetic extendeth it ſelfe firſt to *Hezechias*; Next, vnto Chriſt, of whom *Hezechias* was a figure.

A good Prince muſt carefully provide for the flouriſhing eſtate both of Church and Commonwealthe.

To abſtaine from offering violence, to releue the poore, to be ſpeake with our neighbours, good ſignes of the feare of God. It is needfull for a good Prince to haue good counſellers about him.

Nero

Good gouernours, eyes, eares, and hands to Kings.

Simile

Exod. 18.

Our finnes the cauſe of all diſorders, both in ciuill and eccleſiaſtiſſall gouernments.

3

thoritic are readie rather to raise vp troubles then to alay them: it is not without cause that this good King is heere adorned with such titles.

And if this were rightlie spoken touching the person of *Hezekias*, how much more doth it sidge appertaine to Christ, in whom we haue our iure and only refuge in these *scampes*? and yds which wee must be tossed as long as our conſtituting dayes shall laſt in this world. Are we then parched with heate? Let vs learne to throude vs vnder his shadow. Are we euer and anon tossed with waues, so as it ſeemes we ſhall be ſwallowed vp of them? Let vs runne to him as to our moſt ſafe and ſure haue. He will eaſily ſtill and quiet all tempeſts. He will ſet all things in order which before were confuſed and out of frame.

Verſ. 3. Then the eyes of the ſeeing ſhall not be ſhut, and the eares of them that heare ſhall hearken.

4. And the heart of the fooliſh ſhall vnderſtand knowledge, and the tongue of the ſtutterers ſhall be vnloofed to ſpeake diſtinctlie.

Hence wee may yet better perceiue that the Prophet ſo ſets forth the gouernment and reigne of *Hezekias*, that his meaning therewithall is to leade vs higher. For he in-treates here of the reſtauration of y Church, whereof there was ſome reſemblance vnder *Hezekias*, but the full accompliſhment of it was vnder Ieſus Chriſt. We know the Church neuer proſpers well if it want iuſt and wiſe gouernours. But which way can this be attained vnleſſe Chriſt reigne? It followes therefore that himſelfe and his kingdome are here recommended vnto vs. Now this promiſe is oppoſed to that fearefull iudgement of *blinding*, mentioned in Chap. 29. 10. 11. Heere on the contrarie he promiſeth that *true light*: ſo as thoſe which were *blinded* before, ſhall now ſee clearly: the *deafe* ſhall begin to heare, the *fooliſh* ſhall vnderſtand knowledge, and the *ſtutterers* ſhall ſpeake diſtinctlie.

He calles them *ſeers* & *beavers*, which ought to haue taken heed to the word of the Lord when it was publiſhed vnto them: but they choſe rather to remaine wilfullie *blinde* and *deafe*, and eſtranged both their minds and thoughts from wholeſome doctrine. Now the Lord promiſeth them that hee will reſtore *eyes, eares, tongue, and vnderſtanding* vnto them. Sure it is that whatſoever is heere promiſed proceeds from the free grace of God: for the queſtion is not now ſimple what men ſhal do of themſelves, but of that which God ſhall worke in them. Theſe then are the ſpeciall gifts of God: as on the contrarie, when he *ſhuts the eyes, takes away vnderſtanding, and the righte uſe of ſpeech*, and ſuffers ignorance and barbarouſnes to reigne; theſe are to be accounted horrible iudgements, whereby God auengeth himſelfe vpon the vnthankfulnes of men, and alſo of their contempt of his word.

The Prophet then promiſeth that God taking pitie of his Church, will at the laſt reſtore that vnto her which before he had iuſtly withheld, and that for the loue which he beares vnto Chriſt, from whom we muſt receive a *tongue to ſpeake, eyes to ſee, eares to heare, and an heart to vnderſtand*, for till then, we are more then blockiſh, and ſmiten as it were with a fearefull ſortifſhnes. Let vs know then that out of Chriſt there is no ſpiritual life in the world. Why ſo? Becauſe euery mothers ſonne of vs is *blinde, deafe, dumb, and fooliſh*, vntill we be gathered into that bodie whereof he is the head: whence it followes, that all theſe benefiſts faile when his kingdome is defaced.

We are alſo to note that the chiefſt benefiſts which aboute all others we are eſpeciallie ro deſire are here recommended vnto vs: for riches and the like, in the ioiying whereof men vſualle place their happines, ought to be eſteemed as nothing in compariſon of theſe things. Shall we not be more then miſerable in the middes of all abundance, if the Lord denie vs theſe ſpiritual bliſſings whereof the Prophet ſpeakes in this place? Take away theſe, and we may be ſure Chriſt is gone; neither can wee haue any part in him. For from him doe theſe heauenlic graces flow, as *S. Paul* teacheth vs, *Ephes. 1. 3*. Seeing therefore we now enioy theſe benefiſts whereof we haue been ſo long deprived, let vs bluſh for ſhame that with our *tongues* we haue not rendered vnto Chriſt that glorie which is due vnto him; alſo that we haue neglected to apply the *vnderſtanding* which he hath given vs to the aduancement of his kingdome, and to the furtherance of his ſeruiſe: for by neglecting theſe things, we haue maniſteſted to all the world that his kingdome hath no place in vs. To conclude, for as much as foolcs are worie to be *raſh* and headie, therefore the Hebrues take *haſtines for ſollie*: for wiſe men are commonlic watie and ſlow in that they take in hand.

Verſ. 5. A niggard ſhall no more be called liberal, nor the churle rich.

The Prophets meaning is, that all things ſhall be brought into their order, that men ſhould not eſteeme vices vertues, as they did in times paſt. For where gouernment is confuſed, the courtois reigne as Lords; becauſe men vſualle iudge of vertue by power and riches. Let a poore man be neuer ſo honeſt, religious, yea, and *liberal*, according to his abilitie, yet he is generallie deſpied of all. In an ill gouerned Common-wealth therefore all things are out of frame, but the contrarie eaſily diſcouers all ſuch iuglings. For let vertue once be in requeſt, vice will forthwith be brought to light. The godly alſo haue greater libertie to repreſſe the pride of ſuch as before trode all iuſtice and equitie vnder foote.

Beſides, in regard the Prophet ſpeakes here touching the ſtate and reformation of the Church, the gouernment whereof is ſpiritual, we muſt yet raiſe vp our minds a little higher,

Chriſt eſpeciallie is this hiding place.

Chriſt our ſhadow and moſt ſure haue of ſafetie in the midlt of ſtrict trials, and floods of aduerſities.

* Or raiſh, or giddie headed.

It is Chriſt only that giues vs eyes, eares, a tongue, and an vnderſtanding heart. No ſpiritual life in the world out of Chriſt.

No riches comparable with theſe benefiſts, which the Prophet here recommends vnto vs.

higher, that we may refer all this vnto Iesus Christ, whose peculiar propertie it is to discouer the vices that are hid, and to take away the vailes & impediments which change the outward face of them: by reason whereof, they are for the most part praised no lesse then if they were vertues indeed. This hee doth by the Gospell. How so? Through the preaching thereof, he laies those wickednesses open, which before were close and secret, and makes them appear in their owne likenesse: so as none shall be beguiled by outward appearances, vnlesse he will wittingly close vp his eyes. Will yee see the reason then why the Gospell is so generally hated of the world? No man would willingly haue his secret filthie thoughts and vile actions made manifest.

The Philosophers dispute very well in manie places touching *conuersione* and *liberality*, and in some fort discouer the differences betwene them: but they gage not the consciences to the bottome, neither doe they truly distinguish betwene the one and the other. This cannot bee done but by Christs light, when hee shines by his Gospell, discouering the inmost secrets of our hearts, bringing vs to a spirituall and willing obedience. We are here therefore called to the iudgement seate of Christ, who onely vnmaskes hypocrisie, causing vs to see whether we be truly *liberall* or *niggardly*.

Verf. 6. But the niggard will speake of niggardnesse, and his heart will worke iniquitie, and doe wickedly, and speake falsly against the Lord, to make empty the hungry soule, and to cause the drinke of the thirstie to faile.

WE may also translate, The wicked will speake wickedly: for the word *Nebalah*, signifies all manner of villanie or wickednes, which we commonly call, a man of no worth. We may also translate, The foole will speake wickedly: and thus there should be some allusion in the words *Nabal* and *Nebalah*; but the sense would be diuers. Notwithstanding, because he vsed the verie same word in the former verse, when he spake of lawlesse persons & niggards; I do the rather follow this interpretation. I take the word *Auen* for impietie; for he speakes of a continued liberty to doe euill, as the sequell sufficiently shewes. Why so? Because hee directs his speech to such as plunge themselves into all manner of leaud behauiour; being without touch of breast, and as it were past feeling. They iest out all admonitions, and scorne both God and his messengers. But Christ drawes euē such forth into the light, and laies that open to the view of their consciences, which before lurked in secret: for to him it belongs to diuide (with his two edged sword of the Gospell) euē betwene the marrow and the bones, that euery thought may lie naked and bare before his iudgement seat.

Our Prophet then conuigues on the same

matter which he began to handle in the former verses. Others expound it otherwise, (yet not so properly as I thinke) for they take it to be a prouerbiall speech, and expound it in the present tense; The villaine speakes of villanie. But if I be not deceiued, the Prophet points out vnto vs an higher matter; to wit, that Christ who is the Iudge of the world, will ascend into his iudgement seat to manifest what is in the heart of euery one. For as long as hee forbears to execute the office of a Iudge, all things run out of course: wicked men are applauded because they carry a faire shew of vertue; and the godly are counted as the of-slowing of the world. But Christ will bring euery mans doings to the touchstone that low wickednesse, which before caried some colour of vertue, might be discouered. For which cause it is said, hee hath his fan in his hand to separate the good corne from the chaffe. This fan is the Gospell, whereby God as a iust Iudge, puts the wicked as it were vpon a racke, and maugre their teeth, makes them to vter their inmost thoughts. Wee haue good proofe of this againe and againe, whilest wee discouer that grosse idolatry which was so masked vnder the papiacie, that men tooke it for Gods true worship. Oh how wonderfully were the poore people wrapped in superstitions! Who would euer haue thought that there had lien such horrible monsters (in those times of darknesse) within the hearts of men: such as they are now manifested to be. For the contempt of God so ouerflowed, that some shewed themselves beasts rather then men. But what doe the Papists? They cry out as if we by our doctrine had let loose the bridle to men, and had set open the doore to epicurisme; so as it should be lawfull for any amongst vs (without blushing) to doe what he list. But let them heare our Prophets answer; who telles them, that the truth of God being once brought to light, vile persons will behaue themselves vilely, and *the wicked will then speake wickedly*: otherwise, how should Christ be a spirituall Iudge, if he did not manifest the secrets of the hearts, and discouer the things that were most deeply hidden?

But besides the scoffes which the reprobrates cast forth against God, hee taxeth also their cruelty, namely, *They make empty the hungry soule*. Wherein the Prophet orderly recites the finnes that are against the second table. The wicked begin at the contempt of God: afterwards, they fall into their finnes; to wit, they spare not to exercise cruelty against their *poore neighbours*. What rigor can be greater then to deprive the *hungry soule* of his bread, and the *thirstie soule* of his drinke: For the very instinct of nature must needs cause our bowels in compassion to yearne within vs. But when men are growne so yron hearted, and haue so far degenerated, that they are without sense or feeling of their brethrens wants, doe they not shew themselves worse then sauage or wild beasts, who wil pitie their like?

*Verf. 7. For the *weapons of the eburlie*

*Instruments or measures.

Mat. 3.

The Gospell hath brought papish iagling to light.

Papish slander.

Heb. 4.

charle are wicked: hee deuise wicked counsels to vnder the poore with lying words, and to speake against the poore in iudgement.

WEE must alwaies retaine the future tence, because he disputes not so much what couctous men are, as what they will be, when Christ by the light of his Gospell shall discouer their hypocrisie, lest they should deceiue any. For hee speakes of that heauenlic light which should breake forth to cause secret wickednesses appeare; as wee haue said. Christ then manifesteth the venome that is hid in the couctous and thewes with what vnlawfull weapons they fence themselves. If any will interpret the word *Kelai*, Measures; I hinder him not; but the word *weapons* agrees best, and hath a larger sense; for vnder it are comprehended all sortes of instruments. He means then by a metaphor to set forth the cunning practises and subtiltyes, wherewith the couctous beguile the simple, and snare them in their ginsnes.

In the next place he shewes the reason of it; to wit, they are alwaies *hammering of wickedness in their hearts*. Surely hee here describeth the miner of the wicked, who busie their braines about nothing else but how they may fill their purses; be it by right or wrong, it is no matter. Such people doth our Lord Iesus Christ here vnmaske, and lets all the world see their priuie packing. Our Prophet amplifies the indignitie of their fact yet further, by other circumstances. For is it not a more grieuous sinne to *circumuent the innocents* who are vnable to thurst for themselves, then such as haue reaching heads? Againe, is it with sweete baits, they deceiue vnder pretext of friendship? In the third place, if they do this to the poore, who had more neede to be deliuered? Lastly, if *nares* be spread euen in the open iudgements feates? No doubt the sinne is greater to spoile the poore vnder colour of iustice, then to set vpon them in the high way. For iudgement feates ought to bee like Cities of refuge for the distressed to flee vnto. What shall we say then, if such places bee made dennes of theeces? On the high way a man may happily shunne a theefe, and may wind himselfe out of his nets; but which way shall a man escape out of the Inates which are laid in places of iustice? The circumstances of this text therefore ought diligently to be obserued.

Vers. 8. *But the liberall man will deuise of liberall things, and he will continue his liberalitie.*

WEE haue told you before that these sentences haue a more spiritual sense then our bare reason can attaine vnto: for the Prophet speakes not so much of Commonwealth matters, as of the reformation of the Church. These things therefore appertaine to the regenerate, ouer whom Christ reignes by the scepter of his word. For how-

soeuer many bee called outwardly by the voice of the Gospell; yet few are brought by it to yeeld sound obedience vnto God, or to beare that sweete yoke. Those few doth the Lord make benefactors and truly *liberals*, in such wise, as they seeke not so much their owne things, as how to benefite the poore; and that not once or twice, and so away, but continue the same from day to day, so as their heart doth rather increase then decrease.

This place is commonly translated otherwise; to wit, that those who are liberall, go on forward, and abound in well doing, because God enricheth them; & recompenceth them with greater benefits. This sense at the first, hath some shew of reason: but the Prophet rather meant, that the liberall shall neuer cease giuing. Why so? Because they shal grow more and more; they shall haue the same will and affections, and shall continue constant in their good course: as it is said, *Psal. 112. 9. He hath distributed abroad, and giuen to the poore: his righteousness he indureth for euer.* Now this is added because it is an easie matter to counterfet the liberall person for a time: many also thinke they haue quit themselves well, when they haue giuen a litle; but they grow faint hearted by & by, and change their mindes: whereas on the contrary, true liberalitie is not an houres bird, as we say, but growes on to perfection. Those that are indued therewith, perseuere therein constantly: their liberalitie is not by fits & starts; neither are they like a seething pot, that is now ready to boile ouer, and by & by stands as still as a Stone.

This is it which our Prophet meant to expresse by the verbe, *shall goe forward* or *continue*. Many things fall out often times, which cooles the heat, and hinders the course of our charitie. First, we meete with the strange ingratitude of men; so as it seemes all our cost is ill bestowed. Againe, many are too greedie, like hoisleeches, that still sucke in other mens blood. Yet let vs often and alwaies beare in minde what Saint Paul saith, *Gal. 6. 9. to wit, that we shall reape in due season if we faint not.* For the Lord exhorts vs not to such a kinde of liberalitie as should last for a day or a weeke, but for our whole life.

Vers. 9. *Rise vp, yee women that are at ease: heare my voice ye carelesse daughters, hearken to my words.*

IT seemes there should bee no coherence betweene these words and the former. For before hee spake of the restitution of the Church; but now hee threatens that Gods iudgements are readie to seise vpon those who gaue themselves to a pompous, delicious, and an idle course of life. It should seeme therefore that *Isaiah* takes vp a new matter in this place. Yet will there be no great inconuenience, if this prophetic be ioyned to the former: for the Prophets vsually keepe this course; first, they lay forth promises of grace

It is a greater sinne to rob the poore vnder colour of iustice, then to set vpon them by the high wayes side. Iudgement feates ought to be as cities of refuge for the distressed to flee vnto.

Many called by the external voice of the Gospell, but few are brought by it to yeeld sound obedience therunto. The way of the righteous like the light that shine in more and more vnto the perfect day: *1. Cor. 13. 12.*

2. Cor. 9. 9.

The vsual tenor which the Prophets hold in their sermons.

grace to the faithfull; then they direct their ſpeech to the hypocrits, teſtifying that the mercy which God promiſeth to his children, ſhall be ſo far off from beſiſing of them, that they ſhall ſurely beare the reward of their finnes.

Whereas he bendeth the force of his ſpeech in particular againſt *women*, the Hebrews vnder this word (according to the uſe of their tong) vnderſtand Cities: but I thinke this ſhould be no figuratiue maner of ſpeech, and therefore I rather reſt in the bare letter. Now he ſpeaks to *women* rather then vnto men, to ſignifie the greatneſſe of this deſolation: for *women* and maidens are commonly ſpared in ſuch times, by reaſon of their ſex, being alſo deſtitute of warlike defences. Well, he ſaith the deſtruction ſhall be ſo barbarous, that none ſhall ſcape ſcotefree.

And note that he ſpeakes expreſly of *women* of *reſt*, who commonly are the moſt delicate: for according to their abundance, ſo they may better ſhift for themſelues, and may more eaſily eſcape dangers, when the poore muſt be faine to goe to the wall. But *Iſaiah* telleth them that they ſhall be conſtrained to *riſe* and tremble: therein oppoſing this trembling to that *reſt* and eaſe which they quietly enioyed. For he commands them to *riſe*, as giuing them to vnderſtand, that it was no time, for them now to *ſit ſtill*, becauſe the Lord was about to awaken them out of their ſecure couſe of liſe.

When he addes, *heare my voice yee daughters: by daughters* the Rabbines vnderſtand Cities and Townes; but this ought to be taken literally, as I ſaid before. Hee ſhewes whence this terror and violence ſhall proceed, which ſhall cauſe them thus to *riſe* and tremble; to wit, from the iudgement of God. But he mentions the *voice*, to ſhew that this ſhall bee no vaine prophecie, becauſe this war was proclaimed againſt them by the commandment of God. As if he ſhould ſay, You ſhall one day ſeele by experience, what power and efficacy there is in the *word of God* to awaken you.

Now he blames their idleneſſe, ſecuritie, and delicacie ſo oft, not onely becauſe it ſhould be vnked for thoſe that had bin wont to be at their eaſe, to bee ſo rudely rouzed vp; but alſo in regard it is a thing almoſt vnpoſſible, that the world (in this corrupted and depraued eſtate of mans nature) ſhould not bee too careleſſe in abuſing reſt and abundance. For we then by little and little fall into a fortiſhneſſe of mind, deceiuing our owne ſoules with vaine imagination: ſo as all feare is abandoned of euery one: in which falſe ſecuritie, wee eaſily are drawne audaciously euen to ruſh againſt God himſelfe.

Verſ. 10. *Yee women that are careleſſe, ſhall bee in feare above a yeere in daies: for the vintage ſhall faile, and the gathering ſhall come no more.*

BY theſe words he meanes, that the calamitie ſhall laſt long: for it is a great re-

heſe to a ſorrowfull mind, when hee thinkeſ heart, when that the miſeries and afflictions which p^{er}ceiue it, that though vpon him ſo neerly, ſhall laſt but a while. But thoſe afflictions be ſo that there is no hope left of ſome comfortable iſſue, nor promiſe of deliuerance, what can enſue thereof but deſpaire? Hee ſhewes then, that they ſhall not ſuffer this extreme for a yeere onely, but that they muſt expect new afflictions, one in the necke of another. By the word to *feare*, hee p^{er}itually taxeth their drowſyncke; ſhewing that they ſhall be led away with *terror* and *trembling*, ſeeing the ſweet and ſtill voice of whoſſome doctrine was ſo tedious vnto them. And in as much as the Iewes were too much beſet with the loue of earthly and tranſitorie things, hee threatens them with want of *bread* and *wine*. And thus hee applies himſelfe to their capacite.

If they had been better purged from their earthlineſſe he would rather haue awakened them with the feare of that iudgement which *Jeremiah* bewailes, Lament. 1. 7. to wit, that the ſacrifices and feaſt daies ſhould ceaſe, and that the holy aſſemblies ſhould be aboliſhed. But becauſe they had plunged themſelues in voluptuous liuing, and had not ſo well profited as to eſteeme ſpiritual benefits, the Prophet applying himſelfe to their weakneſſe, addreſſeth his ſpeech rather to their bellies, then to their mindes.

Now he toucheth the *wiſhing of the fields*, which ſhould vndoubtedly follow this war: for abundance is the mother of idleneſſe and ſecuritie. It is therefore as if he had ſaid, The Lord will deprive you of your belly cheere, he will rouze you vp with a witneſſe, and will deprive you of all matter of reioycing. By this verſe then are we admoniſhed not to lie ſnoozing in our proſperity; neither to dreame of ſuch a reſt, as if we were to enioy the ſame in this world for euer. No, let vs ſee the good thing, which God beſtows vpon vs moderately, vnleſſe we meane that God ſhould awaken and ouerwhelme vs vnawares: and by this ſudden change which ſhall befall vs, vex vs worſe then wee can expect or thinke of.

Abundance the mother of idleneſſe and ſecuritie.

Verſ. 11. *Yee women that are at eaſe, be aſtonied: feare O yee careleſſe women: put off the clothes, make bare, and giue ſackcloth vpon the loines.*

THIS is no ſuperfluous repetition, but rather an amplification of that which hee ſpoke of before: for whileſt men are thus rocked aſleepe, hardly can they be awakened by the voice of Gods Prophets. It is needfull then to cry aloud, and to adde rebuke to rebuke. Therefore in that hee multiplies his threatening, he thereby ſhewes how great our ſecuritie is, when men are once blinded with proſperitie. It is almoſt a thing impoſſible for them to heare the voice of God when he admoniſheth them. And to ſpeake the truth, men are in much more danger by proſperitie, then by aduerſitie: for when all things fall out well, they are ready to flatter themſelues

selues; yea, and to be bewitched with their felicitie. This was the cause why he was faine to rebuke the Iewes so sharply; euen to quicken them vp if it were possible out of their drowsynesse. This exhortation then ought to be referred to the time to come as if the Prophet should haue said; In the end you shall tremble, for I can assure you, your rest shall not last alwaies.

Thus hee shewes that this calamitie which was to ensue, should be as a scale set vnto his prophetic, whereby God would manifest by the effects, that these words should not vanish away in the ayre. Where hee bids them to *make bare* and to gird them with sackcloth, he describes the estate of mourners. For when aduersitie presteth any, then they put on sackcloth, and make the rest of the parts of their bodies naked; and so by outward afflictions and garments, and the like, they manifest the inward dolour of their mindes. Hee calles the women then for their delicious and daintie fare, and voluptuous luing wherein they plunged themselues, to sackcloth and other testimonies of sorrow.

Verf. 12. *Men shall lament for the teate; euen for the pleasant fields and for the fruitfull vine.*

THIS verse is diuersly expounded: for some without any figure, vnderstand, that there shall bee such great want of food, that women shall lose their milke, and therefore that the infants shall weepe ouer the empty and dried breasts of their mothers: which we see to fall out when people are pined away in great famins. But the most receiued sense, and that which agrees best, is; that by *teates*, vnder a figure we vnderstand *fields* and *vineyards*, which also is expressed in the very words of the text: because from them, as from the teats of our mothers, we daily sucke milke & blood as it were out of y^e earth. His meaning is then, that the fruits of the earth shall faile, because the Lord will so curse her, y^e shall not be able to yeeld any increase. Thus *men* shall lament in regard of this great penurie, as ouer the teats of their mother, which were wont to feede them with delicates. This sense I take to be fittest, as best agreeing to the naturall scope of the text: for it was necessarie it should serue as an exposition to that which is afterward added, touching the *pleasant fields*, and the *fruitfull vines*.

Verf. 13. *Upon the land of my people shall grow thornes and briars; yea, upon all the houses of ioy in the Citie of reioycing.*

HEE now confirms the former sentence, and shewes that the cause of this famine and barrennesse shall be, in regard that *thornes* and *briars* shall grow vpon the land; that is to say, the fields shall bee laid fallow and barren, whereas before they were fat and fruitfull.

Now this must needs be an horrible change for this Country, as we know, had the praise for fruitfulness about any other; not so much in respect of the soile, as by Gods blessing, who had said, I will giue you a land flowing with milke and hony: Exod. 3. 8. and 17. Hence (I say) came this fruitfulness of that land.

Whereas he calles it *the land of his people*; he preuents an obiection which they might thus make; what reason haue we to feare the barrennesse of that land, or that it should not yearly yeeld vs fruit, seeing God who is good vnto all, will be much more a nursing father to vs, and that in a more particular manner? They thought it then a thing utterly vnpossible, that this land being bestowed vpon them, who were the children of Abraham, should cuer be ouergrowne with thornes and briars. And thus the Prophet rebukes the Iewes the more sharply, because by their rebellion, they had not onely made void these blessings of God, but had also pulled downe his wrath so far vpon them, as to lay their fruitful land waste and barren.

The word *yea*, in the middle of the sentence, amplifies the doctrine: albeit some expound it, For; reading it thus: For gladnesse is in their houses. But this sense suites not well, in regard the construction of the words will not beare it. I rather thinke therefore that he enlargeth the sentence; as if he meant to say, that this calamitie shall not onely seize vpon the vtmost bounds of the land, but euen vpon the houses of ioy also; to wit, euen vpon those which were sumptuous and pleasant, where they were alwaies wont to solace themselues without let in times past.

But when the Prophet spake these things, I warrant you the people of that time laught a good (as we say) at him: neither could they heare such vnswaorie newes amiddest somanie delights which bewitched them. Nay, they tooke foule scorn to be so dealt withall, because of Gods promises, which they tooke to bee so sure, that they thought no want could euer befall them: but *Isaias* words haue all proved true for all that. By this example therefore let vs learne to vse prosperitie with sobriety, and so depend vpon Gods promises touching his blessings, to be powdered out vpon vs, that in the meane while we yee, de obedience to his word with a good conscience.

Vse prosperitie with sobriety.

Verf. 14. *"Because the palace shall be forsaken, and the noise of the Citie shall bee left; the tower and fortresse shall bee demnes for euer, and the delight of wilde Asses, and a pasture for flockes."*

HEE yet sets forth this desolation more at large: for, hauing in the former verse mentioned the house of magnificence; hee now adds the *palaces* and *Cities*: meaning to shew, that nothing (be it neuer so glorious or excellent) could bee exempted from this common

common deſolation. We ſee then that menſies are dazeled with their owne glorie vntill they liſt vp their eies towards heauen, and thus being ſweetly lulled aſleepe in their plentie, they grew feareleſſe and careleſſe of any thing. Therefore he tels them that all their pleaſant and gorgeous things in the land of Iudea, to wit, their *Cities, Pallaces, Caſtles & Fortreſſes* ſhould be laid vpon heapes and brought to nothing.

By the word *etur*, he againe admoniſheth them (as I haue touched before) that this wound ſhall not be cloſed vp againe in a yeere, but ſhould be long in healing; which ſhould anſwere in proportion to the length of time in which they had hardened themſelues in their vices; for had not the hand of God preſſed them long according to their ſubborne and rebellious nature, they would haue been readie forthwith to haue ruſhed into their iniquities aſreſh.

Verſ. 15. *Untill the Spirit be poured vpon vs from above, and the Wildernes become a fruitfull field, and the plenteous field be counted as a foreſt.*

Verſ. 10.

*Or, Carmel.

The Prophet had to deale as we know with the Iewes, amongſt whom the Lord had planted his Church, it was needfull therefore to leaue them ſome hope of ſaluation, leaſt they ſhould diſpaire in the middes of ſo many calamities. For albeit the Lord handles hypocrits roughlie becauſe they falſely ſhroude themſelues vnder the tide of being his people; yet is he inforced by one meanes or other to prouide for the good of his Saints. This promiſe is added therefore to put them in hope that God can not, nor will not forget his Couenant; howbeit for a time he ſcourgeth his children ſharplie with the rods of men; for he neuer ſo threatens, but he leaues hope and conſolation for the repentant to cheere vp and reſreſh their hearts, and that euen when it ſeemes heauen and earth ſhall goe together.

God neuer threatens fo ſharplie, but he ſtill leaues hope for the penitent.

And that they might the better taſte this conſolation which our Prophet ſets before them, he raiſeth vp their minds to the author of life. Wee ſee that when all things ſadge well, many eate and drinke till their ſkins crack, as they ſay: If ſamin pinch, then God is forgotten, and men renue for ſuccor to the earth. It is not without cauſe then that *Iſaiab* ſaith, *the Spirit ſhall come from above*, which warming the earth, ſhall cauſe the ſame to ſloriſh with new fruitfullnes. Neither do I doubt but he alludes to that ſentence of *Dauid*, Send forth thy *Spirit*, and they ſhall be created, and thou wilt renew the face of the earth, *Pſal. 104. 30.*

I 2

This word ſpirit hath two extents here: 1. ſo the reſtauration of earthly benefits.

Now in regard that he alſo ſets before them this ſigne as a token that God was reconciled vnto them, he therewithall aduerteth them, that the reſtauration of ſuch Church ſlowes only from his free grace, who can abolith barrennes as ſoone as it pleaſeth him in his fauor to diſtill ſome ſweet dewes from *above*: yea, ſo he can do it in an inſtant, becauſe

at the firſt he created all things of nothing, as if they had been before.

The expoſitors doe diuerſlie translate the latter part of this verſe, where he compares the deſert to *Carmel*: but as I haue ſhewed in the 29. Chapter verſ. 17. where there is the like phraſe of ſpeech, it ſeemes to me that the Prophet ſimply ſets forth the effect of this reſtauration: to wit, that the abundance of all things ſhall teſtifie that God is indeed appeaſed towards his people. For the places which were deſerts before ſhould be as *Carmel*, which was a fat & fruitfull ſoile, whence alſo it tooke his name.

Carmel alſo ſhall be as a deſert: that is to ſay, ſo fruitfull, that if it be compared as it is now with that which it ſhall be one day, it may well be called a deſert: for it is an amplification of the extraordinarie fruitfullnes of it; as if he ſhould ſay, The fields which now are laid fallow and beare nothing, ſhall bring forth frutes: and thoſe which are tilled, and are by nature apt to yeeld increaſe, ſhall wax ſo fruitfull, that the abundance which is now vpon them is but barrennes in compariſon of that which ſhall be hereafter. As if we ſhould compare the grounds of Sauoy, with thoſe of Sicilia or Calabria, we would ſay that it were but a deſert. In a word, he ſignifies that there ſhall be an incomparable fruitfullnes, which the faithfull ſhall enioy after they be reconciled vnto God; and all becauſe they may vnderſtand what loue he beares them by lading them with ſo many benefits.

Now *Iſaiab* ſo propheſieth here of *Hezekias* his kingdome, that therewithall he referres all things to the kingdome of Chriſt, as to the end and full accompliſhment thereof. Come we once to Chriſt, then muſt we expound all theſe things ſpiritually, that ſo we may know we are renewed, as ſoone as the Lord ſends *downe his ſpirit from above into our hearts*, of barren ground, to make them fruitfull. For till we be inſpired from *above* by this holy *Spirit*, we are rightlie compared to deſerts and parched grounds, ſeeing we bring forth nothing but thornes and buiſhes, and are vnfit naturallic to bring forth any good fruite. Thoſe therefore which in times paſt were fruitleſſe, being now regenerated by the Spirit of God, ſhall begin in ſome meaſure to bring forth fruite vnto him: and thoſe who before had ſome outward ſhew of goodnes, ſhall become ſo fruitfull after they be thus regenerated by the holy Ghoſt, that comparing the one eſtate with the other, the firſt will be iudged but as a deſert in reſpect of the latter: for all the goodly works that men do before Chriſt hath regenerated them, are but ſo many glorious finnes. Therefore when wee ſee the Church oppreſſed euen vnto death, and that her condition ſeemes very lamentable, let vs liſt vp our eies to heauen, and depend whollie vpon theſe promiſes.

The ſecond extent.

Verſ. 16. *And Iudgement ſhall dwell in the deſart, and Iuſtice ſhall remaine in the fruitfull field.*

The Prophet heere teacheth wherein the true glorie of the Church conſiſts, to wit,

Wherein the true glory of the Church conſiſts.

F f when

when *Iustice* and *Iudgements* gets the vpper hand: for men are not to resemble beasts in seeking only after the abundance of earthlie and transitorie things. By this it appears sufficientlie, that the Iewes were not held by the doctrine of the law in the hope of temporarie benefits only, as some fantasticall spirits affirme: but they were by it commanded to rest in that which was the principall, to wit, that *Iustice* and *Iudgements* should flourish amongst them: neither is it to be doubted but they knew well enough that true felicitie consisted therein. We are therefore first of all to seeke the kingdome of God, and the righteousnes thereof, and not to place our ioy and happines in the abundance of wheat and wine, as hogges that feede in the trough. For as *Zacharie* sings in Luk. 1. 75. The end of our deliuerance from sinne and Satan, and of all the blessings we receive from God, is, that we should serue him in holines and in righteousnes all the dayes of our life.

By *Iustice* and *Iudgement* then he vnderstands all vprightnes, as we haue often shewed before. See *Verf. 11*. Which albeit they properlie concerne the equitie which we ought to vse one towards another: notwithstanding, because it is vsuall in the Scriptures by the duties of the second table to vnderstand the obseruation of the whole law, the Prophet here vnder a part comprehends religion and the true seruice of God. But the Prophets are wont especiallie to mention the duties of loue and those things that concerne the second table, because we chiefe lie manifest vnto men thereby what affection and loue wee beare vnto God. Now where he saith, that *Iustice* and *Iudgement* shall also dwell in the desert as well as in y^e plowed fields: it so much the better appears that such plenty of blessings was promised, that the beholding thereof should put men in minde of that great increase which they had seene in the fields before, was but barrennes now in respect thereof.

* Or, effe.

*Verf. 17. And the Worke of Iustice shall be peace, euen the * Worke of Iustice and quietnes, and assurance for euer.*

EVEN now he enuaied against that peace in which the Iewes were lulled asleepe. See *verse 9, 10, 11*. But heere he promiseth a peace contrarie to that, which shall be a testimonie of Gods loue towards them, who will keepe them faithfullie after he hath received them into his fauour. The close opposition betweene that *bruiſh* peace, which the wicked thought they had gotten when they committed all sorts of wickednes, whilſt they lay snoring therein also without repentance, and *this* peace which the children of God enioy by a godly and *iust* life, is here to be noted. For *Isaiah* stirres vs vp to couet after this latter; and teacheth vs to be assured that those with whom God is appeased, shall enioy a peace that is blessed and happie in deed. Thus he sets *integritie* before them for the object of their desires, that so they may attaine that peace which passeth vnderstanding: for there

They that would enioy an happy peace, must

is no better meanes to liue such a peaceable life as is free from anyance, then in absteini-
labour after an innocent life.
ing from euill, and doing of good, as *S. Peter* testifieth in his first Epistle, Chap. 3. *verf. 13*.

But our Prophet leades them higher, to wit, that in liuing holie and iustlie, they shall keepe themselves in Gods fauour. For is it not a thing altogether vnreasonable, that the wicked should expect peace, when they themselves will continuallie make warre against God? In deed there is none but desires peace; yea, who is he that can not highlie extoll it? but in the meane while themselves are the cause why enemies are raised vp against them, for they trouble heauen and earth by heapes as it were with their wickednes. Now in regard that this peace which God giues is *perpetuall*, *Isaiah* compares it with that which lasts but for a moment.

The wicked would faine enioy peace, whilſt they make open war against God.

In that he calles peace *the effect of Iustice*, let vs thence learne that warres proceede from Gods wrath, which we set on fire by our rebellion, whereas peace on the contrarie proceeds from his blessing. When therefore we see the enemies boile with rage, exalting themselves furiously against vs, let vs seeke no other matter to allay that heate then true conuersion: for our God will easily calme and quiet tumults, we being at one with him: for he it is as the Psalmist saith, which makes warres to cease vnto the ends of the earth: he breakes the bow and knapeth the speares in sunder, and burnes the chariots with fire, *Psal. 46. 9*, but we haue told you before that these things belong not only to the time of *Herzlians*, but ought also to be referred vnto Christ.

Warres proceed from Gods wrath, which we set on fire by our finnes. Our sound and sincere conuersion, the oonly meanes to still and quiet the rage of our enemies.

*Verf. 18. And my people shall dwell in the tabernacles of peace, and in sure dwellings, and in * safe resting-places.*

* Or, quiet resting-places. Peace, the fruite of Iustice.

AS he hath shewed that spirituall *Iustice* is that which hath her seate in the hearts of men, the same must be said of *peace*, which is the fruite of it. Thus when we heare of *sure dwelling places*, and *resting-places*, let vs remember what *Paul* saith, *Rom. 5. 1*. Being iustified by faith, we haue peace with God. This peace Christ left with his Disciples, which the world could not giue vnto them, *Iohn 14. 27*. And what maruell? For as the same Apostle teacheth, *Phil. 4. 7*. This peace passeth all vnderstanding. Hauing once obtained this *Iustice*, we shall be no more disquieted with inward terrors, as we were whē we felt that God was angrie with vs. The wicked conscience is alwaies at warres with it selfe, and in continuall anguish. The wicked therefore must needs be tossed to and fro with diuers garboiles: for he that is destitute of righteousnes, can neuer be in any sound peace of conscience. But where Christ reignes, there only is the true peace to be found, which the faithfull haue in assurance, which makes the come without feare before the heauenlie throne, not so much in respect of their owne picie, as for that they rest themselves vpon the sure rock of Gods mercies in Christ. Hence we gather, that Christ reignes not where consciences

He that is destitute of the imputation of Christs righteousnes, can neuer haue found peace.

ees are troubled and toſſed to and fro with diuers doubtings; in which caſe the Papiſts muſt of neceſſitie be: yea, and all others that caſt not themſelues vpon the meritorious ſacrifices of Chriſt, and vpon that purgation which he hath purchaſed for vs,

Verſ. 19. When it haileth, it ſhall fall on the foreſt; and the Citie ſhall be ſet in the lower place.

WE told you before, that the Prophets were often wont to ſet forth the kingdome of Chriſt vnder ſhadowes; becauſe they borrowed ſimilitudes from an earthly kingdome, for otherwiſe (in reſpect of our dulnes) we could hardly be brought to comprehend this ineſtimable treaſure of all good things. The meaning is, that the Lord will remove far off from his people, all incombrances and diſcommodities, and will cauſe them to fall vpon others. Now becauſe in this world were ſubiect to diuers tempeſts and vexations, ſo as wee muſt indure raine, hail, windes, and whirle windes: he ſaith that God by his admirable prouidence will exempt vs from the harme we might receiue by theſe things, becauſe the violence thereof ſhall be driuen by him vpon thoſe of other places.

By *foreſts*, hee meanes vaſt and deſert places, where none inhabits. By this we are aduerſed, that being vnder the protection of Ieſus Chriſt, we are ſo freed from all dangers and inconueniences, that notwithstanding there are many hailes and tempeſts readie to fall vpon our heads: but the Lord is our deliuerer, who either turnes away theſe eminent perils, or frees them who are in danger to take hurt by them. And that hee might the better confirme that which he ſaid touching *peace*; he ſaith, that the *Cities* which ſtood in the *plaine*, ſhall be out of danger; for they were wont then to build their *Cities* vpon high places, the rather to prevent aſſaults. Now hee ſaith, that God will ſo defend his people, that they ſhall neede none of theſe vſuall munitions, becauſe the *Cities* ſhall bee ſafe, though they ſtand in the *vallies*; neither ſhall they receiue any hurt, albeit they lie open to the furie of the enemy. Why ſo? For the hand of the Lord will ſaue and keepe them. Wil we be ſecure then? Let vs not truſt in horſes, nor chariots, nor yet in defended Cities, leſt the Lord ſuddenly diſlodge vs: but ſeeing our good and heavenly Father vouchſaſeth to take care of our ſaluation, let the protection of ſo good a gardian ſuffice vs.

Verſ. 20. Blessed are ye that ſow

vpon all waters; and drine thither the feet of the Ox and the Aſſe.

HE ſhewes how great the change ſhall be, when Chriſt begins to reigne. For hee ſaid before, that there ſhould be ſuch a deſolation, that *thornes* and *bruiſes* ſhould cover the face of the holy land, that *ſtately houſes* ſhould be laid on heaps, and the *Cities* and *palaces* utterly rased. All theſe things were to fall out when the Country ſhould be ſpoiled by continuall incuſions of the enemy: but now he ſaith they ſhall be *bleſſed*, becauſe God will giue them the abundance of all things. He adorneth and decketh this fruitfulneſſe with figuratiue ſpeeches, which may be expounded in plaine words; to wit; *that they ſhall ſow in marriſh grounds, and ſhall ſeede their caſtill in thoſe places without feare*.

By *waters*, ſome vnderſtand a fat and fruitful ſoile: but I take it otherwiſe, becauſe of the generallitie of the particule *All*: for in calling them *all waters*, it is as if hee had ſaid, that euen *theſe places* which were covered with *waters*, ſhould be fit for ſilage: ſo as they ſhall not neede to feare the ſpoiling of their ſeede. It is our manner alſo to drue *Oxen*, *Aſſes*, and other beaſts out of the fields that are ſown, leſt they ſhould crop off, or mar the corne. But he ſaith here, that it ſhall be ſo thicke and faire vpon the ground, that *Oxen* and *Aſſes* muſt be *driven thither* to eate the firſt growth, as they vſually doe when corne is too ranke.

Hee calles them *bleſſed*, according to the vſuall Hebrew phraſe, if becauſe their labour ſhould not be in vaine. If it be objected that there was neuer ſeene ſuch a fruitfulneſſe of the earth, vnder the kingdome of Chriſt: I confeſſe that in the times wherein God hath provided for his children in greateſt plenty, yet ſome tokens of his curſe might alwaies bee perceiued, wherein the whole race of mankind is wrapped, by reaſon of *Adams* reuolt. But becauſe the inheritance of this world was reſtored to the faithfull, by the meanes of Ieſus Chriſt, the Prophets vpon good reaſon affirme, that hee will renew the earth in ſuch wiſe, that it being purged againe from her filthineſſe, ſhee ſhall receiue her firſt beautie. Thoſe that reply, that this is not yet fulfilled, ought to take a view of themſelues, to ſee whether they be yet wholly cleaſed from all their ſinnes. And if they be as yet far off from that ſpirituall righteousneſſe, ſpoken of verſ. 16 let vs bee contented to feele this *bleſſing*, according to the meaſure of our regeneration; which ſhall neuer be perfected in vs, till hauing put off the infirmitie of the fleſh, wee be fully renewed after the image of God, in true holineſſe and righteousneſſe.

Obiecta
Anſ.

If thou ſee not the full accompliſhment of theſe promiſes, impute it onely to thy imperfect obedience: & be content to feele this bleſſing according to the meaſure of thy regeneration.

Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth them out of all: *Plal. 34. 19.*

THE XXXII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Woe to thee that spoilest and wast not spoiled; and dost Wickedly, and thou shalt cease to spoile, thou shalt bee spoiled; When thou shalt make an end of doing Wickedly.*

Whither this woe be pronounced against the Caldeans.



LF we expound this of the Caldeans, the scope of the place will very well beare it. For seeing in chap. 32. 15. hee promised freedome to the vanquished, it was high time for him now to direct his speech against the vanquishers. Not onely that, but the faithfull also stood in need to be confirmed in particular manner, to the end they might be drawne to beleue this propheticke, which was almost incredible. It was verie unlikely that such a Monarchie could suddenly be brought to nought; or that these poore prisoners, destitute of all hope, should by and by be set at libertie, to returne into their owne Country. The Iewes therefore you see, might very well haue fainted in waiting for any succour in such extremities, vnlesse the Prophet had prevented the same by this and the like instructions. He takes away the occasions then which might otherwise haue incited and prouoked them to dispaire, when the Caldeans led them captiue into Babylon; for they then saw no performance at all of these promises, but felt the cleane contrary.

Or, against the Assyrians.

Notwithstanding, because all are of opinion, that this is the beginning of a new sermon, and that these words are directed against *Senacherib* and his host. I also am drawn to admit, that the Prophet here threatens the Assyrians, with the chastisement of their vniust oppressions and cruelties by them committed, against their neighbours; that so comfort might bee given by meanes hereof, to the comfortlesse and oppressed. His meaning is then, that there shall be a wonderfull change when this flourishing estate of Ninieue shall be brought to ruin, albeit it seemed impregnable. Why so? Because the Caldeans should come against it, and should reuenge the cruelties which the Assyrians had exercised against so many Countries. And to the end his words might haue the greater efficacy, he addresseth his speech euen to the Assyrians, saying; *Ho, thou which spoilest*; as if he should say; *thou hast now libertie to range abroad at thy pleasure, no man darre resist thee; but a day will come, wherein others shall make their pray vpon thee, as thou hast done vpon them.*

The Caldeans sent to reuenge the cruelties committed by the Assyrians.

He speaks in the singular number, but it is by a noune collective; which is an vsuall phrase of speech. Others read it by an interrogation, *Shalt thou not be spoiled?* Thin-

kest thou thy violences shall escape vnpunished? No, they shall one day render thee like for like. But we may follow the vsuall interpretation, by which *Isaiah* amplifies the iniquitie of the enemy, who was so greedie after his pray, that he spared none: no not those innocents which neuer wronged him. Wherein we may behold a signe of extreme crueltie, I am very willing to receiue this exposition then; to wit, that in this first member, he describes the disposition of the Assyrians; shewing that they were mercilesse theues and robbers: and further enlargeth their crueltie, in regard they vexed and spoiled those which neuer hurt the: and all to this end, that when the Iewes should behold such wickednesses, they might first be brought to consider of Gods iustice therein; and in the second place, that hee would not suffer such barbaritie to escape vnpunished.

When thou shalt cease.] This is the second part of this verse, in which the Prophet shewes, that the Assyrians do now spoile, because the Lord lets them run riot: but the time of their restraint draws on, so as they shall haue no more power of doing hurt. If it were said, they shall cease to spoile, when they were able to spoile no longer; the sense would be too barré. Our Prophet therefore mounts higher; to wit, that the time will come, that they shall indeed cease to spoile, because the Lord will tame them, and take downe the pride of their power. Which is as much as if he had said; euen then, when thou shalt be at the highest. Hence we may learne, that tyrants haue their terme limited, which they shall not passe. They rob and spoile whilest they haue run the length of their chaine, but when they are come to the end of it, they shall be constrained to stay there, as at their last exploit. Let this consolation then cheere vp our hearts, when we see tyrants take their swinge, and doe furiously band themselves against the poore Church: for the Lord will calme their rage well enough; and by how much the more they haue exercised their crueltie; so much the more shall God heape his wrath vpon them. The Lord will cut them off in a moment; for hee will raise vp enemies against them, which shall sacke and spoile them forthwith, and shall reward them that which they haue done to others.

Tyrants haue their terme limited, which they shall not passe.

Aconsolation.

We are here also to note Gods prouidence in the change of kingdomes; for vnbeleeuers thinke that all things are huddled together by the hand of fortune: but it is our parts to looke higher; to wit, that the Lord rewards the wicked according to their wickednesse; so as in the end, they shall feel by the effects, that he will not suffer the wrongs to goe vnrecompenced, which they haue done to the innocents.

Gods prouidence seen in the change of kingdome.

The euents of things haue confirmed the truth of this propheticke: for soone after the Caldeans subdued Ninieue, who by this meanes

The euents of things haue confirmed the truth of this propheticke.

loſt their Monarchie; yea, and in few yeares it was rased and brought into obſolution, that the might loſe her name. Now in reſpect that *Babylon* which ſucceeded it, was no leſſe replenished with robberies; the Prophet doth rightly affirme that *other robbers* ſhall deſtray it, and the Monarchie being ſubdued, they ſhall pill and take to themſelves that which the Chaldeans had purloined from others.

Verſ. 2. *O Lord, haue mercie vpon vs, We haue waited for thee: be thou, which waſt their arme in the morning, our help alſo in the time of trouble.*

The Prophet adds this ſentence, to ſhew the faithfull whereunto they ſhould haue their refuge in ſuch diſtreſſes; yea, euen then when there ſeemed to be no hope of ſaluation: to wit, vnto prayers; beſeeching God that theſe promiſes might take effect when they ſhould be in the greateſt miſerie, and the enemies power at the higheſt ſo oppreſſe them. We haue neede to obſerue this order diligentlie, for the Prophet hath no ſooner propounded theſe promiſes vnto them, but he forthwith exhorts them vnto prayer. Yea, ſuddenlie breaking off his ſpeech, he comes abrupte as it were vnto inuocation: for he ſaw how hard a thing it was for the Jewes who were in ſuch miſerie to overcome that feare wherewith they were almoſt ouerwhelmed. It is not to be doubted but the Lord haſtens to performe the promiſes which he hath made to his children; yet for a while he deſerres to do it, that he might thereby exerciſe our patience. But if it come once to waiting, no conſtancie nor perſeuerance at all is to be found in vs, for our hearts are by and by danted and broken in ſunder. Is it not needfull then to haue our recourſe vnto prayers; for thereby are our ſpirits cheered and fortified, when we caſt our eye vpon the Lord, by whoſe only diſcretion we get our of all the agonies and anguiſhes which preſſe vs, yet let vs patientlie wait in aſſured hope for that which he hath promiſed: for our God is a faithfull God, he neither will, nor can deceiue vs.

Our Prophet further admoniſteth the Jewes not only to conſider in generall the iudgement of God againſt the Aſſyrians, but alſo to behold therein his fatherlie loue towards his choſen people: as if he ſhould ſay, the Aſſyrians ſhall be ſpoiled in deed, yet not ſo much to receiue the iuſt reward of their couetouſnes and crueltie: as that God thereby means to ſhew what care he hath for the ſaluation of his Church. Moreouer when he exhorts them to cry for mercie, therein he ſets forth our miſerie. Then, to the end the faithfull might encourage themſelves in ſeeking to obtaine fauor, they reſuſe that they waited vpon this God on whom they called. For in deed, our prayers are vaine and friuolous, vneſſe they be grounded on this principle, *Let thy mercie o Lord be vpon vs* (ſaith Dauid) *as we haue truſted in thee.* Pſal. 33. 22. For it were preſumption otherwiſe to preſſe into the preſence of God, if he gaue vs not en-

trance by his call: who as he for his part graciouslie inuites vs to come vnto him, ſo muſt we on the other ſide be ready to yeeld our ſelves obedient to his word as oft as we approach neere vnto him.

Next of all, patience muſt be ioined with faith, without which, we be vnworthie to be heard, becauſe we call not vpon God with confidence. Now faith only is the mother of prayer, as y Scripture often teſtifies in many places, without which what remains but hypocriſie, a vice moſt detestable before God about all others. Hence it alſo appears that Chriſtianitie is baniſhed out of the whole kingdome of Poperie: for if Gods choſeſt ſeruiſe conſiſt in prayer, and they know not what true prayer is (becauſe they will haue men continually to doubt, and accuſe the faith of the Saints of preſumption) how can their ſeruiſe be acceptable vnto God? Can that be a lawfull prayer which is made in doubting and without reſting aſſuredly vpon Gods promiſes? Thoſe great Rabbins which will be called Doctours of Diuinitie (forſooth) are they not more ſimple in this matter then little children? Certainly our children vnderſtand what prayer is better then they, and haue more godly affection. Wee may alſo learne from this text that faith is proued by afflictions, and the true triall of it conſiſts in a conſtant vndergoing of all dangers and aſſaults, and in reſting ſecurely vpon the word and promiſe of God. For thus we make it manifeſt that we haue truly beleued.

As touching that which followes, *Thou which waſt their arme, &c.* Others tranſlate, as if it were a continued prayer; Be thou our arme in the morning, and our help in the time of trouble. And whereas the faithfull ſpeake in the third perſon, they take it for a change much vſed among the Hebrewes. But I thinke the Prophet hath another meaning, that is, rather to ſet forth the ardent deſire which is conceiued from the conſideration of former benefits. And therefore he thinks theſe words *arme of the morning* a ſtille added; in which muſt be ſupplied, *Thou which waſt*, and ſo the faithfull let before them the fauours which God beſtowed vpon their fathers. As if he ſhould ſay, *Lord, thou haſt heard our fathers prayers; and when they cried vnto thee thou gaueſt them help. Be thou now our ſuccor and ſaluation in our afflictions.*

Arme and Saluation, differ in this; that *arme* is taken for the power which the Lord ſhewed in defending his Church before it was afflicted; and *ſaluation*, for the deliuerance thereof when ſhe ſeemed vtterlie waſted. He records the benefits then which the Lord had done to the fathers, that he might moue him to beſtow the like fauor vpon their children: as if he ſhould ſay, *Lord, thou haſt heretofore turned away the enils which were reade ſo ſeaſe vpon thy Church; and by thy fauor ſhe flouriſhed and prospered: when ſhe was in trouble thou deliueredſt her: canſt thou now do leſſe for our ſaltes, ſeeing it is thy propriety to relieue thy ſeruants when all hope in men is paſt.*

The particle *alſo* hath great force in it to confirme our faith, and to acertaine vs that

The promiſes begets faith, faith brings forth prayer. Pſal 50. 15. Patience muſt vnderſtop faith and prayer. Faith is proued by afflictions.

Papiſts know not what true prayer is.

Faith is proued by afflictions.

See Pſal. 22. 4-5.

Gods promiſes ſhould forthwith kindle in vs an ardent affection of prayers.

Deut. 7. 9.

God iudgeth the enemies of his church not only to recompence the wrongs and cruelties they haue done her into their own boſoms, but alſo to maniſeſt the care he hath of her ſaluation.

God, who alwaies continues like himselfe and neuer degenerates from his nature, being euer immutable, will deliuer vs also; for such a one the faithfull haue found him to be. Let vs remember therefore in all extremities how the Lord hath been helpfull vnto our fathers that trusted in his helpe, and hath deliuered them, that thence we may conclude, he will no more faile vs, then he hath done them.

Psal. 22. 4.

*Or, voice.
*Or, peoples.

Verf. 3. *At the noise of the tumult the people fled: at thine exalting the nations were scattered.*

Hee returnes now to the former doctrine; or rather continues it; hauing in the midst thereof placed a brieue exclamation. First, hee shewed that the Assyrians should be destroyed, albeit they then seemed out of danger. Now he calles forth the Iewes to be eyewitnesses of the same: for the multitudes of the enemies being in a maner infinit, euerie one quaked and thought them inuincible. *Isaiah* therefore sets before their eyes their fearfull ruin, and that no lesse then if it were already come to pass. He speaks in the plural number, calling them *peoples*, because the Monarchy of the Assyrians was compact of many nations, and their Campe was gathered out of many Countreies. But be it their numbers were so infinit. What then? Yet they shall miserably perish, saith our Prophet.

Some expound the *exaltation*, Manifestation; whereby God did notably shew his power; but I take it more simply; to wit, that the Lord, who seemed before to sleep (as it were) whilst the Caldeans spoiled and pillaged at their pleasure, shall notwithstanding suddenly awake, and come forth of his place. Neither is it to be doubted, but the enemy proudly derided this his patience, as if the God of Israel had been subdued and overcome; but in the end he rose vp, and being set in his throne, he reuenged himselfe vpon the wickednesse of his enemies to the full. There is here then a close opposition betweene this *exalting*, and that appearance of weaknesse which seemed to bee in the Lord for a time, whilst hee suffered his people to be spoiled and wasted.

By the *voice of the tumult*, some thinke the Lord would put his enemies to flight, onely with a *noise*: but I feare lest this interpretation should be more subtile then sound. I willingly take the word *voice* then, for the noise which should moue the Medes and Persians.

Verf. 4. *And your spoile shall be gathered like the gathering of caterpillers: and he shall goe against him like the leaping of the grasshoppers.*

HE speaks here of the Assyrians. Vnlesse many had rather referre it vnto the Iewes, and so take the word *spoil*, in the actiue signification; albeit the first sense agrees best. Now

this change of persons giues great vehemencie to the propheticie, in that he so plainly aduanceth himselfe against such proud aduersaries, and doth as it were name them. Yet some doubt whether he speaks heere of the final destruction of this nation, or of that discomfiture in which the host of *Sennacherib* was destroyed before the walls of Ierusalem, by the hand of the Angell. All expositors almost haue followed this latter opinion, which notwithstanding, as I think, is too much constrained. For it seemes the Prophet meant to say somewhat more in the beginning of the Chapter, when he spake of the destruction of this people. Yea, as I haue touched a little before, this propheticie may be extended further off; so as it may comprehend also the Caldeans, which were the last enemies of the Iewish Church. But not to stand much vpon it, it appears sufficiently that the Prophet directs his speech against the Monarchy of the Ninuities.

Now hee compares this warlike people to *caterpillars*, because they should haue no power to resist, but shall tremble and be so overtaken with feare, that they shall be taken vp by troopes and heapes. The similitude is verie fit: and *Nahum* vseth it, Chap. 3. 15. although somewhat in a different sense. Wee know that this kind of vermin do much hurt, especially to trees; so as they may well be called the calamitie of the earth. But in regard they are void of defence, albeit they flie in troopes; we know that little children can easilie shake them downe, gather them vp, and kill them by heapes, as many as they meete withall. Our Prophet saith, that the like shall befall to these insatiable robbers: for albeit in that trade they had done much hurt a long time together, yet in the end they should bee easilie ruinated, because being faint and feeble hearted, they shall fall into the hands of their enemies, in such wise, that the riches which were hoorded vp in Ninie by theft, should bee caried into Babylon.

The other similitude of the *grasshoppers* is added, to shew that the Caldeans shall come vp *leaping* as it were to deuoure the Countrey. For as these little wormes eate vp all before them; so they flie without ceasing, and in *leaping* nimble vp and downe, they mar all the fruits of the earth: whereas others refer this to the Assyrians, as if the Prophet compared them to *grasshoppers*, because it was easie to scatter them one from another, it agrees not: for the Prophet sets the *armie of grasshoppers* in battel aray as it were, who by their leaping should ouerspread the earth: and very fitly opposeth them to the caterpillers, respecting herein as well the insatiable couetousnesse as the multitudes of the Assyrians and Caldeans.

Verf. 5. *The Lord is exalted, for hee dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with iudgement and iustice.*

HE sets that forth at large, which he spake heretwile touching Gods exaltation, going

The first
Simile.The second
Simile.*The Lord
which dwells
in the most
high places
is exalted.
He hab. 6. c.

ing on with the ſame argument which was handled before; to wit, that in the deſtruction of ſo famous a Monarchy, men ſhould know how deere and precious the ſafetie of the Church is vnto him, ſeeing for her ſake he will roote out Nimue the Queene of Cities, with her inhabitants alſo. Now this aduerſement is wonderfull neceſſarie: for hereby we perceiue, that God ſpares not the prophane & wicked; for in ſetting himſelfe againſt their rage, he mindes to let his elect ſee what tender care he hath ouer them.

Fiſt hee ſaith, *the Lord is exalted on high*: whereas on the contrary, the wicked thought to haue beaten him downe to the ground, in the deſtruction of his people. But to the end they ſhould not thinke God to be like vnto thoſe, who being overcome, reconer new ſtrength vnto them when things are in better plight (as often it falles out in the world, that ſuch win that at one time, which before they had loſt at another) he ſaith expreſly, *ŷ God is exalted in the preſence of all*, and that ſuch an high dignitie belongs vnto him, becauſe he *dwels in the heauens*. Whence it appeares, that he is neuer deſtroyed of his diuine right, howſeuer often times hee ſuffers his power to be hid; but when it ſeemes beſt vnto him, he will manifeſt his greatneſſe in the view of the whole world: for *dwelling in heauen*, as wee know, ſignifies an imperial ſoueraignty vnder which the whole world is ſubiected. Thus he ſhewes, not onely that God can eaſily overthrow all the pride of fleſh; but alſo concludes from the nature of God, that hee muſt needs ſhew forth his glory at the laſt, when the wicked fall to deſpiſing of him: for otherwiſe he ſhould renounce himſelfe.

Where hee ſaith, that Zion was filled with *iudgement and iuſtice*, it is another confirmation; to wit, that God will ſhew ſignes of his ſpecial fauour, when the Iewes ſhall be deliuered from the tyrannie of the Caldeans. And it was no leſſe then needfull, to ſee the *author of ſo great a benefit before their eyes*: for we ſee how peruerſly we darken his glorie by our ingratitude. To be filled with iudgement and iudgement, ſignifies, that God will liberally and abundantly ſhed abroad his grace in the reſtauration of his Church. Neither will the ſenſe be much impertinent, if we refer this to a right polittique order, when all things are juſtly and well managed: for without that, the Church ſhall neuer flouriſh, though all things elſe ſucceed according to our wiſh. We muſt meaſure our prosperous eſtate then by *iudgement and iudgement rightly executed*, and not by the ouerflowing of theſe corruptible things.

Verſ. 6. *And there ſhall be ſtabilitie of thy times, ſtrength, ſaluation, wiſdome, and knowledge: for the feare of the Lord ſhall be his treaſure.*

Hee promiſeth that the eſtate of the kingdom ſhall ſtill be happie and glorious vnder *Hezechias*, hauing reſpect principally to that woſull and miſerable ſcattering which

was ſcene in *Achaz* his daies. For albeit the enemy was expelled, yet was there ſmall hope that the Iewes (being in ſuch extreme) ſhould haue recouered their fiſt condition. As touching the words, ſome tranſlate thus; There ſhall bee in thy times, *uirtue, ſtrength, and ſaluation*: as if the Prophet ſhould relate what felicitie the people ſhould inioy vnder this holy King: and they thinke that euery word contains in it ſo many benefits of God. Others take the word *ſtabilitie*, for fidelitic; as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; that it ſhould bee in ſtead of ſaluation and ſtrength. Otherſome draw a ſenſe from hence a little differing; to wit, that *ſtrength, ſaluation, and knowledge*, ſhall bee *ſtable* vnder *Hezechias*. But when I ſcan the words of the Prophet conſiderately, I had rather make another diſtinction; to wit, that *ſtabilitie, ſtrength, and ſaluation ſhall reigne in wiſdome and knowledge* vnder *Hezechias*: and ſo, that which is by and by added, *the feare of the Lord ſhall be the treaſure* of this good King, will follow and agree well. For in time of peace, euery one deſires to be ſecured: yet how few are there that care to *uſe* the meanes to inioy ſo greata benefit? Nay, doe not the moſt part pamper themſelues as ſwine in the ſtie; ſo as whileſt blind couetouſneſſe drawes all the world after things earthly, few make any reckoning of that incomprehenſible light of the heavenly doctrine.

The Prophets meaning thinke is, that the Churches felicitie ſhall be *ſtable*, when *uirtue* and *knowledge* beares ſway therein, and that *ſtrength* ſhall long indure, when the *knowledge of God* is aduanced: thirdly, that eternal ſaluation ſhall dwell there; when men ſhall be taught rightly to know it. This is a verie excellent place: from whence we may learne, that ingratitude ſhuts out Gods bleſſings from vs: that is, when we forſake them to walow our ſelues in earthly and carnall deſires; alſo, that although all the benefits we could imagin or deſire, were giuen vnto vs, yet ſhall all turne to our ruine and deſtruction, vnleſſe they bee ſeaſoned with the ſalt of faith and knowledge.

Wee may therefore hence conclude, that the Church hath no *ſtrength*, vnleſſe the *knowledge of God* preceede all other benefits, and that the then truly flouriſheth, whileſt ſhe willingly confeſſeth to hold all the graces ſhee hath of Gods free bountie. But where this light of the word is wanting, and the true knowledge of God is either dimmed, or put out, the greateſt proſperitie we can inioy, is worſe then all the miſeries the world can afford. I therefore refer *ſtabilitie, ſtrength, and ſaluation*, to one & the ſame thing; to wit, that the Church ſhall haue ſtabilitie, when blindneſſe and error being baniſhed, men ſhall begin to learne the knowledge of God.

By this wee ſee what Church there is amongſt the Papiffs, (a pompous and glorious one it is indeed in outward ſhew); but where is this knowledge? Therefore can the not be ſtable; neither is ſhe the Church of God. If the Lord then ſhew vs that fauour, that the light of faith may ſhine truly amongſt vs, o-

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No benefits of God ſweet and ſuorie to vs, vnleſſe they be ſeaſoned with the ſalt of faith and knowledge. Where the light of Gods word is quenched, our greateſt proſperitie is worſe then the worſt thing the world can afford with- out it.

He hath filled.

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ther blessings no doubt shall easily flow vnto vs: and if it fall cut we be shaken with diuers stormes, yet God will vphold vs alwaies with his hand. Now when he saith, *thy times*, he speakes to *Hezekias*, not as to a priuat person, but as to the head of the people, vnder whom also the whole bodie is comprehended.

But seeing the kingdome of *Hezekias* was but a little shadow of Christ his kingdome as we haue touched before, these things therefore ought to be referred vnto Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of *wisdom* and *knowledge*. We are also to note these titles which are vsed to set forth the commendation of Gods word, and the doctrine of the Gospell: *S. Paul* also doth the like, *Coloss. 1.9.* when he saith, *Teaching in all knowledge and wisdom*: for by this praise, he extols the dignitie of the Gospell. Whence we also gather, that where Iesus Christ is not truly knowne, there men are destitute of true *wisdom*, although they be expert in all other sciences, which without this are all but vanitie.

Morcouer it seemes *the feare of God* should be added for an exposition, that the Prophet might the better manifest that the knowledge whereof he spake was the gouernesse of pietie, being neither idle nor vaine, but penetrating with efficacie into our hearts to conforme vs to the *feare of God*. See therefore why this *feare* is elsewhere called *knowledge*, *Prou. 1.9.* and *9. 10.* yea, the beginning of it, that is to say, the summe and principall part of wisdom. And those deceue themselves which take the word beginning for the first rudimets or elements, seeing *Saomon* means the beginning, and the end: for as men are fooles vntill they haue submitted themselves vnto the word of God, so the perfection of wisdom flows from teachableness, or the obedience of faith. The *feare of God* then is called his *treasure*, because without it all prosperitie is but miserie: whence it yet further appears that all the parts of a prosperous life consists in the knowledge of God, which we attaine by faith.

Also vnder the person of this king he shews that it is an inestimable *treasure* to serue God in such deuotion and humilitie as is meete: and further he esteemes all them miserable and forlorne people which are void of this *feare of God*. On the contrarie, blessed and happie are all those which *feare* him, albeit of the world they be iudged the most miserable of all others. But what *feare* speaks he of here? Euen of that which containes in it true obedience, and a reformation of our minds and affections. For the wicked haue a feare of God, but they feare him as malefactors doe their Iudge. Such a *feare* deserues no such praise, because it proceeds not from the true knowledge of God, nor from a readie desire to serue him. It therefore is directlie contrarie to that *wisdom* whereof our Prophet speaks, who hath so applied these things vnto *Hezekias*, that in the meane while they also appertaine to the whole bodie of the people, as we haue said before. Whence we gather, that they haue relation vnto the people as well as the king: but much more vnto Christ,

who was filled with the *Spirit of the feare of the Lord* (as we haue seene in the *11. Chapter*) to make vs partakers with him of y^e same grace.

Verf. 7. Behold, their messengers shall crie Without, and the Ambassadors of peace shall weepe bitterlie.

8. The paths are wast: the wayfaring man ceaseth: he hath broken the Covenant: he hath condemned the Cities: he regardeth no man.

IT is not very certaine whether *Isaiah* here mentions the perplexitie and danger in which the Iewes were, the rather to set forth the greatnes of their deluerance: or, whether he foretels the calamitie which was to come, that the faithfull should not faint vnderneath it. For mine owne part, I thinke this is not to be referred to the historie of that which already happened: for in regard, that sharp and sore temptations were at hand, it was necessarie that the faithfull should be fortified to wait patientlie for the help of God euen then whē things should be growne desperate. Howsoeuer it be, it is a woull and lamentable description of the wast of the Church; that in these dangers the faithfull might hold fast their confidence: secondly, that seeing themselves deliuered, they might acknowledge they were no other way rid from them but by the wonderfull power of God.

The signe of a desperate estate is noted out, when he saith, that the *Ambassadors* which were sent to appease this tyrant, could obtaine no truce, for which cause they returned with bitter *sorrow* and *teares*, not being able to hide the same in their journey, but were willing to manifest to others what was in their hearts, in regard they were in such a wretched estate. No doubt but *Sennacherib* with proud and scornfull reproaches refused the conditions of peace which were offered him, so as the *Ambassadors* were constrained openly to lament and *crie*, as hauing forgotten the dignitie of their persons, and letted not to publish the answer which this tyrant gaue them, euen before they returned to the King their master to giue an account of their Ambassage. Others by the *Ambassadors of peace*, vnderstand those which were wont to proclaime peace: but this interpretation is vnapt, and as I thinke, too farre fetched. By the *Ambassadors of peace*, I vnderstand those which were sent to appease *Senacherib*, and to redeeme peace with any conditions.

In the next verse he addes, that the waies shall be so stopped vp that there shall be no *commer* or *goers*, as it fallles out when open warres are proclaimed. Now it seemes that the Prophet brings in the *Ambassadors*, telling how it shall not be lawfull for them to passe to nor fro any more, the *passages* shall be so dangerous. As touching that which followes, *he hath broken the Covenant*, some expound it, as if the hypocrits complained that God kept not his promise. But if this be referred

Coloss. 2. 3.

Knowledge the gouernesse of pietie.

The feare of God not only the beginning, but also the end of wisdom.

All outward felicitie meete beginerie with out the feare of God.

These things haue reference first to *Hezekiah*, secondly to the people, but especially to Christ.

ferred vnto God, ſuch a complaint may be attributed not onely to the hypocrits, but to the faithfull alſo, who ſometimes expoſtulate the matter on this wiſe with the Lord: but I like not this ſenſe. And therefore I rather thinke the Prophet continues to ſet forth the crueltie and vnappeaceable furie of *Sennacherib*, who diſloyally brake the conuenant which he made before with *Herzechias*. For albeit he promiſed truce; yet as ſoone as any occaſion offered it ſelfe to inuade Iudea, he falſified his faith, and began warre againe. Thereunto appettaines that which is in the end of the verſe, *he contemned the Cities, and regarded no mans perſon*: wherein he ſhewes, that the crueltie of this tyrant was ſuch, that hee could not be withheld, neither by feare, nor ſhame.

Verſ. 9. *The earth mourneth and fainteth: Lebanon is aſhamed, and heauen downe: Sharon is like a Wilderneſſe, and Baſhan is ſhaken and Carmell.*

10. *Now will I riſe, ſaith the Lord, now will I bee exalted, now will I liſt vp myſelfe.*

HE here more fully expreſſeth after what manner they ſhould ſee the eſtate of Iudea miſerably diſtreſſed, yet ſo, that their faith in the end ſhould breake forth as out of a bottomleſſe gulfe. He alſo names the places particularly, to wit, *Lebanon, Baſhan, and Carmell*, which are far diſtant one from another, being as it were the borders of the holy land: all which is to ſhew, that no corner ſhall be ſpared, or reſt in ſaferie. And in the deſcription of this delolation, hee attributes to euery ſeueral place, that which agreed with the ſituation of it; as to *Lebanon*, ſhame and confulion: becauſe glory and beautie are attributed vnto it in other places, in regard it was replenished and adorned with great and goodly trees. As touching *Sharon*, becauſe it was a plaine and fertile ſoile, he ſaith, it ſhall be like a *wilderneſſe*. That *Baſhan and Carmell* is ſhaken, becauſe there grew abundance of fruits. Thus he alludes to the nature of theſe places, and deſcribes the miſerie and calamitie which ſhould befall the ſame, that hee might the better amplifie and ſet forth the mercy and goodneſſe of God, which ſhould be the cauſe of their deliuerance, albeit for the preſent, they ſaw themſelues as good as forlorne. For here was cauſe to behold the immediat hand of God. Vnleſſe any had rather ſay, that the Prophet recites a thing already done, to ſtir the people vp to thankſgiving.

1. King. 7. 1.
Pſal. 92. 12.
Chap. 35. 2.

Verſe 10.

Now I will riſe] The particle *now*, is of great weight: alſo this double repetition, *I will be exalted, I will riſe*: for we muſt note the time to which this is to be referred; to wit, euen to that in which the Church in mans iudgement was brought to nought: for then will it be ſoone enough for God to yeeld her ſuccour. There is here therefore a compariſon of things contrary: for hee ſets

the horrible calamities before the faithfull, which ſhould oppreſſe & eaſily ouerwhelme them, had they not been fortified with ſome conſolation. As if he ſhould ſay; The Lord will indeed ſuffer you to be brought to the extremitie; but when you ſhall lie as it were at the laſt gaspe, and in vaine ſhall haue proued all waies to diſpatch your ſelues thereout, himſelfe will *riſe* for your deliuerance. For it is of neceſſitie that wee be thus afflicted and preſſed to the vnoſſ; to the end wee may know God to be the onely author of our ſaluation,

The word *now* therefore ſignifies a time of extreme miſerie. A man would thinke this to be a ſtrange kind of dealing in the Lord: but the anſwere is at hand; God thus deſers his ſuccour, becauſe it is good, firſt that the patience of the faithfull ſhould be exerciſed: ſecondly, that their faith ſhould be tried; thirdly, their fleſh tamed: fourthly, that they might be the better ſtirred vp to ſeruencie in prayers: fifthly, that they might be raiſed vp in the hope of the life to come. And therefore this blocke is laid in our way, leſt they ſhould prevent the time which the Lord allotted out vnto them.

Afflictions exerciſeth our patience, tries our faith, tames the fleſh, quickens prayer, and raiſeth vp in vs the hope of the life to come.

The repetition is very weightie, and is added for the greater confirmation of the matter: for when things ſtand perplexed, wee thinke our ſelues vndone; wheteas we ſhould hope about hope, becauſe then is the time when the Lord vſeth chiefly to manifeſt his power. For this cauſe he exhorts the faithfull to be of good courage, in ſetting before them theſe commendations of his glorious power; that none neede to feare, but valiantly to buckle with the pride of their enemies.

Verſ. 11. *Yee ſhall conceiue chaſſe, and bring forth ſtubble: the fire of your breath ſhall deuoure you.*

12. *And the people ſhall bee as the burning of lime: and as the thornes cut vp ſhall they be burnt in the fire.*

NOW hee turnes his ſpeech againſt the Enemies of the Church, which vaineſie and fooliſhly exalt themſelues: for when God ſhould once begin in wonderfull manner to vtter forth his power, they ſhould then haue trial of the vanitie of their enterpriſes, and ſhould be able to bring nothing to paſſe, although by great troops they aſſembled themſelues together, to put their plots in execution. For the Lord ſcornes their rage, in regard they imagined they were Lords of the world; whereas he in a moment can cut them off, notwithstanding all their preparations. Now it is an vſual manner of ſpeech in Scripture, to call mens deliberations and enterpriſes *conceptions*. The ſimilitude is taken from women with child. And therefore it is ſaid, that men conceiue & bring forth, when they imagin and put ſome wicked thing in execution: but our Prophet tells them, that ſuch conceptions ſhall turne to nothing, and

Pſal. 7. 14.
Iſai. 59. 4.

that

that the birch also shall vanish into smoke, so as they shall not prosper in any thing which they take in hand. What neede we then to feare all these goodly and gay shewes which our enemies make? For say, that God suffers them for a tyme to *consult*, to *imagin*, and *rage* against vs; yet in the end he wil scatter all that they haue rashly, and proudly done, as chaffe before the winde. Let vs also know that this which *Isaiah* hath prophesied against *Senacherib*, doth likewise appertaine to all the enemies of the Church and faithfull people.

Where he deuouneeth that they shall be deuoured by the fire of their owne breath, or spirit. Some are wont to expound it, Your spirit is like a fire which shall consume you: but this similitude is both vnapt and absurd. The true exposition is cleare enough, *The fire which your breath hath kindled, shall deuoure you*: for we are wont to kindle the fire by blowing of it. He teacheth then that the fire which the wicked haue kindled by their wicked deuices, shall turne to their ruine, because they shall be consumed by them.

Now this sentence is the same which the Scripture so often and so diuersly repeates, as, They shall fall into the pit which they haue digged: In the nets which they haue laid are their owne feet taken, Psa. 7. 15. Their sword which they haue drawne shall pierce their owne bowels, and their bow shall be broken, Psa. 37. 15. The Prophet shewes then that this wretched tyrant (which had destroyed all Iudea, and laid siege with great force against Ierusalem) as likewise the rest of y^e Churches enemies, should draw ruine vpon their owne heads, and in the end vtterly perishe. In a word, the fire which themselves had kindled should be the only meanes to consume them.

Afterwards he compares them to the *burning of lime*, in regard y^e their flintines should be mollified, euen as the fire desolues the stones, so that they should be brought to pouder and dust vey easilie. Questionles the wicked rush themselves vpon their owne destruction by their owne headines, so greedie they are to doe hurt. The similitude of *shornes* is no lesse proper, for albeit they wound the shrewdly which touch them, yet there is no wood that burnes so violentlie, or is sooner consumed. The like is to be seene in *lime*, for the fire softens and desolues it, notwithstanding it be neuer so hard at the first. This he saith shall befall the Caldeans, because the Lord shall cut them off in an instant, albeit they were then feared of all: and that their consumption should be brought to passe, when there was no appearance thereof at all. As oft then as wee see the enemies of the Church heape vp treasures, and gather men and munition together to bring vs to wrack, and to put all the world in an hurlyburly, let vs assure our selues they are kindling the fire in which themselves shall miserable be consumed.

We know this was fulfilled in *Senacherib*, for time was the best expositor of the truth of these prophesies, how incredible soeuer they seemed then. Let vs hope then against hope that the same wil befall those that tread

in the steps of this tyrant, and by this and infinite other examples let vs foruise our selues and others in our miseries and calamities, out of which doubtlesse we shall be deliuered, and shall behold the horrible vengeance which shall fall vpon our enemies.

Verf. 13. *Heare, ye that are farre off, what I haue done: and ye that are neere know my power.*

I*saiah* makes a Preface here, as one minding to speake something of great importance: for he calles for *auisance* of his hearers, which men are wont to doe when any excellent or matter worthie of note is to be propounded. He speakes to them that were *neere*, which should be eie-witneses as it were of this spectacle: also he calles those *farre off*, which should heare of it by report. As if he should say, Such shall be the power of God, that it shall not only be manifested to some *neere* bordering nations, but also to those that are vey *farre* remote from them. His meaning is then, that God will make his worke knowne by some notable and speciall signe of his presence. Why so? Because the wicked which before quietlie reposed themselves in safetie as being exempt out of all danger, should now on the sudden be surprized with feares and terrors.

Verf. 14. *The sinners in Zion are afraid: a feare is come vpon the hypocrits: Who among vs shall dwell with the deuouring fire: Who among vs shall dwell with the euerlasting burning.*

B*ut* some might replie, that there is no such great matter here to vse so solcme a Preface, as to summon all the world to *hearken*, was it a thing of so great importance that the wicked should be affrighted? I answer, If all be well considered it will be found no small testimonie of Gods power to awaken *sinners* out of their drouzines, and to make them (will they nill they) feele that God is their Iudge, but then especiallie, when they haue couered their contempt of God vnder the maske of *hypocrisis*. For albeit it is a matter of great difficultie to awaken y^e prophane ones, when their hearts are indurate: yet the obstinacie of *hypocrits* farre exceeds theirs, who thinke God much beholding vnto the. They are so bewitched then we see, that they contemne all threatnings, and scorne the iudgements of God, and with their slouts & mocks they reiect all the prophesies, so as it is a miracle to overcome one of them who so obstinately resist. Thinke therefore that it is not without cause that our Prophet is so sharp in rebuking of them. For doubtlesse he gales the bastard Iewes by mentioning *Zion*: who shrouding themselves vnder the shadow of the Temple, thought themselves secure in so inuisible a fortresse, that no harme could befall them. And truly, there are none more proud or hautie then they (as hath bin said) which glorie so much in the name of God, and in the titles of the Church.

Obiect

Ans

It is a miracle to subdue an obstinate hypocrite.

See Chap. 30. 34.

Whatsoever preparations the enemies of the Church make to consume her, is but the kindling and blowing of the fire which in the end shall consume themselves.

The

The word *Manſiphich*, is translated Hypocrits; but it may also bee generally taken for traytors and reuolters. Seeing they were so wicked then, as to mocke at God himselfe, and his true Prophets, he denounceth, they shall feele him to be a sharp and seuerer iudge, that so they might cease to take pleasure in their subtilties.

He addes a confession, which hath an appearance of humility; the better to shew, that such hypocrits as doe not willingly obey the word of the Lord, shall in the end feele by experience (the mistis of fooles) how terrible Gods iudgements are. When laughter shall be turned into gnashing of teeth, then they shall begin to confesse, that all their force was nought else but straw and stubble. Now for the wordes: some translate; *Who shall dwell for vs? others; Who among vs shall dwell?* If we simply reade it, For vs; this will bee the sense; who dare oppose himselfe against the fire? or, Will put himselfe between it and vs, that the flame thereof touch vs not? The other interpretations will beare the same sense; but the expositors differs in this, that some refer it to the King of Assyria; and others, vnto God: which latter, I rather receiue, as I haue said alreadie. For albeit the Assyrian was as a fire that burnt vp the country by his heate; yet our Prophet meant to expresse a more terrible thing then it; to wit, that inward torment and vexation of minde, wherewith the wicked are racked, the stings of conscience which cannot be auoided, and that vnquencheable fire of offences which surmounts all torments. So then it is iustice with God to deale with sinners as they deale with him. And therefore the Lord is called (in respect of them) *a denouring fire*, by *Moses*, Deut. 4.24. For the Prophets (as hath been often said) borrow their phrases from him: and the Apostle in Heb. 12. 26. doth the like.

The Prophet himselfe confirms this exposition, shewing the cause of this feare: for some might object, that God was too seuerer to terrifie men thus about measure. Indeed he is wont to shew himselfe louing and gracious to the faithfull; but therewithall seuerer and terrible to the wicked. Some thinke that the Prophet meant to conuince all men of sinne, that hauing scattered all trust of merit (into the aire) they might with all reuerence and humilitie, flee vnto Gods free grace by true repentance. As if he should say; None can stand before Gods iudgement seat, vnlesse he be perfectly iust: and therefore that all consequently are accused. But he rather speaks in the person, and according to their meaning, who before scorned all threatnings: and so he now brings them in trembling and asking, who shall dare to present himselfe before the face of God? For this dolorous complaint, is a signe of that terror which he spake of erewhile: where being conuincid of their weaknesse, their distresse extorted forth these words; Who is able to abide the Lords presence? Now because they ceased not to exalt themselves against God, notwithstanding these words were drawne from them against the haire, as we say: therefore the Prophet,

that he might prevent their wicked replies, answers on Gods behalfe, that he is not terrible and fearfull to men naturally; but it falls out so by their owne default, in regard themselves are affrighted with the sense of their owne guiltinesse; so as God suffers not their consciences to be at any quiet.

Verſ. 15. *Hee that walketh in iustice, and speaketh righteous things, refusing game of oppression, shaking his hands from taking of gifts, stopping his eares from bearing of blood, and shutting his eyes from seeing euill.*

Now he expresseth that more fully which we touched before; to wit, y (these hypocrits) had no cause to accuse God of ouer-great rigor, because themselves by prouoking him to displeasure, did thereby put his fauour far away from them. For hee shewes that God agrees with men well enough, if they will *tone and follow iustice*; if they giue themselves to *equitie*; if they keepe their fingers cleane from *brakes*, and walke in uprightnesse with their neighbours; but being infected with all maner of corruptions, and giuen to malice, slander, couetousnesse, extortion, and the like sinnes, must not the Lord astonish such with feares, and shew himselfe terrible vnto them? In a word, the Prophets meaning is to stop the mouthes of the wicked scoffers, that so they might cease to accuse God of cruelty, in bringing destruction vpon them, seeing the whole cause thereof was in themselves. They make many turnings to escape Gods iudgement; but the Prophet affirms, that hee is alwaies good to those which honour him. And albeit *Moses* in this sense calles him a consuming fire, Deut. 9.3. lest his maiestie and power should be contemned; yet whosoeuer hee be that shall draw neere vnto him with a true desire to please him, he shall feele by the effects, that there is nothing more sweete and amiable then his presence. At such time then as God causeth the light of his countenance to shine vpon the faithfull, they haue peace with him in a good conscience: whence it follows, that hee is not terrible of his owne nature, but we, (we) by our peruersitie prouoke him to be such a one vnto vs.

Now this is specially directed to the hypocrits, who cover their villanies and secreet mischiefs vnder the cloke of holinesse; and thus abuse the name of the Lord to sin the more freely. But our Prophet setting downe a definition of *iustice*, by examples, doth thereby more cleerly and plainly rebuke their vngodlinesse. And mentions some principall actions touching the conuerſation of men, whereby we may easily take triall of our godlinesse. For he sets before vs the duties of the second Table (as he hath done often alreadie) which is the best way to discouer who indeed is a religious man. For as gold is tried by the fire, so by a mans ordinarie carriage of himselfe, may you find how he is affected in the seruice

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Though God titles himself a consuming fire, lest his maiestie should be contemned, yet whosoeuer drawes neere him with a desire to please him, shall feel nothing so sweet as his presence.

Deut. 9.3.

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of God. The mutuall benefits which wee doe one to another, will manifest what pietie is in the heart.

By the word to *uualke*, this similitude of the way, so familiar in Scripture, is to be vnderstood, when it speaks of the Christian course, or of a continual perseverance: Psal. 119. 1. 5. and 112. By *iuſtice*, he means not an exact obseruation of the Law; but that equitie which is required in the second Table: but wee will not stand to discusse the word curiously. Afterwards he descends to the principall parts of true vprightnesse: and because the *tongue* is the chiefe instrument whereby man gouernes his actions, he puts that in the second degree after iustice. For he that withholds it from *euill speaking* and flander, and abstains from lying, peritury, and flatterings, whereby he might any way offend his neighbour; such a one is said to *ſpeake righteous shings*.

The other kind is comprised vnder these words, *and deſpiſeth againe, &c.* He might well haue said in a word; Hee which deſpiſeth monie; but he spake plainly, and therein applied himselfe to their rudenesse: for he that deſires *gaine*, polluteth and veth all dishonest and indirec̄t meanes to enrich himselfe, hee wil not ſtucke to vexe and oppresse the poore and needie; neither cares he, so he may get mony, whether it come in by right or wrong. What is to be said of them then which haue their hands alwaies open and stretched forth to take: nay, which with talents grapple whatsoever comes to net. And not content therewith, will prostitute themſelues vnto gaine, as shamelesse harlots will doe, to trap those that are deſtitute of wiſdome. Is it any wonder if God thunder against such, to roote them out wholly?

Laſtly, he requires that some ſigne and teſtimonie of integritie may also be ſeene euen in the *eares*. By *blood*, he meanes murders and manſlaughters; but he therewithall comprehends all ſorts of wicked conſpiracies, that the eates may neither be open to *hearken*, nor yet to giue any conſent thereunto. For hee meanes not that wee ſhould ſhut our eares against the cries of the poore, when they are wronged and oppreſſed; but that we ſhould detest all ſuch counſels, by which the wicked goe about to deſtroy innocents; that wee ſhould not ſo much as lend our *eares* to ſuch, neither in any wiſe to be carried away by their ſolicitations vnto euill. Laſtly, hee requires the ſame purtie in the *eies*. To conclude, he teacheth vs to reſtaine all our ſenſes, in ſuch wiſe, that we giue no occaſion to the wicked to thinke we doe in any ſort aproue of their doing; euen as wee meane to eſcape Gods vengeance & wrath, of which he ſpake before.

Verſ. 16. *He ſhall dwell on high, his defence ſhall be the munitions of rockes: bread ſhall be giuen him, and his waters ſhall be ſure.*

TO the end the Lewes might know that God had iuſtly chaſtiſed them, and that

they might endeavour to make their peace with him, the Prophet affirms, that this bleſſing is ready to fall vpon the *iuſt* and vpright, ſuch as hee deſcribed them to bee in the former verſe: for they were not to feare this deuouring fire of which hee ſpake, in regard they were out of all danger thereof.

They ſhall dwell on high in a ſafe place. The wicked indeede were to feare; for it ſhould ſurely deuoure froward ſpeakers, oppreſſors, deceiuers, and ſuch as applied their *hands, tongues, eares, and eies*, to fraud and vnrightheouſneſſe. As if he ſhould ſay; I would not haue you to wonder if he be ſeuere towards them, and yet he is not ſo much their Iudge, as the guiltineſſe of their owne euill conſcience, who like an executioner, is ſtill at their elbow, miſerably to torment them. The only way therefore to be ſeareleſſe in Gods preſence, is willinglie to keepe our ſelues in his feare.

By *high places*, hee meanes thoſe that are moſt ſafe and free from all danger: in a word, ſuch as the enemy is not able to inuade by any force: which he ſufficiently confirms in the next words, by placing the iuſt in the *rockes*. To the *ſure dwelling*, hee adds abundance of outward bleſſings: as if hee ſhould ſay; Nothing ſhall be wanting to thoſe which ſerue God in ſinceritie & vprightneſſe. Why ſo? Because hee will not onely ſaue them free from hurt, but will alſo furniſh them to the full, with whatſoever good things they ſhall ſtand in neede of in their ſhort pilgrimage. For by *bread* and *water*, hee meanes all things neceſſary for the ſuſtentation of this preſent life.

Next, he promiſeth *ſure waters*: (for albeit the wicked haue abundance for a time, yet their *waters ſaile* in the end, as God threaten in the law.) Now the like may be ſaid touching the word *bread*, becauſe it is an epithete belonging as well to the one as to the other: and it is as much as if he had ſaid; that all the faithfull ſhall be ſure of food. For the lions often lacke and want their pray; but thoſe that feare the Lord, ſhall want nothing that is good: Psal. 34. For as in his owne nature hee is bountifull, ſo is he neuer weary of giuing, becauſe his goods diminiſh not by his great liberalitie.

Now becauſe the life of man is ſubiect to ſundry perils; and that it ſufficieth not to haue prouiſion and plenty of foode onely to ſuſtaine vs, vnleſſe the Lord alſo keepe and defend his by his almighty power; therefore we are diligently to obſerue what was ſaid before; to wit, that the faithfull are lodged in a *ſafe place*. For the Lord performs the office of a faithfull ſhepherd, who is not onely careful to prouide food for his ſheepe, but alſo preſerues them from the rage of the eues and rauening wolues. To be ſhort, he holds them vnder his ſauegard, that no aduerſitie might annoy them. Are our enemies buſie then at any time to moleſt vs? Let vs thinke it a juſt iudgement of God vpon vs for our finnes. Hath hee reiected vs? It is becauſe wee haue deſerued it. And thus we muſt impute all the euill which oppreſſe vs vnto our finnes, as the

The tongue.

Hands.

Takers of bribes.

Eares.

Eyes.

The onely way to be ſeareleſſe, is willinglie to keepe our ſelues in Gods true feare.

Deu. 28. 38. 39. 40.

God is neuer weary of giuing, neither doth his goods diminiſh by contiouall giuing.

Pſal. 23. 1.

Our finnes the cauſe of all our euils. as the

the onely cauſe thereof. Yet let not thoſe who haue kept faith and a good conſcience, think that God hath forſaken them: but to the laſt breath, let them reſt ſecurely vpon theſe promiſes which the Lord hath here made; to wit, that he will be a *ſure rocke of defence* vnto them. I grant that none can be ſo pure or fully perfect, that he ſhould be able to beare the preſence of God: for if he marke our iniquities, who ſhall ſtand? as ſaith the Pſalmiſt; All of vs then haue need of a mediator, by whoſe interceſſion our ſinnes may be pardoned. Which doctrine it was not our Prophets meaning to reiect, which is plentifully diſperſed thorowout the whole Scriptures: but his drift here was, to beat downe the wicked, who are alwaies gaulled & purſued with the ſting of an euill conſcience. Which we are diligently to obſerue againſt our popiſh Doctors, who abuſe theſe and the like places, where workes are comended, that they might abolith the righteousneſſe of faith; as if the remiſſion of ſinnes, which wee receiue by the benefit of Chriffs ſacrifice, were to be excluded.

Verſ. 17. *Theſe eyes ſhall ſee the king in his glory: they ſhall behold the land a far off.*

Altho' the Prophet changeth the perſon, yet this verſe ought to be ioined to the former; becauſe he ſpeakes to the true ſeruants of God, & promiſeth them yet another benefit, to wit, that they ſhall *ſee the King in his glory*. Such a promiſe was very neceſſarie to ſuſtaine the hearts of the faithfull, when things were thus confuſed and deſperate in the land of Iudea. For when Ieruſalem was beſieged, the King was ſhut vp within the Citie, inuironed with diſloyall counſellers, the people inconstant and mutinous, euery one expected preſent ruine, and as it ſeemed, no hope of a better eſtate was left. But the *kingly power in Dauid's race*, was a ſingular pledge of Gods fauour towards them. Iſaiab then prevents this danger as you ſee. *The King* for a time, ſaith he, will ſeeme vile and contemptuous, yet ſhall *thine eyes* ſee him eſtablished in his former maiestie and dignitie.

First then let vs obſerue heere, that God beſtows an ineſtimable fauor vpon vs, when the Commonwealthe inioyes peace, and when he ſends vs good Princes, which gouernes all things faithfully and ſincerely; for then God rules ouer vs by their hand. This benefit therefore being no ſmall one, our Prophet was not forgetfull to mention it, in promiſing ſo happy an eſtate to the ſeruants of God.

But herewithall we muſt obſerue, that this kingdome was a figure of the kingdome of Chriſt whom *Herzechias* represented: for the fruit of this promiſe would bee of no great value, vnleſſe we come to him, vnto whom all theſe things are to be referred. And leſt any ſhould take mee as a forger of allegories, which I profeſſe to ſee, let ſuch a one know, that I expound not this ſimply of Chriſt. But

in as much as the ſtedfaſtneſſe of this vading kingdome is no where elſe to be found, but in him, the figure, which *Herzechias* here, lead vs to Chriſt as by the hand. *Iſaiab* then promiſeth here the reſtauration of the Church, in which, two members are to be conſidered. Firſt, that the King ſhall appear in his *beautie*: ſecondly, that the *boundes* of the kingdome ſhould be *enlarged*. Now we know Chriſt is ſo diſfigured in outward appearance, that the world deſpiſeth him; becauſe nothing is to be ſeene in him that is faire or pleaſant; but at the laſt, his *maieſtie*, his *magnificence*, and *beautie* ſhall appear. His kingdome ſhall flouriſh, and ſpread it ſelfe far and wide, albeit the wicked now are Lords of all, and doe ſo afflict the ſeruants of God, that they can ſcarcelly inioy one foote of ground in peace and ſafety; yet with firme hope muſt we wait and looke for our King in his glory, who at length will ſit him downe in his glorious and beautifull throne, and will enrich his people with great honours.

Verſ. 18. *Thine heart ſhall meditate feare: where is the Scribe? Where is the receiuer? Where is hee that counted the towers?*

The faithfull are againe aduertised of the calamities which were at hand, leſt being ouertaken therewith vnawares, they might happily fall vnder the burthen. Some tranſlate the verbe to *meditate*, in the preterperfecte: others, in the future tence; becauſe this change of time is much vſed among the Hebrewes. For mine owne part, I willingly retaine the future; *ſhall meditate*: which the Prophet alſo in his owne language doth: for as I take it, hee rather warnes the people of the euils which were neere, then relates what they had ſuffered before. Now when he asks, *where is the ſcribe?* he liuely beates into their eares, the voice of them who being affrighted, would cry on this manner, *where is the ſcribe? where is the receiuer?* the rather to touch them to the quicke.

If any thinke it to be a broken ſentence, becauſe hauing ſpoken in the former verſe of the *beautie of the King*, he now propheciethe terrors. I make no queſtion but the Prophet by way of compariſon, amplifies the fauour of God; to wit, that the faithfull being deliuered, might the better eſteeme of their condition. For men are naturally forgetfull and peruerſe, when they ſhould ſet themſelues to publiſh Gods praifes: and being once eſcaped, they let ſlip the acknowledgement of the great dangers fro which they were freed. It was therefore needfull to ſet before them the diſtreſſes vnder which they ſhould be held, that they might the better apprehend the greatnes of the benefit which God ſhewed them. There is yet another reaſon why this people were to be aduertised touching this *feare*; namely, hauing ſpoken before touching the *beautie of their King*, hee would not haue them ſo relie vpon it, as to promiſe vnto themſelues ſuch tranquillitie, as ſhould be ex-

Pſal. 130. 3.

Sec Chap. 33.

God rules where good Magiſtrates rule faithfully.

Caluin no forger of allegoriſſ.

empt from all troubles; but rather to be prepared to vndergo all sorts of greouances and vexations. And yet, that they should know also that God cared for the kingdom of Iudah, and in his good time would deliuer them out of the hands of those tyrants which held them tributaries and besieged them.

The estate which the Prophet heere describes is very miserable: for is it not a pitifull thing to see a people of a free condition so pressed vnder such a barbarous tyrannie, that all their goods must come to be praised, their houses, possessions, families, & seruants registered? Many of our times which haue not bin acquainted with these things, haue yet some little taste how irksome this seruitude is, when their goods are praised to the uttermost mite: and not onely their yeerely rents which are certaine, but also the hope of future gaine: and not mony and possessions alone, but their names also are taken. Such deuices there are to impose new tributes, not vpon viands onely, but euen vpon the smallest things: so that tyrants rake to themselves a great part of that, which the poore people can hardly beare: yet all these, and infinite other calamities will nothing abate the pride, excesse, and rebellion of men. What will they be thinke you, being freed from these taxes? will they not easilie forget all the euils past, and the fauour of God also, and bee worse then euer they were before, in running into all leaud and wicked behauiour.

It is not without cause then that the Prophet laies these things thus before his people, lest after their deliquence they should range after their lusts. As if hee should say; What a shame were that? nay, rather acknowledge the goodnesse of God, who hath dealt so mercifully with you, and cleaue vnto him with your whole hearts. Some haue fallie imagined, that Saint Paul alledgeth this place in 1. Cor. 1. 20. But so he should mistake the Prophets meaning, and should apply these words to a wrong sense. The cause of the error grew from the word *Scribe*, which is not taken here for a teacher. For *Isaiab* calles him a *Scribe* in this place, who tooke the names of men and their families, and inuentories of their possessions and houses. To be short, hee which kept the register of all the taxes and tributes.

By the *poiser*, he means him which receiued the imposts, for hee weighed the monies which were paid in: such as are our receiuers and treasurers at this day. He adds yet a third fort, which was the most intollerable of all; to wit, hee that counted the towers or chiefe houses; for they made search, and viewed euery house, to know which were the richest, that they might get the more pence out of it. Tyrants haue such at command, who like blood-hounds, haue skill to hunt and snell out fat purses; that so, besides the ordinary taxes they may raise an extraordinary impost. No doubt but the sight of such exactors was greuous to the poore people, and not without cause: for they neuer left them, till they had sucked their blood to the verie marrow. If any by this word had rather vnderstand the officers of the

King himselfe, who had the charge to pull downe the houses adioyning to the walles; I hinder him not for following his opinion. I rather thinke it likely that the Prophet speaks of the exactors, which the conquerours set ouer them, whom they had vanquished, that they might the more securely hold their own, as they say.

Verf. 19. *Thou shalt not see a fierce people, a people of a darke speech, that thou canst not perceiue, and of a stammering tongue, that thou canst not vnderstand.*

Some translate the word *Noan*, Strong; Others, Impudently: but I verily thinke he meant to set forth the crueltie of the Assyrians, which he presently declares, saying; *There is no communication to be had with them, for they speake a strange language, which thou canst not perceiue.* For there is nothing that moues men more to mercy, then an interchangeable speech, by which one may take knowledge of anothers misery. But if this be wanting, what is left to cause an hard heart to relent? Alas, they know not what thou saiest, and therefore thou canst looke for no more compassion from them: by thy intreaties, then if thou hadst to deale with wilde and sauage beasts. Thus the Prophet further aggravates the wofull estate of this people, that by contraries he might let them perceiue, how exceeding bountifull God was towards them, when he deliuered them out of so great a feare. As in another place the holy Ghost magnifies the grace of God, in that hee preserued his people in Egypt, albeit they vnderstood not their language. Psal. 81. 5.

Verf. 20. *Looke vpon Zion, the Citie of our solemne feasts; thine eies shall shall see Ierusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that cannot be remoued: and the stakes thereof can neuer be taken away, neither shall any of the cordes thereof be broken.*

Many read it in the vocatiue case; *Looke O Zion*: but it is better to read it as I haue translated it; *Looke vpon Zion*. The Prophet propounds a promise touching y^e restaurati^on of y^e Church, of which y^e faithful were to make speciall account: for if the Church shake or fall, where is their prosperitie? But he shewes that she shall be in such wise restored, that she sets the thing euen before their eyes; whereas indeed he speakes of a thing to come. And this he doth that his words might be y^e more effectuall. As if he should say; *Thou shalt see Zion restored, and Ierusalem flourishing yet once againe. And albeit you now see all things confused they were already accomplished.*

In calling it a *Citie of solemnitie*, he shewes wherein the restaurati^on of Zion did chiefly consist;

Note.

What is meant by Scribe in this place.

Bloodhounds in Common wealths.

A promise touching the restaurati^on of the church

The Prophets are wont to speake of things to come, as if they were already accomplished.

Wherein the reſtauration of Zion chiefly conſiſted.

conſiſt; to wit, becauſe the people ſtooked thither *to heare the law, to renew their covenants with God, to call upon his name, and to offer ſacrifices*: for when they were deprived of theſe things, they were as ſheep ſcattered without a ſhepherd, or as a bodie ſeparate from the head: in a word, as a people vndone, and deprived of all ioy. And therefore the captiues in Babylon ſorrow for nothing ſo much as that they were *banished from Zion*, and could not enjoy the comforts which there they were wont to finde, Pſal. 137. 5. It alſo appears plainlie enough by many places that it hath bin the chiefe complaint of all the faithfull.

Moreover, he calles *Zion, a Citie*, becauſe it ſtood in the miſt of the Citie; and it is alſo called the citie of *Dauid*. The compaſſe of the whole Citie of Ieruſalem was very large, for there was a double wall, as we haue ſhewed you heretofore, which is to be ſcene alſo in many other Cities. Note we here that in the reſtauration of the Church conſiſts the fulnes of all bleſſings, as the only bliſſe which we are to deſire and wiſh for; all other benefits abound they neuer ſo much, wāt we this, are nothing: as on the contrary, enjoy we this; we enjoy all things; for we can now way be miſerable, as long as *Ieruſalem*, that is to ſay *the Church*, flouriſheth. But when doth the flouriſh? When God ſits as chiefe in our aſſembles, and when we covenant in his name to cleaue vnto him for euer. The vnbeleeuers are forward to crowne themſelues as it were with the title of Gods name, as if their aſſembles were gathered vnder his enſigne; but all is hypocriſie. For though they draw neere to him: with their mouths, yet their hearts are farre off from him, neither will they haue him nor his lawes to beare ſway amongſt them in any thing.

In the next place *Iſaiah* ſaith, that the faithfull, which a long time had been toſt to and fro with many tempeſts, ſhould now at the laſt haue a ſure and quiet abode in the Church of God. But howſoever the people had ſome ſmall taſte hereof vnder *Hezekias*, yet the full accompliſhment therof is performed in Chriſt only: vnderſtand me not, that euer ſince, Gods children haue had *ſafe and quiet dwelling* in this world. No, this *reſt* is now hidden, for wee are faine to wander and ſtray vp and downe here; and are driuen many times to ſhift from poſt to pillar without any certaine abode, toſt with diuers tempeſts and whirle-winds, we are on every ſide aſſailed with infinite enemies, and yet theſe combats muſt we ſuffer, ſo as we can hardlie get ſo much as a minutes reſt here. Thinke not then that God promiſeth ſuch a peace as carnall ſenſe can comprehend. No, we muſt diue into the deepeſt thoughts of our hearts, reformed by the holy Ghoſt in righteouſnes and holines, if we will enjoy this peace which paſſeth vnderſtanding, as *Paul* ſaith, Phil. 4. 7. This peace ſhall we be ſure to enjoy as the Lords gift, if we remaine in the true Church.

By *tabernacle, and cords*, he ſtille and aptlie deſcribes the condition of the Church. For he might haue called it a citie well founded; but he calles it a *Tabernacle, or Tent*, which is

apt in an inſtant to be remoued from place to place. To teach vs, that although the eſtate of the Church ſeeme to haue *unaſtable ſtability* in it, and is ſubiect to many changes, yet that the ſhall ſtand ſteadie and vnmoueable for all that: the ſhall ſtand againſt all ſtormes and tempeſts, againſt all the iurie of enemies, although we thinke it vnpoſſible, and can no way comprehend the reaſon of it. Faith alone is it that can make things ſo repugnant to agree together, to wit, that *there is ſafer dwelling in a ſilke tent, then in the ſtrongest Caſtles in the whole world*. With this buckler muſt we beare off Satans blowes, which otherwiſe would ſhake and ſhewer vs to peeces as oft as we ſee the Church not a little tottering only, but caried cleane away as with a whirlewind now hither, now thither. Who would thinke there were any *ſaſtie, or place of reſt* to be looked for in theſe tempeſtuous whirleings? But becauſe the Lord will not haue his ſeruants altogether hampered in the things of this life, that they may depend wholly vpon him; this promiſed protection of his ought to be more eſteemed of vs, then thouſands of other ſtayes beſides.

Verſ. 21. *For ſurely there the mightie Lord will be vnto vs as a place of floods, and broad riuers, Whereby ſhall paſſe no ſhip With oares, neither ſhall great ſhip paſſe thereby.*

The two particles *Chi*, and *Im*, ſtand often for a double affirmation; but they are put here for expoſitions: we may alſo tranſlate, For it, but I willinglie retaine that which is cleareſt. Well, the Prophet giues a reaſon why the Church which reſembles a *reſtleſſe pavilion*, is notwithstanding *ſealier then Cities well founded*: to wit, becauſe her Lord the *Almightie* is in the middes of her, for ſo ſhe ſhall not be ſhaken, as is ſaid Pſal. 45. 5. Separate God from the Church once, and the will fall of her ſelfe though no man put his leaſt finger to it. For whereof doth the conſiſt, but of a ſort of poore weake and fraile creatures, yea, the fraileſt of all others. But whē *God dwels in the miſt of vs*, then he ſuſtines and beares vp this feeble and weake nature, and is to vs as a *ſtrong rampart*, deepe trenches; yea, cuen as walles and riuers which compaſſe in a Citie round about. Now the Prophet had reſpect to the ſituation of Ieruſalem, which had nought elſe but a *little river*, nothing ſo large and boiſterous riuers as Babylon and other Cities had. For they were commanded before Chap. 8. 6. to content themſelues with the only power of God, & not to couet after theſe great floods; as if he ſhould ſay, We ſhall ſurely be inuincible if God be reſident amongſt vs, becauſe his defence will be a ſhield and buckler of prooffe.

The *ſhip ſhall not paſſe.*] Great riuers haue this incommoditie, that they make paſſage for the enemies to arize therein with their ſhips ſometimes more then were to be wiſhed: and thus that which ſerueth at one time for a help, many times may afterward turne

Though the Church in this world be ſubiect to many changes as the Moone, yet ſhall the ſtand vnmoueable againſt all ſtormes and tempeſts whiſt ſoever, as is proued in the verſe following.

In the reſtauration of the Church conſiſts the fulnes of all bleſſings.

1
2

What manner of peace and quietnes it is which the faithfull enjoy in this world.

The Church rather called a Tabernacle then a Citie.

The Church inuincible as long as God dwels in the miſt of her. Content thy ſelfe with a meane eſtate, for that which may be for thy advantage one while, may turne to thy hurt at another time.

to our hurt and losse. But the Lord saith, he will fo serue as a *riuer*, that yet the entrance of no enimie need to be feared, in regard of any such incommodie. Now hee mentions two sorts of vessels, to wit, *gallies*, and ships of burthen: and thus he shewes that the enimie shall no way preuaile. From hence wee may gather two very profitable doctrines. First, neither to seeke, nor wait for saluation at the hands of any, but from God alone. Secondly, that it is in vaine to gather together much artilerie and defences, because they shall not onely become vnprofitable vnto vs, when God is against vs, but shall turne to our owne ruine and destruction.

Verf. 22. *For the Lord is our Iudge, the Lord is our Law-giuer, the Lord is our King: he will saue vs.*

The maner how God fits in his Church.

1. 1. 3. King.

Lawgiuer.

That is the true Church, which acknowledgeth God for her Lawgiuer and King.

Papists exercise a cruell tyranny ouer the consciences of poore men and women.

Iudge.

Now the Prophet shewes how God visits in the midst of his Church; to wit, by being serued and acknowledged as *Iudge*, *law-giuer*, and *King*. For those who obey and submit themselves vnto God, as to their *King*, shall effectually feele that he is the safe keeper of their saluation: but those that glory in this falsly, shall looke for saluation from him in vaine. Submit wee our neckes therefore onely to his yoke. Let vs harken vnto his voice, and obey him: then will he for his part manifestly shew himselfe to be our *defence and protection*. But if we contemne his voice, and rebell against his Commandements; what maruell is it, if in dangers he leaue and forsake vs? The true Church then, as you may obserue, is he who acknowledgeth God for her *King* and *Lawgiuer*. With what face then dare the Papists brag, that they are the Church of God, seeing they reiect the *lawfull governments* established by *Moses*, the Prophets, and by Christ himselfe, to bring in their own deuices and trumperies in stead of the same? They exercise a cruell tyranny ouer the consciences of poore men and women: and in taking that libertie away, which Christ hath purchased, they miserably vex the poore soules of his seruants, and as much as in them lies, would draw them into perdition with themselves.

But it is Gods office alone to sit in mens consciences, seeing he is the onely *Iudge* and *lawgiuer*, whose right it is to rule vs by his word. The Prophet conioynes three words together here; *Iudge*, *lawgiuer*, and *King*; because it is a thing of such great importance, as ought not slightly to be passed ouer. If wee then suffer our selues to be gouerned by his word, hee will neuer forsake vs. Thus in few words, wee haue the onely meane set before vs how to obtaine saluation.

Verf. 23. *Thy cords are loosed: they could not well strengthen their mast, neither could they spread the saile: then shall the pray bee diuided for a great*

spoile; yea, the lame shall take away the pray.

Hee turnes his speech to the Assyrians, in whose person hee also speakes to all the enemies of the Church. For hauing promised her such stabilitie, as shall neuer be shaken, he taxeth now the fond confidence wherewith the wicked are puffed vp; as if they were so well rooted, that it were vnpossible euer to displant them. Be it then that for a time they built their hopes vpon their riches, as vpon a strong Citie, and that the same was as an high wall vnto them in their imagination: whilest they were so besotred therewith, yet *Isaiah* prophecies their sudden destruction to be at hand, because Gods hand vpheld them not. Now hee goes on with the similitude which he vsed in the 21. verse, where he compared the Church to a very strong place, well *inured with goodly riuers*: by reason whereof, the enemy could not approach vnto her. Now he compares the estate of the wicked to *ships*; signifying thereby their *rotting foundation*; notwithstanding they plaied the bugbeares, and were caried with such furie and rage, as it seemed they would beare downe all before them with a breath. Although they had furnished themselves then both with great *ships* and *gallies* to ioyne in one the regions, which lay far distant one from another, and so meant to make themselves Lords of sea and land: yet should they feele that all was but vapors and smoke. The Lord would *turne ouer their ships, breake downe their masts, and cut off their Cables, and sinke all into the bottom of the sea*. Let vs not altogether then stand wondering and gazing at the strength, violence, or audaciousnes of our enemies; but let vs looke vp vnto the Lord, & wait for that day wherein he will tumble their furie and violence vpon their owne heads.

Verf. 24. *And none inhabitant shall say, I am sicke: the people that dwell therein, shall haue their iniquitie forgivenen.*

Now the Prophet returnes againe to the Church; for the ruine which he threatened should fall vpon the Assyrians, tended not a little to the consolation of the faithful: for what securitie could the Church haue had, vnlesse God had opposed his helpe against the power of so many enemies, which assailed her on euery side? Hauing in a word then touched the state of the wicked; to wit, that they shall all be brought to nought, because they persecute the children of God; he aptly returnes where he left, to wit, that God will omit no occasion that may make for the good and saluation of his Church. He saith then that the *Citizens* of the Church shall be freed from all incommodies, because by the fauour of God, they shall inioy an happie estate.

The second part of the verse serues for an exposition of the former: for *sinnes being forgivenen*, the graces of God shall flow in vpon vs without

without any let or ſtay. Whence we gather, that all the miſeries which aſſaile vs, proceedes from no other cauſe then from our *iniquities*. Otherwiſe, the reaſon which hee yeeldes, ſhould be improper and far fetched: but this principle is to be holden, that all the miſeries which God ſends vs, are ſo many tokens of his wrath. Thence it followes that God muſt needes vs with a fatherly reſpect, when our finnes are pardoned; and out of his loue, to giue vs whatſocuer is good for vs.

Therefore if we deſire to be eaſed of our troubles, keep we this order. About all things let vs ſeeke reconciliation with God; for the cauſe being remoued, the effect ſhall forthwith vaniſh away. But becauſe our deſires are not well nor rightly ordered, caring onely to get away the rod from our backs, and neuer conſider deeply of the cauſe: we neede not wonder if wee lie groveling ſtill vnder the ſmart thereof. They therefore deceiue themſelues which would bee freed from croſſes, and yet will delight in their finnes: nay, if ſuch ſhould be vnder no aduerſitie at all, yet ſhould they not ceaſe for all that to be miſerable people: for what reſt or tranquilitie of mind can they inioy, whileſt their conſciences in euery place purſues the guilt of their iniquities?

Wherein conſiſts true felicitie then? In hauing obtained forgiveneſſe of finnes, and in feeling ſenſibly, that all the good things we receiue from God, are ſo many pledges of his fatherly good will towards vs. Learne we alſo, that it is impoſſible to pleaſe him, or be accounted among the number of his children, vnleſſe hee ceaſe to impute our finnes vnto vs. There is nothing then but free reconciliation alone, which can make vs well pleaſing in his ſight; nor nothing but that, which can make way for his loue to be ſhed abroad in our hearts.

Now albeit we be continually vnder the croſſe, yet that breakes not off the promiſe; for the faithfull content themſelues with this comfort and conſolation in the miſdeſt of all their afflictions; to wit, that God is their God, and ceaſeth not to hold them for his deere children, though he correct them. For being regenerate by his Spirit, they begin to taſte of that happineſſe which *Adam* inioined in full meaſure before his fall: but being burthened

with many finnes, therefore haue they neede of a continually waſhing; and yet God ſo tempers his bitter potions, that he ſupports their infirmitie ſtill. He alſo lets them ſee that he hath a care of their welfare, by moderating the ſharpenneſſe of his ſtripes, if hee doe not at once ſet them free. It is not without cauſe then you ſee, that our Prophet exempts the renewed Church from common *miſeries*, becauſe they carrie in them a *ſtampe of Gods curſe*.

Hence alſo we may note how childiſh the diſtinction of the Papiſts is, touching the forgiveneſſe of the ſinne, but not of the puniſhment, as if wee were able to ſatiſfie Gods juſtice. But the Prophet teacheth vs another leſſon, as wee may eaſily gather from other places of their writings. But if we had but this onely text, can any man ſpeake more plainly, then to ſay, that *afflictions ſhall ceaſe*, becauſe *iniquitie is forgiven*? Truly it is all one as if it had been ſaid; *The puniſhments ceaſeth, becauſe the fault is pardoned*. I grant that God ſometimes afflicts the faithfull, albeit he forgives the fault: but it is to the end that by this ſtroke of the rod, he might make them wiſer for the time to come; and not to exact a ſatiſfaction of them, as if he had been reconciled vnto them by halues. But our Papiſts will needes haue ſuch puniſhments ſtand for ſatiſfactions: as if the ſinner in part ſhould thereby redem himſelfe; which, wee know, directly croſſeth the doctrine of free remiſſion of finnes. And thus their fond inuentions, both concerning ſatiſfactions, and Purgatory, fall to the ground.

It is alſo to be noted, that this priuiledge belongs onely to the houſhold of faith: for out of the body of Chriſt, which is the communion of Saints, what *hope of reconciliation with God is there left*? That is the reaſon why wee are taught in the Symbole to ſay, *I beleeue, the catholic Church, the remiſſion of finnes*. For as God loues none but thoſe whom hee findes members of his onely Sonne; no more beſtowes hee his free imputation vpon any, but ſuch as are luely members of his body. What remains to thoſe that are without then, and ate ſtrangers from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, but that they muſt needes periſh vnder the curſe? Therefore to forſake the true Church, is manifeſtly to renounce eternall life.

Daily deſirings needes daily waſhings.

A childiſh diſtinction of the Papiſts.

Satiſfactions and Purgatory.

Two Articles in the Symbole.

To forſake the Church, is to renounce eternall life.

THE XXXIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Come reere yee nations, and hearken yee people: let the earth heare, and all that is therein; the World, and all that proceedeth thereof.*

Witherunto our Prophet minding to comfort the children of the Church, hath preached as it were in the miſt of their aſſembly. But now he directeth his ſpeech vnto the Gentiles,

and takes vp the ſame argument ſtil, albeit after another maner then before. For hauing ſhewed that the Lord hath ſuch care ouer his Church, that hee will alwaies prouide meanes for her ſafetie: hee now alſo addes that which we haue ſcene heretofore; to wit, that he will at laſt take his peoples cauſe in hand, and reuenge their quarrell, though for a time hee hath ſuffered the wicked to take their penniworths of them. He continues to handle the ſame matter then; but by a con-

All our miſeries proceedes from our finnes. A Principle.

What courſe we are to take, that would be eaſed of our troubles.

They deceiue themſelues, that would be freed from croſſes, and yet delight in their ſins.

In what the faithfull find contentment in afflictions.

solation of another kind. For he shewes how seuerely God will plague those wicked ones, which haue persecuted his Church. The Prophet according to his office therefore, summons them by proclamation on Gods behalfe (that he might the better awaken them) to assemble them selues together, and appeare before his iudgement seat. For thus the wicked must be rouzed out of their security, who in time of prosperitie despise all admonitions; thinking that God either will not, or cannot punish their iniquities. Yet in speaking thus vehemently, his greatest respect was to the Church: for otherwise hee found but deafe eares among the *nations*, they would haue profited nothing at all by it.

In this place hee addresseth his speech to the Idumeans, who were like enough proudly to despise these threatnings, and therefore he calles *heauen* and *earth* to witness against them, saying, that the iudgements which God will execute, shall bee so apparant and manifest, that not onely *all people*, but all the insensible creatures also shall see it: for it is the maner of the Prophets to speake thus to the *dunbe creatures*, when men inuaded with reason and vnderstanding, grow deafe; as we haue scene before in the first Chapter.

Verf. 2. *For the indignation of the Lord is vpon all nations, and his wrath vpon all their armies: hee hath destroyed them, and deliuered them to the slaughter.*

BY *nations*, he meanes those enemies which bordered vpon the Iewes, who were inuironed with many Countreys: for they had as many enemies almost, as borderers. Now albeit there were other causes of this malice, to wit, enuie: yet because they were of a contrarie religion, that did wonderfully inflame their rage against them, in regard they thereby condemned their superstitious, which caused the Lord the rather to promise his helpe, as a Iudge to reuenge their quarrell.

He addes, *vpon all their armies*, because the Iewes were but an handfull of people, being compared with other *nations*. Although these nations then boasted, because of their *great armies*, and despised the small number of the Iewes; yet the Prophet affirmes, that God can easily consume their multitudes, & bring them all to nought, rather then he will hazard the losse of his little flocke, whereof he is the shepheard. And albeit hee speakes of *things to come*, yet vseth he the *present tence*, because he might set the thing before the eyes of the poore Iewes, which were almost overwhelmed with afflictions. For, as I haue touched before, he foretels not these things in respect of the *Idumeans*, who would receiue no instruction; but in respect of the *Iewes*, whom he meant to comfort, because they were miserably vexed by their enemies.

Verf. 3. *And their flame shall bee*

cast out, and their stinke shall come vp out of their bodies; and the mountaines shall be melted with their blood.

BY this circumstance hee shewes that the destruction shall be great: for if but a few persons be slaine, they *burie* them. But when so many are *slaine*, that those which be left a liue, are not able to burie them, they care not much to leaue them vnburi'd: so as the stinke of the carcafes, as yee know, ascends and corrupts the ayre. Thus it appeares that God is strong enough to roote out infinite armies. It may be also the Prophet meant to set forth this iudgement of God at large, because besides the killing of the nations, there would be shame and disgrace brought vpon them, in regard their dead were deprived of the right and honour of buriall. Afterwards he amplifies the horrour of the diformiture, in saying, that their blood shall flow from the *mountaines*, as if they were dissolued or *molten*: as when breaches of great riuers doe violently descend, and carry earth and all before them. And thus he againe shewes, that no meanes shall be left them to escape, because the slaughter shall bee no lesse in the *mountaines*, then in the plaine where the battell is pitched.

Verf. 4. *And all the host of heauen shall bee dissolued, and the heauens shall bee folden like a booke: and all their hostes shall fa'l, as the leafe falleth from the vine, and as it falleth from the figgetree.*

ISAIAH vseth here an excessiue manner of speech, as others of the Prophets likewise often doe, to set forth the terror of Gods iudgement, and deeply to wound dull and dead hearts. For otherwise, his speech would haue been of no force, neither would it much haue profited the carelesse and secure person. He addes then, that the very *stars* themselves shall bee darkened in this waste, as if they were constrained to fall: the better to manifest the wailing which should be there. For when the heauens are cloudie and gloomie, it seemes the cloudes *wrap* and *fold* themselves vp one in another, the Sunne and stars begin to grow wan and weak, and the whole frame of the heauens shake, as if they were readie to fall. Now he shewes the like shall happen at this time, because euery thing shall shew signes of sorowe and lamentation.

But this must be referred to the apprehension of men, for the heauens moue not out of their place: but when the Lord manifests some tokens of his displeasure, wee are as much terrified therewith, as if the heauens were ready to fall vpon our heads, and to burie vs vnder them. Not that such things befall the heauens; but he speakes as it were to brazen faces, whom hee was faine thus to awake, that they might not take him as if hee
told

The Prophets vse the present tence when they speake of things to come, to shew the certaintie of their prophecies.

told them a tale of *Robin Hood*, as they ſay; no, you ſhall bee ſo ſmitten with feare, ſaith he, that you ſhall imagin the *very heavens* are ready to fall about your eares. This is the juſt reward of a drouzie conſcience, to wit, that wicked perſons which cannot bee touched with any feare of God, ſhall be afraid of their owne ſhadow, and ſhall as much tremble at the falling of a leafe, as if the *Sunne and ſtarrs fell from heaven*. And thus he alſo notes a woſull change, which ſhall trouble and mingle all things together.

*Verſ. 5. For my ſword ſhall be drunken in the heavens: behold, it ſhall come downe upon Edom, even upon the people of my * curſe, to judgement.*

HE ſaith that the *ſword of the Lord is drunken with blood*, as when one hath made a great ſlaughter, ſwords are bathed in blood. And that the ſpeech might haue the more force, he brings in the *Lord himſelfe* vterring of it. But why, ſaith he, it is *in heaven*? For God calles not men vp thither to puniſh them, but executes his iudgements here below in earth, and that by the hands of men. But the Prophet reſpects that ſecret counſell of God, by which he deliberates and ordaines all things before the execution thereof: he vnderſtands it not then of the act it ſelfe, but commends the efficacy of his owne propheſie, in regard that by the immutable counſell of God this ſlaughter ſhould certainly fall out. Alſo he meant to informe the faithfull hereby, that God examines the doings of the wicked *in heaven*, howſoever they giue themſelues to all iuſtice on earth, and go on in their bad courſes unpuniſhed. Laſtly, that the *ſword* wherewith they ſhould be ſlaine was *alreadie bathed in blood* in God his account, euen when he is only determined to puniſh them, which he will assuredly performe, notwithstanding all their proſperitie.

Sodom burnt alreadie in Gods account, whileſt ſhe gaue her ſelfe to drunkennes, diſſolutions, and execrable villanies: as much may likewiſe be ſaid of all other wretched people which lie fettered in Satans chaines, to be ſlaine by the ſword of the Lord of hoſts, euen then when they wallow themſelues moſt in their voluptuouſnes. Let vs not therefore ſtand gazing vpon the proſperitie of the wicked, whileſt they inioy more then their hearts can wiſh; neither let vs hunger after the ſame: for albeit no man moleſt them, yet are they not far off from ruin. Why ſo? poore ſoules! God is againſt them.

But our Prophet names the *Idumians* here, who were enemies to Gods people, notwithstanding they were of affinitie with them, and bare the ſtamp of the ſame religion, for they were children of *Eſau*, and of the ſtock of *Abraham*, as was ſaid before. As at this day, what greater enemies haue wee then the *Papiſts*, which are baptized with the ſame baptiſme that we are, and make profeſſion of the name of *Chriſt*? and yet they furiouslie perſecute vs, and would haue vs vterlic rooted out; be-

cauſe we conſent to their ſuperſtitious, and Idolatries. Euen ſuch were the *Idumians*, and therefore the Prophet culled them out from amongſt all the reſt of the enemies of the Church.

In calling them the *people of his diſcomfiture*, he conſignes the former ſentence: for it is as much as if the Lord had ſaid, It will be but in vaine for you to thinke you can eſcape my hands, ſeeing you are alreadie ordained to deſtruction. For by this phraſe of ſpeech he pronounceth definitive ſentence vpon them, as being alreadie condemned in his heauenlie decree, and that no leſſe, then if at that preſent they had been *put apart, and cut away* from off the land of the liuing.

And leſt it might ſeeme that God did them any wrong, he addes, *in judgement*: for there is nothing vnto which men are more prone then to accuſe God of crueltie: ſo as the greateſt part can not be brought to acknowledge him their competent Iudge, eſpeciallie if he chaſtiſe them ſomewhat ſeuereſly. *Iſaiab* therefore ſhewes, that this ſlaughter muſt needs be mixt with equitie, ſeeing God neuer exceeds in our much ſeuereſtie.

Verſ. 6. The ſword of the Lord is filled with blood: it is made fat with the fat, and with the blood of the lambs, and the goates, with the fat of the kidneys of the rammes: for the Lord hath a ſacrifice in Bozrah, and a great ſlaughter in the land of Edom.

HE goes on ſtill with the ſame argument; but by another deſcription, which amplifies the matter greatly: wherin his drift is to rouze vp the wicked who were wont to giue and geere at all admonitions, as we haue ſaid before. Is it not needfull then that Gods iudgements ſhould be diſſepered out in liuely tables to wound the hearts of the enemies, and to animate the minds of the faithfull with an holy pride, in aſſurance that their foes can not any way luſte it for all their ſtoutnes and rebellion, but that they muſt be brought to the ſhambles like beaſts as ſoone as God doth but hold vp his finger, as they ſay?

He compares their deſtruction to the *ſacrifices*: for as they were wont to ſacrifice beaſts, for the ſeruite and honor of God, ſo ſhould he be glorified by the ſlaughter of this people. The Prophet then confirms that here which he hath ſaid before touching the *iudgement*: for when the Lord executes iuſtice, his glorie ſhines thereby: men reuerence and worſhip him, ſo as the deſtruction of the wicked you ſee is rightlie compared to ſacrifices, which were a part of his ſeruite.

Indeed there was no great pleaſure in be- holding the ſacrifices: for the cutting their throats, the guſhing out of the warme blood, and the ſtink of the ſmoke ſerued rather to driue men away; yet the honour and glorie of God thined euen in theſe things. So, this deſtruction of the *Idumians* no doubt was an

The reward of a beaunimed conſcience.

* Or, diſcomfiture, in judgement.

My ſword.

Note.

1

2

3

Gen. 18. 20.

Gen. 36. 8.

Papiſts the greateſt enemies the Church of God hath.

horrible spectacle to looke vpon, and made no such goodly shew, as to bring one in loue with the sight of it : but that the faithfull euen in this respect, might learne to sanctifie the name of God, they were commanded to lift vp their eyes to heauen, because God in executing such a vengeance, did as it were erect and set vp so many altars for his sacrifices. And because they had vniuistly afflicted the Church of God, and had cruelly intreated his chosen, without all compassion or humane, *Isaiab* pronounceth that the offering vp of their blood, was a sacrifice acceptable and of a sweet smelling saueur vnto God, because it is the execution of his iudgements.

By *lambes* and *goates*, vnder a figure he means the people which should be sacrificed : and in alluding to the sundry kinds of offerings, he comprehends all the people, as well small as great : to shew, that when God shall take his enemies in hand to punish them, hee will not let so much as any one of them escape. He mentions *Bozrah*, which was the chiefe and head Citie of the Country, in which the greatest slaughter should be executed : and in the next place adds the *land of Edom*, through which this discomfiture should passe, without sparing any corner of it.

Verf. 7. *And the unicornes shall come downe with them, and the heifers with the bulles : and their land shall be drunken with blood; and their dust is made fat with farnesse.*

This verse is annexed to the former, for it is no new thing he speaks of; but hee continues the same figure, amplifying what hee had said touching *goates* and *lambes* : to which, hee nor onely adds *calues*, but *wilde beasts* also. The summe is, that Gods vengeance is bounden, so as he will spare neither age nor estate; for he will put to the sword as well the cruell and proud Giants, with their vaine brags, as the feeble weaking: as if one prepared a sacrifice, in which, *beasts of all sorts* were mingled one with another. Neither should any thinke it absurd, that *lambes* are coupled with *cruell beasts* in this sacrifice : for by the word *lambes* in this place, hee meanes not harmlesnesse and innocencie; but the poore and weake are called so by comparison, because their meane condition held them vnder some appearance of modestie.

Now albeit it may seeme strange that the Lord should thus smite his enemies, without sparing of any at all; notwithstanding by the word *sacrifice*, he shewes he doth nothing but that which is iust and equall, and for which he ought to be praised. And indeed whosoever shall examin this fact, shall be inforced to lay his hand vpon his mouth, and to confesse, that God had iust occasion to cut them off all, nor one excepted. The like end are all reprobates to looke for; namely, to be sacrificed by the hands of those that are as wicked as themselves. Some take the word *Abbirim*, for Strong : I had rather follow them

which translate it *Bulles*, it being so taken, *Psal. 50*. Albeit by *Bulles* here, vnder a figure, he meanes the strong and mighty.

Verf. 8. *For it is a day of the Lords vengeance, and the yeere of recompence for the iudgement of Zion.*

This verse must be ioyned to the former; for it contains the end why the Lord corrected the Idumeans so severely, namely, because he meant now to maintaine and reuenge the quarrell of his people. For had he not added this reason, that which hee spake before, might haue seemed not onely darke, but improper. For it would be but a flitting and vncertaine knowledge of things, vnlesse in the consideration of Gods punishing of the wicked, we did also therein see, that hee manifests the continuall care and loue which he hath to his chosen, in the preservation of them. Now that which is here said of the Idumeans, ought to be applied to all the enemies of the Church; for vnder this one particular, our Prophet comprehended them all; and for this cause are we to cheere vp and refresh our hearts with this consolation in time of aduersitie, and to sustaine the iniuries which are done vs, which God shall reuenge himselfe. For is he called the auenger, thinke you, for nought? See *Psal. 94. 1*. It is not our Prophets meaning then alone to say, that God hath power sufficient to punish the wicked when he thinks good, but also that he reignes in heauen, to reuenge all wrongs in due season.

But the two words, *day* and *yeere*, is to be noted: for thereby he giues vs to vnderstand, that God sleeps not in heauen, whilst hee seemes to winke at the enemies crueltie; but onely defers to punish, till the appointed time; to the end the faithfull might learne in the meane space, to possesse their soules in patience, and suffer him to gouerne all things according to his incomprehensible wisdom.

Verf. 9. *And the riuers thereof shall be turned into pitch; and the dust thereof into brimstone; and the land thereof shall be burning pitch.*

This whereof he speaks, hath relation to that which went before; in which hee adds a more ample declaration of this destruction. We told you erewhile why the Prophets doe liuely represent and set forth Gods iudgements in such plaine tables as it were; euen to bring men vpon the scaffold, thereby constraining men to take knowledge of those things, which otherwise they would neither see nor comprehend; and if they did, yet they would vtterly forget them as soone as they had scene or apprehended them. But besides this, we must note that the Prophets spake of secret and hidden things, which seemed altogether incredible: for many thought the Prophets bolted out things at a venture

From particular threatenings, we may descend to the general.

Luke. 23. 19

in theſe matters. There needed many confirmations therefore: and ſuch are thoſe that he ſpeaketh in this, and other the like places.

The ſumme then is, that he ſpeaketh of ſuch an horrible change, as ſhall utterly waſte the land of Edom. Moreover, he alludes to the deſtruction of Sodom and Gomorrah: Gen. 19. 24. which is a forme of teaching much viſed among the Prophets: for in this ruin we liue (as Saint *rule* telleth vs) a perpetuall example of Gods wrath againſt the reprobate: neither is it without cauſe that the Prophets doe ſo often renew the remembrance thereof, for they would haue all men learne thereby to tremble at Gods iudgements. Hitherto appertaines that which is ſaid in the verſe following.

Verſ. 10. *It ſhall not bee quenched night nor day: the ſmoke thereof ſhall goe vp euermore: it ſhall be deſolate from generation to generation: none ſhall paſſe through it for euer.*

Queſtionleſſe the Prophet ſpeaketh an exceſſiue manner of ſpeech; but the Lord is conſtrained thus to deale with vs, to awaken our dulneſſe; for an vſuall forme of ſpeech would not moue or affect vs. In ſaying then, that the wrath of the Lord againſt the Idumeans, reſembles a fire that never goeth out, he takes from them all hope of pardon: for as they ceaſed not to prouoke him, ſo ſhould they find him a ſeuere Iudge vnto them. And Malachi notes it as a ſigne of the reprobation of this people, that the Lord was angry with them for euer: Malachi 1. 4. The oppoſition muſt be ſupplied, becauſe Gods children alwaies receiue ſome conſolation, leſt they ſhould be diſcouraged. But we need not ſtand long vpon this matter: it ſufficeth that we haue the drift and ſcope of the Prophets words.

Verſ. 11. *But the pellican and the hedgehog ſhall poſſeſſe it: and the great owle and the rauen ſhall dwell in it: and he ſhall ſtretch out vpon it the line of vanity, and the ſtones of emptineſſe.*

As touching theſe creatures which Iſaiah here mentions, there are diuers opinions: neither are the Hebrew expoſitors themſelues well reſolued touching the ſame: yet we may perceiue the Prophets drift well enough; to wit, that he ſets out the face of a Country laid waſte & deſolate. For doubtleſſe he ſpeaketh of hideous monſters in nature, which come not among men, neither are they acquainted with them. And this he doth the rather to deſcribe the horror of this deſtruction. The firſt member of the verſe then is cleere enough of it ſelfe: but there is ſome difficultie in the ſecond. Some expound theſe words, *lines of vanity*, by an antiphrace, and vnderſtand it of the Iewes: but I rather thinke it ſhould bee referred to the Idumeans, as the former words are. And to the end

we may the better know that this is the Prophets true meaning, the ſame words are found in the firſt Chapter of Malachi, verſe, 4. 5. who came long after our Prophet: in which place, hee confirms that which Iſaiah here denounceth. Though Edom ſay, we are impouertied, but we will returne & build the deſolate places; yet ſaith the Lord of hoſtes, they ſhall build, but I will deſtroy it; and they ſhall call them, the border of wickedneſſe, and the people with whom the Lord is angry for euer. And your eyes ſhall ſee it, and yee ſhall ſay, The Lord will be magnified vpon the borders of Iſrael. Malachi then plainly expounds that which Iſaiah ſpake ſomewhat darkly in his time: Iſaiah ſaith, the Idumeans ſhall build in vaine: the other, that they ſhall ſpread the *lines of vanity*: for it is all one in effect as if he had ſaid, that the maſter-workmen (as Maſons and Carpenters) ſhall but loſe their labour in going about to build the Cities againe: for men of ſuch craft, vſe *ſmall lines* and *plummets* to meature their works by. Thoſe then that ſhould take in hand the reſtauration of Edom, ſhould beſtow coſt in vaine: for they ſhall be ſo confounded, that they ſhall not know at what end to begin, nor where to make an end. And albeit God ſpeaketh to mitigate the miſeries which he ſends vpon others, by ſome conſolation in the end, yet they muſt looke for none at all.

Hence we may collect a very profitable doctrine, which is this: doe wee at any time ſee that cities heretofore ruined, are now built againe and brought into ſome good faſhion? Therein we may behold a ſingular note of Gods fauour: for the labour of Maſons and handicrafts men would haue been to no purpoſe, vnleſſe the Lord had put his hand both to the beginning, middeſt, and end thereof; for what can prosper, vnleſſe he guide things from the laying of the firſt ſtone, to the laſt: and likewise, vnleſſe hee keepe them vnder his protection? Men may well diſburſe great ſummes of monie then, *yet in vaine*: yea, they ſhall vex themſelues, without bringing to paſſe, vnleſſe hee be pleaſed to gouerne the buſineſſe, and to powre out his bleſſing vpon that which they take in hand. His onely bleſſing therefore makes rich: and that alone is it which vpholds vs in any eſtate or condition. For which cauſe it is ſaid, that *his hands* built Ieruſalem: Pſal. 47. 2. Now as touching that which Iſaiah here threatens againſt the Idumeans, the holy Ghoſt pronounceth the like elſewhere, againſt the houſe of Abah: meaning that it ſhould bee raced euen with the ground: 2. King. 21. 13.

Verſ. 12. *The Nobles thereof ſhall call to the Kingdome, and there ſhall be none: and all the Princes ſhall bee as nothing.*

This text is diuerſly expounded: but I will not trouble you with the reciting of the expoſitions; for in reſurting of them, I ſhould make my ſelfe more worke then needs. That which is moſt probable, is this, *They ſhall call*

Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour but in vaine that build it. Pſal. 127. 1.

Pro. 10. 10.

As heere, that hath a contrarie meaning.

they

Chap. 3. 6. 7.

the Nobles of Edom to rule, but it shall be in vaine: As if he should say, In so miserable an estate there shall none be found that will willinglie beare rule, or take vpon him the government of state-matters. This sentence is read elsewhere, yea, we haue had the same in a maner before, albeit somewhat differing in words. Now this maner of speech leads me to think, that the Prophet meant closely to taxe the pride of this people, who were waxen ouerhaughtie, by reason of their peace and abundance. For as much then as the Idumeans being seated vpon high mountaines grew proud, the Prophet shewes, that they should be brought downe with ihame, so as none of the Nobles should be left, neither should there remaine any man of great place: for when kingdomes are ruinated, all government is also abolished. The people are as a bodie without an head, neither is there any distinction of persons, or places.

Lords without Lordships.

Thus then by way of scorn he saith, that these braue Nobles which were so highlie exalted, shall be as Lords without Lordships, which appears yet better by the second member where it is added for expostions sake, that they shall be brought to nothing. The summe is, that Edom shall resemble a bodie shattered in peeces, in which shall appeare nought else but an horrible confusion of all things. Oh fearefull curse of God! What doe men differ from beasts, I pray you, if they want the execution of good lawes? Is their condition any whit better? No surely. The beasts may well be without any head or gouernour, because they will not offer crueltie to those of their owne kinde: but Lord, what is more cruell then man, if he be not kept vnder! Is he not caried an end by his passions as a fittie of hell to runne out into all dissolutions?

¶ *Vers. 13. And it shall bring forth thorns in the paces thereof, nettles and thistles in the strong holds thereof, and it shall be an habitation for Dragons, and a coure for Ostriches.*

HE continues on his speech, wherein he sets forth an Image of an horrible desolation: to wit, when beautifull houses and paces are razed euen with the ground; or, so laid on heapes, that men can haue no vse of them: being rather fit for thornes, briars, and nettles to grow in, then for dwelling places, which is farre worse, then if they had bin conuerted into meadow or errable ground. But see how the Lord punisheth the pride of such as delight in building of sumptuous houses, and gorgeous paces; they thinke to make their names immortall, as it were: but God driues them out, and makes nests therein for birds; and dennes for wild beasts: and thus they serue as perpetuall ensignes of their vaine ambition, who by such buildings thought to make themselves garlands of their owne renouue and excellencie. Mens places then are inhabited of such beasts, who represent the nature & dispositions of those which built and dwelt in those so goodly houses,

How God punisheth the pride of such as delight in building sumptuous houses.

The houses of men inhabited by beasts, answerable to

Now this ouerturning of order is also a woorthie signe of Gods wrath; to wit, when the earth which was created for the vse of man, is constrained to receiue inhabitants of other kinds, and to spew out their right and lawfull owners: but by meanes thereof no doubt it shall be purged of that filthines wherewith it was in times past defiled.

their natures that dwelt in them.

A note of Gods curse in this change.

Vers. 14. There shall meet also Zim and lim, and the Satyre shall crie to his fellow, and the Skritch-owle shall rest there, and shall finde for her selfe a quiet dwelling.

15. There shall the Owle make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather them vnder her shadow: there shall the Vultures also be gathered every one with her make.

SOME affirme that these beasts are Fayries, Others, Hobgoblins, others, Satyres: neither do the Hebrues themselves agree about the proper signification of their names. But what need we stand much about the matter? It sufficeth vs that we haue the Prophets scope and drift. He meant to decipher out an horrible desolation. As if he should say, Idumea shall be laid low wast, that it shall be left without inhabitants: for in stead of them it shall be replenished with wild beasts. See here the iust reward of those vaine glorious fooles, which built such sumptuous paces to continue the perpetuall memorie of their names forsooth. And here by the way also is a prediction of the chastisement wherewith this cursed nation was to be scourged for their crueltie, in regard they whollie bent themselves to seeke the ouerthrow and destruction of their brethren and neighbours.

Now howsoeuer it be doubtfull whether the Prophet speaks here of * Fates, * Hobgoblins, or * Satyres, yet all agree that these words signifie such beasts as haue the faces of men. We also see how cunning the Deuill is by diuers illusions, ghosts, and fearefull apparitions; by sounds, and hidious noyses, to inchant desolat places: but of this wee haue spoken in the 13. Chap. Now this vice which God hath so sharplie punished in one people, is almost common to all: for who is he that builds such stately houses, but the price thereof is wrung out of the poore? Sometimes by violence and extortion; sometimes by continuall molestations; so as the very morter, stones, & wood, are replenished with blood, in Gods sight: Therefore the stone shall crie out of y wall (saith *Abacuc*) and the beame shall answer vnto it, Woe to him that builds a Towne with blood, &c. Let vs not wonder at these strange iudgements and horrible changes then, when wee see that ambition draws with it these wicked extortions and robberies, but rather let vs serioulsie therein consider Gods iust reuenging hand.

The like was threatened before Chap. 13. 22. against-Babell.

* Ladies of the Fayries or Elves. * A Skritch-owle, or an vnclucky kind of bird.

* Gods of the woods, hauing the head of a man, and bodie of a goate.

Sumptuous buildings for the most part: reared vp by extortions. *Abacuc*. 2. 11.

Vers. 16. Seeke in the booke of the Lord, and reade: none of these shall faile, none shall

ſhall want her make: for his mouth hath commanded, and his very ſpirit hath gathered them.

BY the booke of the Lord, ſome vnderſtand this propheticke; as if he ſtured them vp to reade it diligently: and ſo it is, as if he ſhould ſay, *not one ſide of it ſhall faile*, when the time is expired: as he addes by & by after. Others expound it more ſubtillic of Gods eternall decree, thus; Search whether he hath not ſo ordained it: but this expoſition is too farre fetched. I expound it of the *law* it ſelfe therefore, which by way of excellencie is called *the booke of the Lord*, becauſe out of it, the Prophets drew all their doctrine, as we haue often told you heretofore. That the noueltie of ſuch a ſact then, ſhould not make them reiect this propheticke, *Iſaiab* ſaith, that they were aduerted of it long before: and thus hee priuily taxeth their incredulitie, for remaining ſo groſſe conceied, as to eſteeme this thing altogether new and vheard of.

Now he hath good reaſon to bring them to the *law*, wherein God ſo often declares that he will haue care of his people, and will puniſh the wicked ſort. Seeing *Mofes* therefore ſpake of it ſo long agoe, the Prophet ſaith, that none ought to be ſo incredulous touching the truth of his propheticke, ſeeing he telles them of no ſtrange matters, but onely confirms that which *Mofes* hath long ſince teſtified and taught. This I take to be the nauiue ſenſe of our Prophet, who by theſe words meant to fortiſie the Iewes, to the end they ſhould wait with patience for the promiſe of the Lord, as being aſſured that the euent would manifeſt the truth of thoſe things, which were alreadye foretold to fall vpon the Idumeans, and other enemies of the Church. Why ſo? becauſe *Mofes* had teſtified (without cauſe of blame) that God would alwaies protect and defend his people. Againe, it was needfull they ſhould be aduerted hereof, that when the Idumeans ſhould be thus dealt withall indeed, they might not thinke it fell out by chance, but might acknowledge God the author of this iudgement. For ſuch is the peruerſitie of mans nature, that he beleeueth not, though he be forewarned, till the very pinch: and beſides, hee is giuen to attribute that vnto fortune, which proceeds from the iuſt iudgement of God. *Iſaiab* therefore prevents theſe inconueniencies, in willing them to aſke of *Mofes* touching the truth hereof, becauſe hee was reuerenced of all, in reſpect of his authoritie.

None of them, to wit, of the beaſts: for the Hebrewes vſe theſe two wordes *Iſch*, and *Iſhab*, not only when they ſpeake of men and women, but alſo of males and females of all kinds. For his mouth. He confirms that which he ſaid before; for albeit Gods works, be manifeſt inough, yet he makes vs comprehend them better by his mouth, that is to ſay, by his word, that thereby wee may haue a clearer ſight of them: and this is the right viewing of the works of God, to wit, when

with a quick eie we behold them in the cleere glaſſe of his word. For we are too bold and preſumptuous, and giue out ſelues the raiues too much, velleſſe we be guided by this heauenlic doctrine, as it were by torch light. The pride and ouerwening of men therefore is here to be reſſeſſed, who will call into queſtion, and cenſure the iudgements of God and all his workes, without being ruled by his word: for if they would ſeeke in his booke, and aſke at his mouth, wee ſhould ſee greater pietie and religion in them then there is.

Now the Prophet in ſpeaking of the mouth of the Lord, meant to confirme that which was ſaid before touching this iudgement; the reaſon is, becauſe nothing can ſaie of that which iſſues out of his ſacred mouth. *Iſaiab* affirms it to be a thing impoſſible then, that that which is once decreed of God, which he alſo hath commanded him to publiſh in his name, ſhould euer be called backe by any meanes. And thus with this buckler, hee repulſeth all the difficulties which caſilie ariſeth, as oft as the promiſes of God doe ſurmount our reach.

I grant he ſometimes threatens with condition, as he threatned *Abimelec*, Gen. 12. 17. and *Pharaoh*, Gen. 20. 3. and the Niniuities, Ionah. 1. 2. whom afterwards hee pardoned, becauſe they repented: but if he haue once determined to puniſh men indeed, hee will ſhew by the effects, that hee is both true of his word, and able to performe it, as well as hee is able to deliuer his in the time of neede.

This the Prophet expreſſeth againe when he maketh the mouth and ſpirit. or breath to conſent together: for albeit the ſpirit of the mouth and the word, doe often ſignifie one and the ſame thing; and that the Hebrewes are wont to repeat one thing twice: yet here he makes an elegant alluſion vnto the breath, from which the words proceed, and of which they be formed: as if he ſhould ſay; this propheticke ſhall not want his efficacie, becauſe God, who by his voice hath commanded the brute heaſts to poſſeſſe Idumea, will alſo draw them thither with his onely breath.

Now hee ſpeakes of a ſecret inſpiration, What maruell is it then, if all beaſts aſſemble themſelues together at Gods firſt becke; as we ſee it came to paſſe in the deluge; yea euen in the creation of the world; when *Mofes* teſtifies, that at Gods commandment all beaſts came by and by vnto man, to ſubiect themſelues vnder his government? Gen. 2. 19. & 7. 15. And would they not thinke you haue been ſubiect and obedient to him ſtill, if he himſelfe had not been deſtroyed of this authoritie by his owne rebellion? But being now reuolted from God, the beaſts forthwith began to band themſelues againſt him, and to offer violence vnto him.

Men erre, becauſe they learne not the Scriptures, Mar 12

The brute beaſts would haue been ſubiect to man if man himſelfe had been ſubiect to God.

Vers. 16. *And hee hath caſt the lots for them, and his hand hath diuided it vnto them by line: they ſhall poſſeſſe*

The word Law expounded.

possesse it for euer, from generation to generation.

HE saith, that these monsters and wilde beasts are so put into possession of these places, that they can not be easily chased from thence, because God (himselfe) hath assigned it vnto them as their *lot* and inheritance. By this then he shewes, that whole Edom is vnder the Lords commandement, that is to say, to cast out the inhabitants thereof, and to giue the possession thereof vnto whom it pleaseth him, namely, to the Dragons, *Ostriches, Sayres, Owles, Vultures,* and such like.

I
We must not promise to our selues a perpetuall abode in any place,

Hence let vs gather, that it is in vaine for men to promise vnto themselves a perpetuall abode in any place whatsoeuer, further forth then they be readie to depart both out of

place, yea, and calling to, as soone as God shall be pleased to dispossesse them. For we hold our places but as tenants at will in the place where he sustaines vs, nay, as pilgrims and strangers, whether we be in the countrie of our naturall birth, or out of it. If he be pleased to giue vs a quiet habitation in a certaine place for any long time together, we inioy it only by his speciall favor: for as soone as he speaks but the word, we must of necessity be packing thence. Moreouer, if we acknowledge he hath giuen vs to continue in any Countrey, there we may be bold to dwell safely and quietlie: for if he will maintaine the beasts right in keeping them safe in the place which he hath assigned them, will he not much more preserue men, for whose sakes he hath created heauen, earth, and the sea, with all that therein is?

2
We must impute it to a speciall favor of God if he suffer vs to inioy our abode in any place for a long space.

THE XXXV. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *The desert of the Wildernes shall reioyce: and the wast ground shall be glad and flourish as the rose.*



HE Prophet speaks heere of a maruelous change, for hauing in the former Chapter set forth the desolation of Idumca, and shewed how it should be brought vnto a desert, now on the contrarie

he promisseth that the desert shall be made a frutesfull place, so as the barren and fallow field should become fat and flourishing, and the solitarie and wast places should be inhabited with people. This must needs be the peculiar worke of God, for as he blesteth the whole earth, so also with this blessing doth he sprinkle some parts of it more sparinglie, others more liberallie: sometimes he withdrawes it altogether, because of mans vnthankfulness.

This text is diuerslie expounded. Not to meddle with the fond glosses of the Iewes, who draw this and the like places to the temporall kingdome of the Messias, whom they forge at their pleasure. Some expound it of Iudea, others referre it to the vocation of the Gentiles. But let vs aduise our selues well, whether it will not agree better so to expound it of Iudeah, that vnder it we also comprehend the whole world. For he hath so prophesied the destruction of the whole world, that in y^e meane while he spared not Iudeah, contrariwise in as much as iudgement began at his owne house, or sanctuarie, the wast of the holie land was foretold in the more lamentable termes to the end it might serue as a speciall example. Hauing therefore aptlie and fitlie begun with Iudea, he now calles all the world a *desert*, because the wrath of God whollie ouerflowed it as a deluge. I therefore willinglie referre this place to Iudea first, and next to other parts of the world: as if he

should say, When the Lord shall haue punished men for their iniquities, and shall be auenged vpon the Iewes and Gentiles, then the *deserts* shall be conuerred into an habitation, and God shall renew the face of the whole earth.

This restauration is an excellent testimonie of the goodnes of God: for are we not all worthie to perish, and to be vterlie consumed, when we prouoke God by our reuolt, but especiallie those whom he hath adopted for his peculiar people? But *Isaiah* had speciall respect vnto the Iewes, lest they should faint in their scattering.

Let vs now see how this prophesie was accomplished, or when it shall be accomplished. The Lord began some restauration of his Church when he brought his people out of of Babylon, but that was but a small beginning: I am not afraid therefore to say, that this, and the like places, are to be referred vnto Christ and his kingdome: for it can not otherwise be vnderstood nor fulfilled, if we compare other prophesies with this. But whē I speake of Christes kingdome, I vnderstand not only that which is here on earth, but that also which shall be accomplished at the last day, which for this cause is called the day of restoring & refreshing, Acts 3. 21. because the faithfull finde no permanent rest till then. The reason then why the Prophets speake so magnificallie of Christes kingdome is, in regard that they haue an eie vnto that great and notable day wherein the true and perfect felicitie of the faithfull shall be established.

The Prophet therefore hauing spoken of these horrible discomfitures, and hauing likewise foretold the miserable confusion that should befall the whole world, he now comforts y^e faithfull by this promise, telling them for certaine, that all things shall be restored. But this is only brought to passe by Christ, in whom we may be said to be renewed and gladdened in deed, for he it is who restores and puts in order whatsoeuer was and is confused: for

How and when this prophesie shall be accomplished.

The Churches restauration began in the re- turne from Babel, proceeded at Christes first commiog, and shall be fullie accomplished at his second appearing.

out of him; what is there in heauen or in earth but ſhine, conſolation, and deſtruction. But wee are to note it diligently in the firſt place, that the world was fitted by ſuch chaſtiſements to receiue ſo great a fauour; and that by meanes thereof, this benefit of Chriſt might ſhine the more gloriously, which would haue ſeemed but darke and obſcure, if things had been already ſet in perfect order. And therefore it was needfull that the proud and haughtie hearts ſhould be tamed and humbled, that the taſte of this grace and power of Chriſt might be the more welcome.

Verſ. 2. *It ſhall ſouriſh abundantly, and ſhall greatly reioyce alſo and ioy: the glorie of Lebanon ſhall be giuen vnto it: the beauty of Carmell, and of Sbaron; they ſhall ſee the glorie of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.*

HE now more fully expreſſeth how great the effect of this grace of Chriſt is, by whoſe power and vertue, the things which before were deſolate and in poore eſtate, doe now ſouriſh. This repetition then ſerues for an amplification: and the verbe twice vſed, may be doubly expounded; that is, either to ſignifie the prolonging of time in the continuall growth: as if he ſhould haue ſaid, It ſhall not ſouriſh with a tranſitorie beautie; which vaniſheth away by and by, but with a continuall ſouriſhment, ſtedfaſt and permanent; that ſhall neuer fade nor fall: or, to note out the increaſe and continuall, or yeerly growth: for Chriſt enricheth vs, that from day to day he may augment his graces in vs.

The ſimilitudes following, doe further ſet forth this fruitfulneſſe: for hee contents not himſelfe to ſay, that there ſhould be plentiful harueſts, whereas before it was a wilderneſſe, and that the dry places ſhould wax greene, but hee adds that there ſhall be ſuch a glorie and excellencie, as is in *Libanus, Carmel, and Sbaron*: and albeit *Carmel* ſignifies a field that is tilled and fruitful, yet here it is a proper name, as the other two be. Now we haue ſcene heretofore, that theſe mountaines were much renowned, and held for the moſt wealthy places of all Iudeah, in regard of their goodly ſituation and abundance of fruits.

They ſhall ſee the glory. He now expounds that in plaine termes, which before he ſpoke figuratiuely. Men are barren and empie of all good things by nature, till they haue learned to know God aright: and therefore the beginning of our fruitfulneſſe is, that wee haue life put into vs by his preſence, which cannot be brought to paſſe without an inward feeling of the power of faith. For I make no queſtion, but the Prophet meant to raiſe vp our mindes higher, to the end wee might be brought to the conſideration of the abundance and fruitfulneſſe of heauenly graces. Men may be filled with bread and wine, and ſuch like, and yet in the meane while may be ignorant that God is the giuer thereof, and therefore ceaſe not to be miſerable

ſtill; nay, which more is, abundance rather blindes them, and oftentimes makes them grow rebellious: but when God manifeſts himſelfe, and cauſeth vs to ſee his *glory* and *excellencie*, it comes to paſſe, that beſides the ſight of theſe bleſſings, we inioy them to our ſaluation.

Verſ. 3. *Strengthen the weak hands, and comfort the weak knees.*

WE may expound this place generally, as if he ſhould ſay; Let thoſe that feele *their hands weak*, put ſtrength to them; and let thoſe who feele their *knees trembling and weak*, be of good comfort, and be ſtrong: but the verſe following ſhewes, that all this belongs to the Miniſters of the word. For he ſpeakes to the teachers of the Church, & commands them to exhort, to prouoke, and quicken *up the feeble*, which were weak and fainthearted, to the end hee might make them more conſtant and chceretull. Now this is brought in to very good purpoſe, becauſe it could not be choſen, but that ſo many ſignes of Gods wrath (of which he ſpoke before) ſhould not terrifie and make the ſtoutest of all to tremble. For ſeeing aduerſities doe alwayes caſt vs downe, who is not afraid when God ſhewes himſelfe angry againſt our finnes, and proclaimes open war againſt vs? But the Prophet giues them in charge to cheere vp the ſorrowfull hearts, and thoſe that were as good as dead: and in the verſe following hee ſhewes how this ſhould be done.

Verſ. 4. *Say vnto them that are fearefull; Be you ſtrong, feare not: behold, your God commeth with vengeance, euen with a recompence, and will come and ſaue vs.*

BECAUſE it is God onely who makes his word effectual in our hearts by his holy Spirit, and puts this *ſtrength* into it, whereof he hath ſpoken; (for by faith onely wee liue and ſtand) therefore *Iſaiah* adds this promiſe, touching the grace that was to come, ſaying, *Behold, your God will come.* In the firſt place we haue to note, that Gods meaning is not to withdraw or keepe his grace in ſecret, but rather that it be publiſhed and communicated to all, to the end *trembling hands* and hearts may be ſtrengthened, and their ſpirits reuiued. This is the onely meane to inable vs to ſtand in the moſt deſperate tentations: for if wee be not ſet vpon our ſeete by the word of the Lord, we muſt needes quaiſe and loſe our hope. The Miniſters haue this charge then; to wit, to comfort the heauy hearted, to confirme the weak, and to ſtrengthen thoſe that are ready to fall.

Wee haue alſo to note of what exceeding force the word is, ſeeing it is able to ſtrengthen the *weak hands*, and to comfort the *feeble knees*: for if it had not power to inſpire this life into men, the Prophet would neuer haue ſpoken thus. And yet, if God ſhould onely

H h ſmitc

The Miniſters of the word.

The ſorrowfull hearted ought to be comforted.

The efficacy of the word noted.

chap. 33. 9.

smite the eares in speaking, and should not therewithall cause the same to sinke into our hearts, all would be to no purpose. In that he attributes this efficacie vnto the word then, let vs also therein know that it is himselfe from whom that power proceeds, that so it might not be spoken fruitleslie, but might worke inwardlie vpon the conscience, not at all times, nor vpon all, but then, when it pleaseth him this to worke by the secret power of his holy spirit.

The Lord works not vpon all, nor at all times, inwardly vpon mens consciences.

Hence we gather, that by the same word we be brought into the right way of Gods seruice, for without it we should remaine ignorant, all our reason would faile, and not only stagger, but our infidelitie would make vs become whollie brutish. It is more then need then that the Lord succor vs this way, that our feates being appeased, & our weaknes strengthened, we may be fitted to walke on in our christian course. For if we had these words *Fear not, Behold your God*, well fixed in our hearts, all faintings would soone vanish. Men no sooner feele that God is neere vnto them, but they cast away feare, or at the least so resist it, that they are not overcome of it. In nothing be carefull saith *S. Paul*, for the Lord is at hand, *Philip. 4. 5.* and *6.* of which sentence we haue intreated at large elsewhere. It seems also that the Apostle to the Hebrues alludes to this place, *Chap. 12. 3.* and *13.* where hauing forbidden them to be grieved or discouraged with Gods correction, he recites the words of our Prophet, and applies this sentence to all the faithfull, that so they might stirre vp themselves vnto perseuerance, and constantlie to hold out vnto the end, in regard they were to suffer many assaults.

How to be cald of fainting fits.

Neither is it superfluous, that the Prophet addes *your God*: for if we be not assured that he is *ours*, his *comming* shall bring vs terror rather then comfort. Therefore he sets not God forth here in his Maiestie, which casts downe the pride of the flesh; but his grace which comforts the afflicted & weak. We see then it is not without cause that he thus adorne God with this title, namely, that he is the protector of the faithfull, to retaine them in safetie.

Obiect.

If any obiect that God must needs be dreadful when he comes to punish in his wrath: I answer, that this *vengeance* is threatened against the wicked, and the enemies of his Church; so that albeit it be terrible vnto the, yet it shall bring consolation to the faithfull. This is the cause why he addes, that he will come to *save*: for otherwise the Lewes might haue replied, What benefit shall the destruction of the enemy bring vs? What shall we be the better for it? Should wee delight in their calamities? This is the cause I say why he saith expresse, that he will turne this *vengeance* and *recompence* (touching their enemies) vnto their *saluation*: for the saluation of the godly is alwaies joined with the punishment of the wicked. We shewed in the seauenth Chapter *vers. 4.* how the faithfull are deliuered from perplexed cares by this fauor of God, and by the hope of his defence. For the present; let vs obserue, that God is readie

Anf

The punishment of the wicked is alwaies joined with the saluation of the faithfull.

armed with *vengeance*, to the end his children may learne to rest vpon his help, and not to thinke him idle in the heauens: this is the cause of these repetitions, for infidelitie hath gotten such fast rooting in vs, that is not plucked vp by and by.

In the end of *y* verse there may be a double reading, to wit, either that God shall come with a *recompence*, or, that he will come with the recompence of God; choose whether of the two you like best, for the sense is all one. Now vnderstanding if you reade *Elohim* in the genetiue case, *Recompence* shall be called the recompence of God, because it properlie belongs vnto him, that so the faithfull may know assuredlie that he is no lesse a *rewarder*, then *God*.

Verf. 5. Then shall the eyes of the blind be lightened, and the eares of the deafe opened.

6. Then shall the lame man leape as an hart, and the dumb mans tongue shall sing: for in the Wildernes shall Waters breake out, and riuers in the desert.

* Or, be digged.

HE speaks still of the promise touching the restoration of the Church, that he might comfort the hearts of the faithfull who should be sharplie assaulted with the grievous calamities of which he had foretold. Now seeing Christ is the fountaine from whence this restoration springs, we must of necessitie still haue recourse vnto him, if we will haue the right vnderstanding of that which *Isaiah* saith in this place, for by him alone it is in deed that we are begotten againe to the hope of the heauenlie life. Now it is not vnlke but our Prophet alludes to the prophesie which we haue seene in the *29.* Chapter *vers. 9. 10.* where he threatens the Lewes with a fearefull blinding of their eies, and an hardening of their hearts, for which cause he here promisseth that at Christs comming mens mindes shall be *enlightened* and cleared by regeneration, whereas before they fate in darknes.

There is great force in the word *Then*: for thence we may gather, that being out of Christ we are *dumb, blind, and lame*: in a word, void of all abilitie to performe any thing that is good; but Christ renews vs by his spirit, that in him we may recouer our true health. By *tongue, eyes, eares,* and *feete*, he means all the faculties of our soules, which in themselves are so corrupted, that we can not draw thence so much as a good thought; till we be made new creatures by the benefit of Christ:

Being out of Christ, we are spirituallie blind, dumb, and lame.

for our *eies* can not see the truth, our *eares* can not vnderstand it, neither can our *feete* walke in it, vntill we be vnted vnto Christ. The *vnderstandings* of men indeed are very acute in apprehending mischiefe, *their tongues* eloquent and prompt vnto slanders, periueries, lying, and vaine speach, *their hands* and fingers but too nimble to theft and violence, *their feete* to shedding of blood: in a word, all the powers both of soule and bodie not only inclined, but

Eyes, Eares, Feet.

We are naturallie prone and wise to do euill, but to do well we haue no knowledge. *Iere. 4. 22.*

but also set on fire to doe wickedly. But come we to the performace of that which is good, every finger is a thumbe, as they say. Is it not more then needfull then that wee be reformed by the power of God, that thence wee may beginne to vnderstand, comprehend, speake, and put in execution those things which God hath called vs vnto ? for none can so much as say, that Iesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost.

This reformation then we see proceedes onely from the grace of Christ : those therefore which are conuerted vnto him, doe recover new strength, whereas before they were wholly vnfruitfull, and as good as dead. For out of him, we are either deprivied of all good things; or else they are so corrupted in vs, that they can be applied to no right vse, but are rather prophaned by our abusing of them. Iesus Christ hath both fully testified and taught the truth of this point, when hee gaue speech to the dumbe, sight to the blind, legs to the lame and impotent; but that which hee did to the body, was but a glimpse of that which hee works much more abundantly and powerfully in our soules.

In saying that the *waters shall be digged out*, hee adds other benefites wherewith the faithfull are enriched soone after the establishing of Christ his Kingdome : as if hee should say; You shall not neede to feare any want, after you be reconciled vnto God through Christ; for plentifull and perfect felicitie streames from him vpon vs. But these things the Prophet sets before vs vnder borrowed speeches.

First, hee saith the *waters are digged*. For whereas all things were barren before, now there should be great abundance. How poore and beggerly are we then, vnlesse God, for the loue which hee beares to Iesus Christ, powtes out his blessing vpon vs; which Iesus onely brings with him from his heavenly Father, and then imparts it to the members of his body. I denie not but the wicked thriue wonderfully in outward abundance; but all is accursed of God; because they are out of Christ: from whom onely flowes that true and sauing influence of all riches. Truly it were much better to wish death, rather then the abundance of wine and oyle, with which wee must needs swallow the curse of God. When Christ then shall beginne to manifest himselfe, then shall riuers and waters flow forth, to the healthfull vse of the faithfull.

Verſ. 7. *And the dry ground shall be as a poole, and the thirstie as springs of water: in the habitations of dragons, where they lye, shall be a place for reedes and rushes.*

HE confirms the former sentence; to wit, that Christ shall come to satisfie his chosen with abundance of all good things. Why so? Because waters shall issue and flow out of the *dry ground*. But we must remember what I said erewhile, to wit, that the Prophet here

describeth out vnto vs, an Image as it were of euerlasting happinesse: for howsoeuer this outward change appeared not visible to the eye at Christs coming; yet *Iſaiah* not without good cause affirmes, that vnder his government, all things shall be fruitfull: for hee hath said before, that without him all things are accursed vnto vs. This whole world will bee but as a parched heath and wildernesse, where lions, *dragons* and wild beasts range after their pray, vntill the kingdome of our Lord Iesus Christ be erected and set vp amongst vs: let it bee once established; the faithfull shall seele no want at all.

The Lord did set his scale to the truth of this doctin, whē he deliuered his people out of Babylons captiuitie. Yet we are to seeke the accomplishment of this prophetic in Iesus Christ, who sets all things that are out of frame, in their perfect estate againe. For that deliuerance was but a darke shadow of this; and yet wee are not to seeke the full accomplishment of this promise in this world; neither, because as our blessednesse consists onely in hope, so must wee frame our mindes to wait for the same till the last day, when wee shall be put into the full possession of our happinesse, which now for the present is hidden as it were from vs. It sufficeth vs that God giues vs some sweete taste thereof in these our conflicting daies, that with the greater affection we might learne daily to aspire to that full felicitie which is reserved for vs in the heauens.

Verſ. 8. *And there shall be a path way, and the way shall be called holy: and the polluted shall not passe by it: for he shall be with them, and walke in the way, and the fooles shall not erre.*

THE Prophet promiseth the Iewes haere, that they shall be set at libertie to returne home againe into their country, to the end that being afterward carried captiue into Babylon, they might not imagin it to be a perpetuall banishment. And yet me thinkes this sentence should extend it selfe further. For as heretofore hee promised them abundance and store of blessings, where there was nothing but barrennesse; so hee saith now, that the place where none dwelt, shall be inhabited and frequented by multitudes. To bee short, that Iudea shall be in such league and amitie with other nations, that one of them shall mutually passe to the other without any danger at all: for where places are not inhabited, what traffique can men haue there? You shall see no man passe to and fro there. Hee saith then it shall come to passe that the Iewes shall haue egress and regress (as we vse to speake) to traffique with others, after they are come home, and shall bee settled in their Country.

But it is not without cause our Prophet adds, that the *way shall be holy*. For where there is much concourse of people, vices and corruptions haue their swinge on every side, How could it bee auoided then, but these

Hh 2 great

The world but a wildernesse without Christ. *Psal 67. 9. 7. Psal 84. 11.*

As our full blessednesse consists in hope, so must we patiently wait for the same till the last day.

Verſ. 7.

1. Cor. 12. 3.

Mer. 1. 11. 5. & 15. 3.

Wee are poore and beggerly, ill God in rich vs with Christs benefites.

Death is rather to be wished, then that abundance which we must needes swallow Gods curse.

great troupes must needs pollute the land, yea, and infect one another with a mutuall contagion. The Prophets meaning is then, that not only the land, but the minds of men should be purged and renewed by the benefit of Christ, that both the one and the other which in times past were wont to be prophaned by their vncleanes, should now be sanctified. And yet we must keepe that in minde which I haue touched before, to wit, that the Iewes whose way shall be made holy, should returne into their countrie again to serue their Redeemer therein. As if he should say, The land shall be purged from those filthie sinkes which in times past were in it, that it may be inhabited by the true seruants of God.

He ads also a more ample exposition when he saith, that *no polluted* shall passe by this land now hallowed by the Lord for his children. As if he had said, God will so separate the faithfull from the prophane, that they shall no more be mingled one with another: and this doubtlesse was to be esteemed as one of the principall blessings that the Church receiued. But this is not accomplished in this life, for hypocrits and contemners of God intrude theselues pell mell into the Church, and many times hold great places in it: and yet we may see some signe of Gods fauor this way, when he takes off the scumme from his Church by diuers meanes; only we must wait for the full purgation of it vntill the last day: yea, euen the seruants of God theselues, who are regenerated by the worke of his holy spirit, are yet compassed about with many corruptions: for albeit the Lord hath begun to sanctifie them, yet it shall not be perfected in this life: their old man is not whollie mortified, but only tamed and repressed to giue way for obedience to the new. Now because the Lord liues and reignes in them, and subdues their lusts, they are called *holy*, in respect of y^e principall part of regeneration in them.

The expositors turne the end of the verse diuerslie, where he saith, *he shall goe with them*: for some translate, They shall walke that way, and shall not erre after they haue been accustomed to walke in it, no, nor they which knew it before others. This way shall be for the children of Israell, those which walke in it shall not erre though they be foolish. But me thinketh the pronowne demonstratiue *he*, may better be referred vnto God. As if the Prophet had said, God shall goe before you to prepare the way, and the scope of the text also requires it to be so vnderstood: for it was not enough for them to haue an open way, vntill God went first before to direct his chosen. Our Prophet then magnifies this inestimable grace, by bringing in *the Lord walking* with his people: for if he (hew vs not the way we shall alwaies erre, being of our felus whollie addicted to vanitie. Nay, though the way be plaine, and be before our eies; yet can not wee discern it from that which is crooked: and although we haue made some good entrance, yet will our follie carrie vs hither and thither out of it by and by.

But our Prophet telles vs, that we shall not neede to feare missing of the way when we

follow God, whilest he goes before vs; seeing it pleaseth him to take this office vpon him. It is very likely also, that he alludes to the historie of the first delurance, because God then led his people in the day vnder the cloude, and in the night vnder a pillar of fire, Exod. 12. 21. Therewithall he also shewes how needfull it is that God should gouerne vs: he also taxeth vs all of follie (be wee neuer so wise in our owne conceit) when he addest that *the fooler shall erre no more*: for God lets them wander by crooked paths, which thinke themselues wise enough to be their owne guides: if we therefore desire to keepe *him in the way with vs*, let vs acknowledge that we stand in neede of his direction. In the meane while he offers vs a good recompence when he promiseth that all such as forsaking their owne counsels shall be content to follow him, shall not erre in any thing though they be none of the wisest. And yet his meaning is not that the faithfull shall remaine *fooler* still after the Lord hath taken them by the hand: but he shewes what they were, before God vouchsafed to leade them the right way.

Vers. 9. There shall be no lyon, nor any some beasts shall ascend by it, neither shall they be found there, that the redeemed may walke.

HE addest yet another fauour of God, and that is, that the people shall be deliuered fro all dangers, though they walked through the deserts. Before, among other curses of God he put this; that wild beasts should meet the Iewes in all places which way soeuer they trauailed: but now, being receiued into fauor, they should be assailed neither by *lyons*, nor any other cruell beasts, because God would chase them away, that his redeemed might passe without hurr or danger. For albeit they had libertie to returne, yet they might well meete with many impediments in the way, and therefore he saith, The Lord shall remoue all annoyances that might any way stop their passage. Hence we gather a very necessarie doctrine, to wit, that the Lord not only begins the worke of our saluation, but continueth it vnto the very end, lest otherwise his grace might be frutelesse and vaine in vs. *First* then he opens the way to giue vs entrance. *Secondly*, he makes it plaine and easie, and takes away all impediments. *Thirdly*, he goes with, and before vs in the way. *Lastly*, he so continueth forth this grace in vs, that at the last he brings vs vnto his perfection. We must make vse of these foure points every day. For albeit our hearts be set (whilest we liue in this world) to aspire to our inheritance which is in heauen, yet Satan laies many stumbling blocks before vs, and we are inuironed on euery side with infinite dangers, but the Lord who hath set vs in this way, and goes before vs, leading vs by the hand, will neuer leave vs in the midway, but wil fullie perfect that vnto the end which he hath begun in vs by his Spirit. We may also obserue, that the mouthes of rauening and wilde beasts are muffled so by the grace of

Chap. 30. 6.

He that begins a good worke, will accomplish it vnto the day of Christ
Philp. 1. 6.

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We ought to make vse of this doctrine for the whole course of our life.

The Church shall not be fullie purged till the last day.

The elect are called Sainis in regard the principall part is regenerated.

God, they cannot hurt vs, nor exerciſe their crueltie vpon vs; according as it is ſaid in Hoſe. 2. 18. I will make a couenant for you with the *beaſts* of the field, and with the birds of the aire.

Verſ. 10. *Therefore the redeemed of the Lord ſhall returne and come to Zion with praife: and euerlaſting ioy ſhall be vpon their heads; they ſhall obtaine ioy and gladneſſe, and ſorrow and mourning ſhall flee away.*

THe Prophet confirms the former doctrine; to wit, that nothing ſhall hinder the Lord from working the full redemption of his people, becauſe he hath decreed it. He calles them the *redeemed of the Lord*: firſt, that he might prouoke them to the conſideration of his power: ſecondly, that they ſhould not meaſure the promiſe of their returne, by looking vnto humane helpeſ. Moreouer, hee ſhewes that *they ſhall come to Zion*. Thereby giuing them aſſurance, that God will not bring them out of Babylon, to leaue them in the way. Hence we learne, that we cannot enter into Zion, which is the Church, vntill God haue *redeemed vs*: for in this example of the ancient people, we haue a paterne ſet before vs, in which wee may ſee that no man is deliuered from vnder the tyrannie of the diuel (whoſe vaffals we are all of vs by nature) vntill God haue preuented vs by his grace. For who is ſufficient to be his owne redeemer? Now becauſe the worke of this redemption belongs in particular vnto the kingdom of Chriſt, it thereupon followes, that hee is onely the finiſher of it; as himſelfe ſaith, Iohn 8. 36. Againe, it is not enough to be once redeemed: for marke what the end of it is here, to wit, that he might remaine in the Church of God, and grow daily from faith to faith. Hath Chriſt *redeemed vs* then? let vs aime at this marke with all our might.

If any ſhall reply, that we need not goe far to be receiued into the Church, for wee are brought into it by Baptiſme: I anſwere, the Prophet vnder this figure, ſpeakes of the whole courſe of our life; becauſe the *redeemed of the Lord* are then ſaid to bee truly *come into Zion*, when hauing ended this their pilgrimage, they enter into the poſſeſſion of the heavenly life. We may therewithall alſo note that the more we profit in the grace of God, and proſper in the Church, the neerer we are vnto him.

By the words of *joy and gladneſſe*, hee meanes there ſhall be ſuch felicitie vnder the King-

dom of Chriſt, that we ſhall haue ample matter of reioicing. But wherein doth true ioy and gladneſſe conſiſt? And ſurely the true and onely way to obtaine *gladneſſe*, is to ſeele that God is reconciled vnto vs, whoſe fauor alone is ſufficient to yeeld vs perfect felicitie; yea ſo far, as to make vs reioyce in tribulation: Rom. 5. 1, 2, 3. Contrauwiſe, what can comfort or glad vs, if God becauſe vs of this reconciliation? Hence wee gather a ſure doctrine; to wit, the faithfull cannot be ſaid to *reioyce* as they ought, vnleſſe they ioine *praiſes* vnto God therewith: this ſpiritual ioy therefore muſt be diſtinguiſhed from carnall and prophane ioy and delights, into which the wicked plunge themſelues: for they reioyce indeed, but the iſſue ſhewes how dangerous this laſciuioſneſſe of the fleſh is, when wee flatter our ſelues in the contempt of God. It is not without good cauſe therefore that *S. Paul* calles this ioy ſpiritual; for it conſiſts not in the inioying of earthly things, as in riches, honours, treaſures, which periſh and come to nothing in a moment; but this ioy is ſecrete, it hath his ſeat in the heart, and out of it can it not be remoued nor taken away by any meanes whatſoeuer, though Satan inducers with might and maine vpon all occaſions to diſturbe and aſſaile vs.

And therefore our Prophet addes verie well, that it is *euerlaſting, and drives away all ſorrow*: for albeit the children of God do euery day vndergoe many anguiſhes, yet ſo great is the power of their conſolation which they haue by the Spirit, that in the end it ſwallowes vp all ſorrow and mourning. We glorie, ſaith *Paul*, Rom. 5. 3. euen in our tribulations: now this glorying or boaiſting cannot be without ioy. The Apoſtles went away reioicing from before the Councell, that God vouchſafed them the honour to ſuffer rebuke for the name of Ieſus: Act. 5. 41. I graunt y faithfull are not exempt vtterly from ſorrow: nay, they are oftentimes plunged in great diſtreſſes: it is moſt true, but they are not ouercome of them, becauſe by faith they looke directly vnto this redeemer, by whoſe power they are more then conquerors. For they may be compared to one that being gotten vp to the top of ſome high mountaine, beholds the Sunne, and is gladdened with the brightneſſe of it; and in the meane while ſhould ſee others vnderneath him below in the vallies, ſo choked and ſufed with fogges and miſts, that they could not behold this light.

The hitorie contained in the next Chapter, and that which followes, is as it were a ſeale ſet vnto the former prophecies.

We cannot enter into the Church till God haue redeemed vs.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Simile.

THE XXXVI. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. Now in the fourteenth yeere of King Hezekias, Sennacherib King of Assur came vp against all the strong Cities of Iudah, and tooke them.



IN this Chapter, and in that which folloves, the Prophet recites an excellent historic, which is set as a seale vnto the doctrine of the prophesies before going, touching the afflictions of his people: in which also, God promised to shew them mercy by repulsing the Assyrians, that so hee might deliuer Ierusalem and the holy land out of their hands. By this so manifest an effect then, the people perceived that the Prophet had not foretold these things in vaine. Furthermore, God had also a purpose to informe the posteritie to come, albeit those, which then liued had no lesse need of such a spectacle then their predecessors. Our Prophet hath often threatned that Gods vengeance was at hand; that the Assyrians taried but till God gaue them a signe to imploy themselves as his scourges in his seruice: on the other side, he published promises of consolation touching the Iewes; to wit, that God would succor them when all things should be brought to an after deale. And these things were all fulfilled, but the greatest part of the people closed their eyes, when they should haue beheld these famous iudgements of God: nay, which was worse, they shamefully despised the succour which God offered them. By all which circumstaues, their fortuthnesse was altogether inexcusable.

But this serued no doubt for the comfort of the little flocke, who would not by their infidelitie cast disgrace vpon so excellent warnings, but rather by beleeuing, in deuoured to purchase credit vnto them, for their sakes that should succede. And the Prophet for his part was hereby encouraged to hold on his course with the greater affection, and with the more inuincible constancie, when he saw before his eyes, that God did as it were from heauen so gloriously confirme the doctrine which he had preached. And because the truth of God is neuer honoured according as it deserueth, if it bee not furnished with infallible testimonies of his mightie power, he being willing to relieue our infirmie, makes vs here behold as in a glasse, his workes and word ioined together; so that looke what the Prophet caught vpon earth, God confirmed from heauen. But his calling was then manifestly confirmed indeed, when the Lord deliuered Ierusalem from the siege of Sennacherib, all things being then in such a

desperate case, that the faithfull could not, but confesse that they were rid out of death by his onely power. Now yee see the reason why I haue said, that this historie is as an authenticke seale set to the former doctrines, the which (if it had been wanting) would not haue bin beleueed.

In the fourteenth yeere.] It is not without cause that he notes this circumstance of time, in which these things were done. For Hezekiah had then established the worshipp of God in his Country: and not content therewith, he had also summoned the Israelites by posts and messengers sent from all parts, with commandement that they should come to Ierusalem to offer sacrifices; to forsake that their long reuolt, that with one consent they might be reunited againe into their most holy faith, & serue God according to his word. Read 2. Chro. 30. 31. 32. Chapters. Euen when the Kingdome was brought into this good order; to wit, when superstitions were abolished, the Temple purged, and Gods true worship erected and set vp: then came the Assyrians to assaile Iudea, who wasted the Country, tooke the Cities, and subdued the land vnder his command. Ierusalem onely remained, within which Hezekiah was mued vp as in a prison.

Let vs consider a little now in what dumps this good King and his subiects were cast: for if we iudge of this calamity according to reason vnreformed, a man would thinke that God did vniustly suffer his seruant to bee brought into such extremities; because it seemed in some sort, that his godlinesse might deserue protection at Gods hands, and that hee should haue exempted him from all incumbrances; because his whole desire was bent to serue his God purely. For we may wel thinke that God brought not this scourge vpon him now for his negligence, excessie, or wantonneffe; much lesse for his superstitions or idolatry, seeing at the very first entrance into his Kingdome, he imploied himselfe to the vtmost, with exceeding diligence to establish religion in the puritie of it. What was Gods purpose herein then? Surely hee meant to try the faith and patience of his faithfull seruant.

Verf. 2. And the King of Assur sent Rabshakeh from Lachish towards Ierusalem vnto King Hezekiah with a great host, and hee stood by the conduit of the vpper poole, in the path of the suters field.

THE order of the historie may seeme somewhat here to be altered: for hee said before, that Sennacherib had taken all the Cities of Iudah: verf. 1. and now hee sends Rabshakeh from

The ends
and vices of
this history.

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2. King. 18. 4

Nota

from Lachiſh which he had beſieged: Lachiſh was not taken yet then. But we are to note that oftentimes the courſe of an historic is diſioynted, ſo as that is recited laſt which was done firſt. Beſides the Scripture haue this figure frequēt in them (as in this place) where it is ſaid, that all ſtrong Cities were taken, although ſome no doubt eſcaped, which *Hezekias* notwithstanding was vnable to ſuccour. It ſeemed then that the Aſſyrian was become Lord of the whole land, ſeeing nothing was left but Ieruſalem, in which *Hezekiah* was impriſoned.

This historic is deſcribed more at large in the ſecond booke of Kings 18. & 19. Chapters, where it is ſhewed that *Hezekiah* uſed all the meanes he could to redeeme his peace, for he would haue had it almoſt vpon any condition. He gaue 3000. talents of ſiluer, and 30. of gold, which this tyrant exacted, for payment whereof, he was driuen to rob the Temple of the veſſels that were in it, and of the plates of gold which were faſtned vpon the gates thereof, becauſe his owne treaſure waſt ſpent. But as ſuch inſatiable gulſtes can neuer be filled, ſo when he had receiued this money he then falles to demaund greater things, and impoſed vpon him harder conditions then the former, that he might vex and aſſiſt this good King to ſuffer. For nauing once wrought vpo his mindes, he thought the ſecond time to draw him to whatſoever himſelfe liſted, only he waited for ſit oportunitie to begin warres aſreth.

But the people no doubt for their parts had well deſerued to be thus ſcourged for their wickedneſſes, according as it had been before propheſied: for albeit religion flouriſhed in outward ſhew, yet their liues remained vnchanged, impietie ouerflowed, and their hearts were as foule within as euer they were before. For as much as the people repented not of their ſinnes then, was it not needfull they ſhould be chaſtiſed with the greater ſeueritie in regard of ſuch a malicious obſtinacie? But becauſe the meſure of their iniquities was not yet full, God pacified the rigor of his wrath, and gaue them an admirable deliuerance when all things were become vtterlie deſperate.

Verſ. 3. *Then came forth vnto him Eliakim the ſonne of Hilkiah, the ſteward of the houſe, and Shebna the Chancellor, and Ioah the ſonne of Aſaph the Recorder.*

Menrion was made of this *Eliakim* in the 22. Chapter: to whom the Lord promiſed the chiefe place in the kingdom after the death of *Shebna*. But it ſeemes this was but a vaine and idle promiſe, ſeeing he is ſent to the enemy to ſue for fauour, as one, being readie to yeeld and ſubmit himſelfe to the mercie of ſuch a cruell Tyrant. This might alſo aſtoniſh the hearts of the faithfull, euen to make them call the truth of Gods promiſes into queſtion. Beſides, this good king was fo deſtituted of good ſeruants, that he was conſtrained to ſend *Shebna* with the reſt,

though he knew him to be a diſloyall traytor. The word *Sopher* ſignifies a Scribe, and therefore it is often taken for Teachers, or ſuch as are learned: ſometimes for thoſe that keepe bookes, and haue the diſpoſing of the rowles or charters of Kingdomes. I haue tranſlated it *Chancellor*: for it can not be referred to the knowledge of the Law: we may alſo gather that this *Shebna* was in great credit, though he were put from the eſtate of being ſeward, or great maſter of the kings houſhold. The word *Mazkir* ſignifies a ſecretarie, or a maſter of the requiſits.

Verſ. 4. *And Rabſhekeh ſaid vnto them, Tell you Hezekiah: I pray you, Thus ſaith the great king, the king of Aſhur, What confidence is this wherein thou truſteſt?*

* This claufe I pray you, is not in Maſter Caluins text.

The Prophet ſhewes that theſe three Ambaſſadors (which repreſented in a manner the whole ſtate of the kingdom) were not only repulſed, but receiued diſgracefullie, & galled with inſupportable iniuries by the Captaine of this Tyrant. For he is ſo impudent as to aſke how *Hezekias* durſt preſume to rebell, no leſſe then if he had bin a man conuincid of Rebellion. Some expound the particule *Na*, I pray you, but it can not well ſtand with the honor (as you would ſay) of ſo proud and inſolent a Tyrant, to come vnto them by way of intreatie. He ſpeakes rather like thoſe who impoſe conditions vpon others, who are either vanquiſhed, or are readie to yeeld themſelues for feare, whom ſuch are minded to receiue to mercie, which we commonlie call, *Sommer*, that is, To call vpon, or To Summon one. But that his Summons might be of the greater authoritie, this Captaine ſpeakes in the perſon of his King: and with big words ſets forth his greatnes; the rather to daunt the heart of *Hezekias*, when he ſhould heare he had to deale with ſo powerfull an enemy. For his meaning was not only to ſay that *Hezekiah* was farre inferior to his Maſter the chiefe Monarch of the world; in compariſon of whom, *Hezekiah* was to be eſteemed no better then a meane Gentleman: but he calles him the *great King*, the *King of Aſhur*; that by theſe titles of his power and magnificence he might as it were darken the glorie of all other Kings, that ſo all might ſeeme to reſt in him alone. Which thunderbolts had bin ſufficient to haue terrified and feared the heart of *Hezekiah*, eſpeciallie ſeeing he was hurt vp, as I ſaid before, within the walles of the Citie, out of which he could not eſcape; much leſſe was he any way able to make his partie good againſt the violence of this Tyrant.

Verſ. 5. *I ſay, * Surely I haue eloquence, * Or, they are but words of the lips, but counſell & ſtrength are for the warre: on whom then doeſt thou truſt, that thou rebelleſt againſt me?*

Whereas we read in the holic hitorie, *Thou haſt ſaid*, it may be expounded thus,

thus, to wit, that *Rabshakeh* makes as if hee knew *Hezekiah* his thoughts: as if hee should say; Thus thou deliberatest with thy selfe. But the sense comes all to one, though we reade this word in the first person: for *Rabshakeh* speaks as one that had gaged the depth of *Hezekias* his enterprises, and had been made acquainted from point to point with all his purposes; and therefore scemingly reproching him, faith, I perceiue thy consultations well enough: but alas! they are but *words of the lippes*.

Now this clause is diuersly expounded: some reade, Thou saiest thou hast not the words of the lips onely: that is, thou braggest not onely of eloquence, but of courage and counsell. Others, Thou hast speech indeed, but counsell and strength are fit for war. But I approue not of them who take *words* for prayers; for that would beea sense constrained, and too far fetched.

Thus vnderstand it then; *Hezekias hath words of the lippes*: that is to say, *hee tickles your eares with goodly discourses and sweete promises, to keepe you from revolting: he hath indeed plentie of words, as they say, but of what value are they to wage warre against a mightie potentate?* as if he should say; I am not ignorant what *Hezekiah* doth, nor vpon what principles he staies himselfe, euen vpon *sweete wordes*: but these are nothing worth to wage warre withal; for counsell and strength are needfull for that. It may also be well referred to the Egyptians; as if hee should say; that *Hezekias* plaid the foole to suffer himselfe to bee gaged with faire promises. For we need not doubt but the Egyptians were forward enough in promising mountaines and wonders, although they were slow enough in performing anie thing. But sofar as such as he will speake of this matter anon, I willingly thinke that he derides *Hezekias*, as one who being stript of all furniture fit for warre; onely entertained his people with wordes full of vaine boasting.

Vers. 6.

Vers. 6. *Loe, thou trustest in this broken staffe of reede on Egypt; whereupon if a man leane, it will goe into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh King of Egypt, vnto all that trust in him.*

IT is very likely that this is distinguished from the former sentence. For hauing said that *Hezekias* entertained his people onely with glozing and flattering words, & thence concluding that his confidence was vaine; he comes now to other particulars, and inductors by all means to weaken the hearts of the people, that by the discouraging of them, he might with the greater facility cause them to yeeld. First, he labours then to bring the King into disgrace with his subiects; secondly, he awakens the hearts of the subiects, by telling them that the helpes vpon which they relied concerning Egypt, should no way help them; and therefore they were very vnwise to

expect any succour thence.

First, he compares Egypt to a *staffe of reede*; because of their weaknesse: then by way of amplification he adds, that it is *broken* thirdly, that it is so far from staying him that *leane* vpon it, that it will rather pierce his hand. The summe of all which is, that the confidence which the Iewes had in the Egyptians, should not onely be frustrate, but also hurtfull. And no doubt but *Rabshakeh* had had good cause thus to tax them, if *Hezekias* had indeed relied vpon the Egyptians. But he falsly & shamefully accuseth this good King of that whereof he neuer had so much as a thought. And yet God in the meane while paid this rude and rebellious people home with this reproch, which they worthily deserued, in suffering to wretched a cause, thus to scorne their reuolt and disloyalty. Our Prophet had sharply censured this offence before, but his reprehensions were receiued; eury one turned away his eares: was it not good reason then that the Iewes, who so vnworthily disdained the Prophet, speaking vnto them in the name of God, should be sent to schoole to such a Master as railing *Rabshakeh* was.

By this example we are admonished, that it is no maruell if at some time vnbeleueurs (who cast off the counsel of God, which tends to their saluation, setting light by all prophecies) bee forced to heare these and the like flouts from their enemies, with which *Rabshakeh* the Captaine of the Kings armie heere proudly and disdainfully scornes the Iewes. Also we may see how great difference there is betweene the admonitions of the Lord, and the reproches of Satan. When God would withdraw our mindes from trusting in the arme of flesh, he pronounceth this general curse; *Woe be to him that trusts in man.* That all the world being brought to nothing, wee might content our selues with him alone. But to encourage those whom before he had cast downe, hee sets this remedie before them; *Blessed is v' man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is,* &c. Ier. 17. 5. & 7. Contrariwise, Satan accusing vs for our vaine hopes, therewithallicites vs vnto dispaire, draws vs from euill to worse; and in the end, to vse vnlawfull meanes, as *Rabshakeh* heere doth; who scornes the hope which the Iewes had in the Egyptians helpe, that hee might bring them from that to rest vpon God onely: but hee puts the Assyrians betweene, as if saluation could appear from no piace else. He names *Pharaoh*, but he also comprehends all Egypt.

Vers. 7. *But if thou say vnto me, We trust in the Lord our God, is not that he whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah rooke downe; and said to Iudah and to Ierusalem; Ye shall worship before this altar.*

Rabshakeh vseth an argument which consists of these three members; to wit, either *Hezekiah* thinks himselfe strong enough

They that cannot indure to heare Gods voice in the ministerie of his word, shall be forced to heare of the same things by such as shall be like to their liking:

What difference is betweene the Lords admonitions and Satans reproches.

to reſiſt, or hee looks for helpe from Egypt, or, he truſts in God. If he reſt vpon his owne ſtrength, it is his folly: for what is he in compariſon of my maſter? As for Egypt, let him neuer expect helpe thence, but rather hurt and loſſe. His onely ſtay that he reſts vpon, muſt be *the helpe of God*; but had he not ouerthrowne his altars, and aboliſhed his ſeruice? will hee not therefore rather puniſh then helpe him? *Rabſhekeb* then in a word ſtrips this good King at once, of all ſuccour both of God and man. Satans drift in this, was not onely to pierce the heart of the King, and to ouerwhelme him vnder the burthen of this affliction; but alſo to ſtir vp the Commons (who commonly are factious and inconstant) to rebellion. Many where of no doubt yet doted vpon their old ſuperſtition, and would eaſilie haue been drawne to a reuolt by this ſubtile deuiſe; becauſe the ancient religion forſooth, which had long cuſtome ioined with it, was now changed by *Hezekias*, who in their conceit was iuſtly puniſhed for his raſhneſſe. For example, if any thing now fall out otherwiſe then well, the Papiſts by and by cry out with open throats, that it is a iuſt vengeance of God vpon vs, becauſe we haue bene ſo bold to aboliſh their traditions and ceremonies, receiued for ſo many hundred yeeres.

Verſ. 8. *Now therefore giue hoſtages to my Lord the King of Aſſur, and I will giue thee two thouſand horſes, if thou be able for thy part to ſet riders vpon them.*

His concluſion is, that *Hezekias* ſhall doe beſt to yeelde himſelfe without trying it out by fight, and to promiſe obedience for euer vnto the Aſſyrian. Which, that he may the rather perſwade him vnto, hee caſts his *powerie* againe in his teeth. As if hee ſhould ſay; *If I ſhould giue thee two thouſand horſes, wert thou able to furniſh them with ſufficient riders amongſt all thy people?* For hee offers him not horſes by way of honor, or that he meant in good earneſt ſo to doe; but rather to afflict and wound the heart of this good Prince. The clauiſe, *I will giue thee*, muſt be thus reſolued; *Although I ſhould giue thee two thouſand horſe, yet wert not thou able to finde horſemen enough for them.* I am not ignorant what the expoſitors write vpon this place: but whoſoever ſhall conſider euery circumſtance well, will eaſilie iudge that this was ſpoken in contempt.

Verſ. 9. *For how canſt thou deſpiſe any Captaine of the leaſt of my Lords ſeruants, and put thy truſt on Egypt for chariots and horſemen?*

Hee now confirms the former ſentence, & ſhewes that *Hezekias* is ſo far off from reſiſting the power of *Sennatherib*, that hee is ſcarſe worthy to be compared with the leaſt of his Captaines. But what is the reaſon that

he liſts himſelfe thus arrogantly? No doubt becauſe the Iewes ſhould not preſume any thing at all in regard of the abſence of the King of Aſſur, who was now beſieging Lachith. For albeit he was not yet come with all his hoſt, *Rabſhekeb* brags notwithstanding, that his *Leſſenants* are ſtrong enough; to the end *Hezekias* and the people might without delay yeelde themſelues vnder his obedience.

Verſ. 10. *And am I come now vp without the Lord to this land to deſtroy it? The Lord ſaid vnto me; Goe vp againſt this land and deſtroy it.*

Now he ſets vpon *Hezekias* another way; namely, that he ſhall aſſemble his forces in vaine, together for his defence. For he pretends that the King hath not now to deale with a mortall man like himſelfe, but rather with *God himſelfe*; becauſe he is come vp to deſtroy the land of Iudeah at his appointment. As if he ſhould haue ſaid; As many of you as ſhall reſiſt me, ſhall reſiſt God: and then your reſiſtance will be to ſmall purpoſe. Hence let vs learne, that albeit we be giuen to piety, faithfully inducuring by all means to aduance the Kingdome of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, yet wee muſt not looke for all that to be exempt from all croſſes, but rather to fit our ſelues for the bearing of them. For the Lord will not alwaies crowne our vertuous life with earthly rewards: truly ſuch recompences were vniſiting for vs. As namely, abundance of riches, inioying of our ward peace, and hauing all things that heart can wiſh. For are not the wicked therefore eſteemed the onely happy men in the eyes of the world, becauſe they are ſrolike, quiet, healthfull, and haue the world at will. Thus then it might ſeeme that our condition ſhould be no better then theirs.

God crownes not vertue alwaies with earthly honours.

But it behoues vs alwaies to ſet this example of good King *Hezekias* before our eyes, who after he had wholly ſet himſelfe to reforme religion, and to ſet vp the pure worſhip of God, was yet ſharply aſſailed with afflictions, ſo far forth, as he was not far off from deſpaire; to the end, that when we ſhall think we haue done much, wee be ſtill ready notwithstanding to ſuſtaine all ſorts of combats and perſecutions. Neither to be out of heart, if at the firſt our enemies be too hard for vs; in ſuch wiſe, that we looke euerie moment to bee ſwallowed vp aliuie of them. For theſe great crackers, and haughtie ſpirits, will eaſilie bee taken downe, after they haue caſt vp their firſt bubbles: yea, after they haue ſpit forth their venom, all their pride will quickly vaniſh and come to nought.

Note.

Rabſhekeb magnifies the greatneſſe and power of his King, to aſſright the heart of King *Hezekias*, ſee I pray you what courſe the wicked ſort takes with vs: they aſſaile vs by threats, they labour to ſhake our faith and patience by many feares; or rather, Satan himſelfe doth it indeede in their perſons. For who ſees him not ſpeaking heere in
the

Satan speakes by the mouth of Rabshekeh.

2. Cor. 11. 14

Iere. 17. 5.

We must wisely distinguish betweene the voice of God, and the voice of mē.

It is the portion of the faithfull to be railed vpon when they do the most good.

1

2

The integritye of the faithfull ought to be vnto them as a wall of brasse, to fortifie them with inuincible confidence.

Vnbeleueers know not how to distinguish betweene religion and superstition.

The raylings of Papists.

the person of this railing miscreant? Nay, which more is, he takes vnto him euen the person of God himselfe, and so transformes himselfe into an Angell of light. For what saith the Holy Ghost in other places? He that rests vpon the help of man, seeks his owne destruction, because man is a thing of nought, weake and brittle. Doth not *Rabshekeh* affirme the same here? Speakes he any otherwise then if he were a Prophet sent of God? It behoues vs therefore wisely to distinguish betweene the voice of God, and men, who deck and adorne themselves with his name vnder false pretences, for the Deuill can turne himselfe into many shapes, that he may appeare in the likenes of God. But this rayler had no cause at all to reproach *Herzekias* with this, as hath been said: for he trusted not in his forces, neither was he puffed vp in any confidence of the strength of Egypt.

But it is our portion euen then to be railed on when we doe the most good. Satan hath skill enough in deed to allaile vs by such engines, and causelesse to make vs stinke as it were in the presence of men, which I confesse is a very dangerous temptation: for we desire to maintaine our credits with men, and are much offended when they take that in euill part which is done with an honest and vpright affection; and therefore Satan labors in nothing more, then by slanders to cast disgrace vpon that which we haue done with pure consciences, for either he forgeth against vs some crime whereof we are innocent, or chargeth vs with fallhood, imputing things vnto vs which we neuer meant. But our integritye must be vnto vs as a brasse wall, whereby we may remaine vnmoueable, as *Herzekias* here doth against all such accusations and slanders.

As touching the latter member of this sentence, wherein *Rabshekeh* taxeth the King, because he had abolished Gods true worship: who sees not that this is a meere slander. *Herzekias* had indeede ouerthrowne the Idols, and the Idolatrye which God abhorred. But what maruell is it if the Infidels know not how to distinguish betweene the false god and the true, betweene religion and superstition? but we haue too much experience of this euen amongst our selues. For the Papists who are plunged ouer head and eares in their superstitions, accuse vs for abolishing infinite humane traditions, and complaine that we haue almost eleene ouerthrowne Gods whole seruence, and thus they stand railing at vs as this *Rabshekeh* doth. Should God help these heretiques who haue destroyed his Altars, profaned his Temples and all things else, which were by vs set vp in such a decent and goodly order? For the Papacie was all glorious without, euery one admired it: but alas, we remaine nothing but a few bare and naked ceremonies altogether without pomp. Will you see the reason then why they thinke the seruice of God is ouerthrowne? It is because they measure it by outward things. Therefore when any aduersitie befallles vs, then by and by they cry out: nay, it is well enough, all the fault is in the selues. These heretiques

haue brought the whole world vnto ruine by their heresies. And if they see vs plunged into any miserie, then they open their mouthes wider against vs then euer before. Yet must we still remaine strong in the faith against such horrible outcries, and must also let them know, that that which they pretend to be the seruice of God, is not; but is rather meere dotages, which we haue worthelie abolished: yea, we must not let to tell them, that all such things as haue been forged in mans braine appertaines not at all to Gods worship, but are to be esteemed as the illusions of Satan, being of all other things the most dangerous. We ought then as you see to stand out with an inuincible faith against all sorts of these imputations, wherby Satan in deuors to darken and smother the light of true religion.

But one might haue thought it strange at the first blush, that *Herzekias* had ouerthrowne all the Altars but one; and prophaned all the Temples, only one excepted: but this only defence may serue in stead of many, that nothing was done for which he had not good warrant out of Gods word; and therefore was he contented with one Altar, because God had forbidden them to erect many: he brake downe all the Images, because they had been vnauidelicly erected and set vp, against the doctrine of the law. We at this day haue the same difference with the Papists, for they blame vs for nothing more, then that we haue castrated an infinite number of their bald Ceremonies, and haue only retained those things which God hath ordeined. But in this matter we are not to dispute to nor fro touching y which may please mē; but rather how we may approue our actions vnto God.

Verf. 11. Then said *Eliakim*, and *Shebana*, and *Ioab*, vnto *Rabshekeh*, Speake I pray thee to thy seruants in the Aramitis language (for we vnderstand it) and talke not with vs in the leues tongue, in the audience of the people that are on the wall.

WE further see by this circumstance how farr *Herzekias* abased himselfe, whilst he sought by mild increasies vnto the seruants of his enemies, by his Embassadors. Secondly, the pride of *Rabshekeh*, in reiecting to curiously these humble requests. Thirdly, the indignitie of such a refusal, which is the greater, in regard the sute was for the obtaining a thing of so small importance. Hereby it is manifest that *Herzekias* was so careful to appease the rage of this Tyrant, that almost quite forgetting his royall dignitie, he endeuored to pacifie him with as lowly termes as was possible: if we be therefore wrongfullie oppressed, let vs not thinke much to part with some of our right in giuing soft answers.

Now in that he thus humbled himselfe in the sense of his owne weakness, because he was vnable to resist the Assyrian, it serues greatlie for the setting forth of Gods glorie, because he saueth this people as it were out

2. King. 18. 4
E.iod. 20. 4

1

Verf. 12.

2

3

Herzekias his example worthe our imitation.

of

of the lions iawes: for this Reluerance had neuer been so glorious, if they had bin fitted onely from some pettic danger. But seeing they were at the pits brink; the power of God shines so much the more, in that by so rare a miracle he chased away and discomfited the enemy, who now had put his knife to their throats as it were.

The Ambassadors besought *Rabshakeh* that he would not speake thus before the people; because they were naturally mutable and inconstant, and therefore might suddenly be drawne to reuolt: secondly, they were timorous, and therefore would quickly tremble euen at the thaking of a leafe: and therefore they request *Rabshakeh* not to speake in the Iewes language, for they sought nothing else but how they might find a fit meane to redeme their peace. This good King likewise did all hee could to appease the rage of the tyrant, but to no purpose; for the Ambassadors obtained nothing of *Rabshakeh*. The more he intreated, the fiercer grew hee, and overflowed in all pride, as the proprietie of the insolent is to doe.

Verf. 12. *Then said Rabshakeh; Hath my master sent mee to thy master, and to thee to speake these words, and not to the men that sit on the wall, that they may eat their owne dung, and drinke their owne pisse with you?*

WE see here the madnesse and wouluifnesse of this tyrant: whence also wee may perceiue, that the state of King *Hezekias* was in great danger. For *Rabshakeh* speakes here like a conqueror, and behaues himselfe towards *Hezekias*, as if hee had been no King at all, but rather his vassall or slaue. In that wee see him then thus swollen with pride, we must needs thinke that *Hezekias* on the other side was not a little cast downe, euen as one ouerwhelmed with sorrow, and left destitute of all succour: so as both in his owne, and all mens iudgements else, there was no way but one with him. Let vs also gather hence, that *Rabshakeh* was not sent thither to offer any conditions of peace, but rather to receiue the King to mercie, and to terrifie the people; for the bringing whereof to passe, *Sennacherib* had giuen him a puissant armie.

Hee also makes his bragges, that he hath not to doe with the King, so much as with the people; to whom he spake forsooth for their benefite and commoditie. Now that hee might make them quake and tremble yet more, he sets before them the miseries and calamities into which they plunged themselves, if they harkened vnto *Hezekias*; to wit, that they must needs die for hunger; because the extremitie would be so great, that of force they shal be constrained to eat their owne dung, and to drinke their owne pisse. They should therefore shew themselves wise, and such as had care of their owne safetie, if they forthwith yielded themselves to his mercie.

Verf. 13. *So Rabshakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Iewes language, and said; Heare the words of the great King, of the King of Assur.*

THE Prophet shewes by what praesises *Rabshakeh* inducoured to discourage the hearts of this people. And first hee telles vs that he spake in the Iewes language, notwithstanding that the Ambassadors had besought him to speake in the Aramites. Now it must needs be a great couraieue to the hearts of the faithfull, to heare this holy tongue, which was dedicated to the mysteries of heauenly wisdom, to be thus prophaned and prostituted to such horrible blasphemies: neither could it be auoided, but this reutation throwdlic shaked the vnfirm and weak. But hence we may note, that there are no enemies more noisome then those that speake in our owne tongue. Of which, we haue experience now in very many who learne our tongue, that is to say, our manner of speech; that they may the better insinuate themselves into the cares of the simple and ignorant, to turne them away from the truth.

Thirtie yeeres agoe the Papists had a barbarous language, vtterly estranged from the stile of the holy Ghost: there was scarcely to be heard amongst them, one word that faoured any thing at all of Christianitie: but now they haue learned to varnish ouer their blasphemies with the language of Canaan, that so we might take them for honest men. And thus wee see the diuell hath filed and furbished their tongues; for he is their father and instructor, as hee was in times past vnto *Rabshakeh*.

When it is said, he stood vp; it is to set forth the pride and insolencie of this varlet, for his outward gestures manifest sufficiently how arrogantly he behaued himselfe. No doubt he stood before; but now hee raiseth vp himselfe, to be the better seene and feared of the Iewes. And hauing yet once againe told them the greatnesse of his King; he addes vnto it the message with which he was sent. For it is one of Satans policies with high wordes to set forth the power of our aduersaries, and to make the dangers seeme greater then they be indeed, to bring vs out of heart: for wee faint by and by, as soone as our eies are but a little dazed with the glory of earthly things. Against it therefore we are to oppose the power of God, which will be sufficient to arme vs with strength, against all the powers of darknesse. The enemies cease not to brag proudly, euen with open mouth of their greatnesse and power, and scorne our feeblenesse and weaknesse; but if the Lord be with vs, what should astonish vs?

Verf. 14. *Thus saith the King; Let not Hezekiah deceiue you: for he shall not be able to deliuer you.*

IN giuing to his Master the title of a King, he speakes of *Hezekias* as if hee were but some

Verse 11.

No enemies worse than those that speake our owne language.

Note.

Satans policies.

some common person, and giues him no title at all. Also, not content to continue his slanders against this good man, he now disgorgeth his venome euen against God himselfe, calling the trust & confidence which *Hezekias* had in his fauor, (whereunto he also exhorts all his) nothing but impostures and deceits.

Slanders of
the Papists,

Wee at this day are assailed with the like slanders of the Papists, when they say, we do nothing else but seduce and leade men into perdition, by teaching the to trust perfectlie in one only God. But we neede not maruell much if they cast those reproches vpon vs which were cast vpon this good King, seeing they proceed from the same author and father of lies, euen the Deuill. Where he saith, *Hezekias* is vnable to deliuer his people, it was very true in deed, vnlesse God did also put to his hand. Neither did *Hezekias* attribute this vnto himselfe, to rob God of his honor: but freeilie protested, that his owne safetie, and the safetie of his people depended vpon God only. But it was needful that this aduerfarie should disguise his words, as the wicked doe at this day, whē they meane to defame our doctrine, for they forge faire and goodlie pretexes to make our words hereticall in shew, so as they easily deceiue the hearers, vnlesse they haue their eyes in their heads, to consider of all things wisely.

Vers. 15. Neither let Hezekiah make you to trust in the Lord, saying, The Lord will surely deliuer vs: this Citie shall not be giuen ouer into the hand of the King of Assur.

NOW *Rabshekeh* recites *Hezekias* his exhortation, by which he encouraged the people, and adds his refutation, as if it had been but a vaine speech, euen the inuentions of his owne braine: whence it appeares, that the wicked make none account at all of the power of God, although they can speake of it to serue their owne turne. For albeit he denies not plainly that God is able to help his people if he would, but makes them beleeeue he is angrie with them, and therefore is their enemy, yet in ouerthrowing their faith (as much as in him lies) he abolisheth the power of God, because his meaning was so to smite the hearts of this ponne people with terror, that they should be constrained through despair to subiect themselves to the lawes of this victorious Tyrant.

Moreover, by another subtletie he also inducours to wring frō them their trust in Gods help, in that he assures them as we shall see in the next verse with promises of inioying plētie and ease. For what is able to worke in vs a desire to reuolt from God sooner, then whē we are drawne thereunto with the shew of profit and pleasure. If the world begins once to smile abuse vpon vs, and to glad our hearts, then behold the hope of eternall life begins forthwith to vanish, for our senses alwaies dote vpon present things. *Rabshekeh* hauing armed himselfe with this engin, giues them this admonition, Depend not vpon vncer-

taine hopes, rather take that which is certaine. This maner of speech hath great efficacy in it to allure vs to a reuolt. For men are apt to nothing more, then to be possessed of that which may bring them profit: and it is exceeding irksome and tedious vnto them to be deferred, or to hang in suspence, so as to preferre the good which is yet farre off, before the commodities which are before their eyes. See *Rabshekeh*s argument then: *Hezekias* promiseth you help from God, but you see no such matter: he therefore seekes to captiue your wits in the expectation of things vnertaine: but the King my Master will not only promise, but wil performe in giuing you those things which you see. This might seeme to be a very strong argument. But let vs finde out the fallacie, for Satan is often wont by such sleights to turne vs from depending vpon Gods prouidence.

The Lord calles vs to the hope of eternall life which as yet is hidden from vs: (for we hope for die things which wee see not.) Hee promiseth that he will be our Saviour: in the meane while he suffers vs to languish and faint many times, so as it seemes all our hope is but in vaine, if we only keepe our eyes fastned to the estate of present things. Satan sets now vpon vs, and thus begins to whisper in our eares. And why dost thou hope thus in vaine? What is the frute of thy faith? What expects thou out of this world? In a word, we must be armed to wrestle thus against Satan euery day. When Christ calles vs to heauen, Satan inducours to hold vs groueling to the earth. We must therefore stick close to the promises which are set before vs, that hoping about hope, we may stand fast in the Lord, and neuer suffer our selues to be seduced nor withdawned from trusting in him by any allurements whatsoever.

Vers. 16. Hearken not to Hezekiah, for thus saith the king of Assur, Make appointment with me, and come out to me, that euery man may eat of his owne vine, euery one of his owne fig-tree, and drinke euery man the water of his owne well.

Wee must walke by faith, and not by sight. 1. Cor. 5. 7.

Rom. 8. 25.

Wee haue need to put on the whole armor of God. Ephes. 6. 11.

Or, make a blessing.

WHILEST he deuisech how to estrange the peoples hearts from *Hezekias*, he therewithall entiseth the vnto present pleasures, that they may quite forget God, and wait no longer vpon him. As if he should say, Trust not in God, Trust rather in my King. See how Satan playes the Sophister: for in darkening Gods goodnes by his fogges and mists, and masking vs with vailles of false hopes, he sets vpon the creatures in stead of the Creator, to wrap vs vp in his nets.

Well, *Rabshekeh* presents profit, pleasure, and ease before them by this vaine brag; to wit, God offers you benefits, but they are far off: I haue mine here in mine hand. Now albeit he vseth *Hezekias* his name here, yet vpon the matter, the comparison stands betwene God and the Assyrians. For *Hezekias* being indeed the true seruant of God, he played not the hypoerite in boasting of his trust and confidence

dence failly: but reſting vpon the immutable and vnchangeable promiſes, hee faithfully exhorted the people (as his dutie was) to reſt quietly vpon God. Contrariwiſe, *Rabſhekeb* clothes his King with Gods ſpoiles as it were, and as the ſeruant and vaſſall of the diuell, indeuoured to withdraw the peoples minds from their true allegiance vnto God, to all impietic.

To make *bleſſing* with him, ſignifies friendly to pacific: as if he ſhould ſay; Fight not, venture not your ſelues that way; but yeeld your ſelues, and ſubmit you freely to my King. Now *Sennacherib* not onely craues audience, but would alſo haue them to do homage and fealtie; which that he might the better draw them vnto, hee couers this odious tenne of ſeruitude, with the word *bleſſing*. Hee counſels them to redeeme their peace and other commodities, which they inioied before at his hands, by this woſull reuolt; to wit, that they ſhould forſake *Hezekias* to cleaue vnto him. Now it was the moſt ſeruile and miſerable condition that might be, to forſake this good King whom God had eſtabliſhed, who alſo bare the image of Chriſt: for what was it elſe but to renounce God himſelfe, who had created and ſet vp in the middeſt of them this ſigne of his heauenly fauour?

Verſ. 17. Till I come and bring you into a land like your owne land, euen a Land of wheat and wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

Now hee addes a condition much more vile then the former: for he ſhewes that peace can no way be procured with *Sennacherib*, but by yeelding themſelues vnto *Baniſhment*. And what was that but to forſake Gods true worſhip, to throw themſelues into ſuperſtitions; and willingly to caſt themſelues out of that inheritance which God had giuen them: But in regard that *Rabſhekeb* ſpeaks to men deſolate, and ſuch as were aſtoniſhed with the preſent danger, hee boldly challengeth of them, whatſoever himſelfe liſtech; to the end they may at the leaſt procure the ſafety of their liues.

And here we ſee as in a glaſſe, that his words are nothing elſe but a liuely representation of thoſe temptations & aſſaults, wherewith Satan daily laies ſiege againſt our faith. For all his practices tend onely to plucke vs away from our confidence in God, by the allurements and pleaſures of this world. What? is it not good to ſleepe quietly in a whole ſkinne, and to redeeme thy peace any way? Thou wouldeſt be happy; doth not happineſſe conſiſt in the plentiful inioying of all things? But then eſpecially he aſſailes vs thus, when he ſees vs in miſericie; then is he bold, & dares more vehemently ſollicite vs to ſhake off Gods yoke; but ſo, that ſtill he doth it with fetches and cloſe conuiances, as hee may beſt couer our reuolt with the ſhew of ſome good.

Now when he hath gotten vs in his nets ſo far forth, that we eſteem better of things

preſent, then of thoſe to come, he addes this condition with it alwayes; to wit, that we will now be his ſeruants, and runne at his becke: and this we can by no meanes eſcape, when hee hath once tickled vs with his deceitfull hopes, and with the taſte of earthly things.

But becauſe this word exile, founded ſomewhat harſhly and vnpleaſantly in the cares of this people, it being no eaſie matter for them to leaue the ſweetneſſe of Iudea; *Rabſhekeb* willing to let them know that they ſhould looſe nothing by abandoning their Country, telles them, that the Country into which they ſhould be caried, was no leſſe fruitful and plentiful then theirs. And thus hee went about to dazle their eies, that they might not thinke themſelues to be looſers any way by the bargaine. Yet doth he finely omit that which was the principall, to wit, the ſeruice and worſhippe of God, the Temple, the Kingdome, and ſacred order & government, with other matters appertaining to the heauenly inheritance. For alas! without theſe, what felicitie is there? Wherefore let euery one of vs in the feare of God learne, to fix the right knowledge of ſpiritual benefites faſt in our hearts: for it is not for nought that *Dauid* ſaith, he would rather be a doore keeper in the houſe of his God, then (with all the delights and pleaſures of this world) to dwell in the tents of the vngodly. For he that once ſuffers his heart to be glewed to the loue of earthly things, is in danger thereby to deprive himſelfe of true happineſſe. For this is that horrible iudgement wherby God often auengeth himſelfe vpon mens incredulitie. Let all the faithfull therefore feare before God, and beware that they faint not vnder anie calamities or afflictions whatſoever.

Verſ. 18. Leſt *Hezekiah* deceiue you, ſaying; The Lord will deliuer vs. Hath any of the gods of the nations deliuered his land out of the hand of the King of *Aſhur*?

Here is now another argument, differing from the former; by which he labours to ſeduce the peoples hearts from their allegiance to King *Hezekias*, and from their truſt and confidence in God. He bragged before that he was Gods ſeruant, ſent of him to deſtroy the land of Iudea: for which cauſe he promiſeth vnto himſelfe aſſurance of the victory. But now the miſerable feares not to aduance himſelfe againſt the Lord of hoſtes. For you muſt know that the wicked doe not alwayes at the firſt chop diſcouer all their impietic touching their contempt of Gods maieſtie; but the Lord by degrees laies open their thoughts, and conſtrains them to caſt vp the poſſon which lay hid within them. This wretch now then goes on further in his blaſphemies, and feares not to ruſh againſt the higheſt Maieſtie, as if hee were the ſtronger.

But he ſpeakes in the perſon of his Maſter,

Satan conditions which hee vſually addes to his temptations.

Pſal. 84. 10.

Verſe 10.

Note.

who had obtained great victories ouer many mightie nations, which indeede had their gods; vnder whose protection they thought themselves safe. *Sennacherib* hauing subdued these, thought also that he had ouercome their gods, vpon whose help they rested. Thence it comes that he puffes vp himselfe so farre in pride, that he dares iustle against the liuing God: yea, he is caried away with such madnes, that he feares not to oppose his strength against the power of the Almighty.

You see then, that albeit the wicked scene at the first to be farre from the contempt of Gods maiestie, yet in the end they manifest that they attribute all to themselves, and vterly exclude him. In words I grant they will giue the praise of their victories vnto their gods, but forthwith they sacrifice vnto their owne nets, and offer incense to their yarne, as *Abacuk* saith, 1. 16. which practise our hypocrites imitate at this day. For if they obtaine any victorie, they by and by runne and thanke their Idols: but when that is done, they also thanke their owne counsels, policies, manhood, and their forces: so as a man may well perceiue that vpon the matter they attribute all their successe vnto themselves, and not vnto their Idols. In this his proud boasting then, he shewes himselfe to be a liar, when he acknowledged God the author of his victories.

On the other side it could not be but the heart of good King *Hezekias* must needs be wonderfullie grieved in hearing God to be thus charged with breach of his promises, whē this wicked one railed thus against God, and matcht him with Idols. But these things are written, to the end we might consider the patience of this good King, and also follow his example when the like shall befall vs.

Have any of the gods of the nations?] When he opposeth himselfe against all Gods, as one that had ouermatcht them, it is so farre from common sense, that the wicked themselves do shudder and tremble at it: and yet if the Lord doe but a little presse them, he easily draws forth of them such confessions as this. When they haue premeditated what they will say, then they can faine themselves Gods seruants forsooth, but soone after he inforceth them to confesse and vter forth that which was concealed within. Let vs know then that superstition is alwaies ioined with pride, so as it is vnpossible but he should aduance himselfe about all that which is called God, which in his heart acknowledgeth him not. We neede not wonder then that wicked men are proud and rebellious, for it is only the pure and right knowledge of God which is able to humble our stout hearts. And yet this miscreant is no way excused, for casting the vanitie and feeblenes of these Idols iustly in their teeth: for wee must lopke at his intent and pride, seeing he scornes not so much the superstition and vaine confidence of the Gentiles, as through their sides to wound (if he could) euen the highest Maiestie. Euen as that tyrant *Dionysius*, who resisted God, and prouoked him to the fight, whilst he scorned his owne Idols: for against his conscience he

derided the God which he could scarcely comprehend in his shallow braine. The like is to be said of all other Infidels, who haue mocked at false religions, which they thought were of God.

Note we here also the other blasphemie by which the diuine Maiestie is wickedlie violated, when *Rabshekeh* couples the true God with the false, as if he were one of their consorts. For what blasphemie is greater then to match the immortall God, the author of all things, with dunghill gods: truth with lyes, glorie with ignemie, and hell with heauen? The Lord our God is great, and worthie to be praised, saith *Dauid*: yea, he is to be feared aboute all gods: for all the gods of the Hea-then are Idols, but the Lord made the heauens, strength and glorie are before him, power and beautie are in his sanctuarie, &c. *Psal.* 96. 4. 5.

Vers. 19. Where is the God of Hamath, and of Arpad? Where is the God of Sepharuaim? Or how haue they deliuered Samaria out of mine hands?

20. *Who is hee amongst all the gods of these lands, that hath deliuered their countrie out of mine hand, that the Lord should deliuer Ierusalem out of mine hand?*

Some thinke *Hamath* to be Antioch in Syria: *Arpad*, that Citie whence people were taken to inhabit Damascus, and that *Sepharuaim* was situated in this countrie. If these things be so, then *Rabshekeh* recites here the ancient names of the Cities whence in times past many nations came forth: but afterward they not only lost their renowne, but their proper names also, that such a change might the rather affect and moue them. Howsoeuer it be, he expressely notes out the neighbour cities which were best knowne by name to the Iewes, that the ruin of them might touch them the more neere: neither do I doubt but these places were of Syria, and Israel. As if he should say, You see these two kingdomes subdued, which notwithstanding had so many gods and patrons, and doe you thinke that your God can resist me? The expositors take the particule *Chi* for an interrogation in both places. Haue the gods of the nations deliuered them? Shall your God deliuer you then? But that the sense might runne the better, I had rather translate it thus, Let your God deliuer Ierusalem out of mine hand? This seemes also to be spoken tauntingly, as if in scorne he should haue said, Yea, I warrant you, your God will deliuer you, as the gods of the Gentiles deliuered those that worshipped them. Now this ignorance of the wicked proceeds from this, they know not that God punisheth mens sinnes when aduersitie befallles them. First of all then they deceiue themselves by making an ouerthwart comparison: Oh, I haue ouercome this or that people, therefore it is I that am the efficient in this matter: for they know not that God by

Hezekias his
patience
worthie our
imitation.

Dionysius.

their hands executes his wrath vpon the people, whom he for their iniquities hath deſtinated to deſtruction. For though they will not vtterly deny but they haue received ſomewhat in their victories from him, howbeit it is but ſainedly, becauſe they neither ſee his will nor his iuſtice therein.

In the next place they ſtep one degree higher; that is, euen to equall themſelues with God: I haue overcome them whom God proteſted; & therefore I haue alſo overcome himſelfe. Heere is a liuely deſcription of that which we ſaw before in the tenth Chapter. Ha I Aſhur the rod of mine indignation: but he thinks not ſo. There the Lord admoniſhed the faithfull, that although *Sennacherib* in his outrageous pride, ſtroue to abolith all diuinitie; yet he was alwaies to hold this principle, that hee could put nothing in execution, but what God himſelfe from heauen ſhould ſuffer.

It is our parts then to acknowledge that God corrects vs by the hands of wicked men, who are the rods of his wrath: and therefore to turne our eyes from them, and caſt them vpon him, who iuſtly corrects vs for our tranſgreſſions. If the wicked preuaile, let vs not thinke that Gods arme is therefore broken: but let vs know that we were vnworthy of his helpe. For he it is that armes tyrants againſt vs for our ruin; hee puts weapons and munition into their hands, hee driues them to and fro which way ſoeuer he thinks good, and deliuers vs vp into their hands, when we haue ſhaken off his yoke of obedience from our neckes.

When we ſee the Turke to ſwell ſo proudly as he doth at this day againſt vs, and is already become maſter of an infinite multitude of Chriſtians: we muſt not be troubled at it, as if Gods arme were ſhortened, or as if hee wanted power to deliuer vs. No, but wee ought rather to conſider how many waies thoſe of Grecia & Aſia haue prouoked Gods wrath againſt them, whileſt ſo many villanies and abominations haue had the full ſwindge in theſe countries, whileſt ſo many horrible impieties and ſuperſtitions haue bin ſuffered to raigne there. It was requiſite then that the chaſtiſement ſhould be the ſharper, that the iniquities of ſuch as made profeſſion of Gods name in hypocriſie, might be ſuppreſſed. Thence hath the proſperitie of the Turke ſprung; theſe followed thoſe horrible waſtes which we ſee in all the eaſterne parts. And yet how inſolent is the Turke? How ſets he vp the creſt, ſcorniug our religion, and wonderfully extolling his owne, or rather worſhips himſelfe indeede, and ſacriſiecth to his yarne, as was ſaid before out of *Habacuck* of other infidels.

Let vs be warned to lay theſe iudgements of God neere to our hearts, and not imagin that the Turke was able of himſelfe to conquer ſo great an Empire, but that it was the Lord who let him looſe thus to puniſh the iniquities of men. But his pride in due time ſhall be reſpreſſed. Now albeit proſperitie in it ſelfe be a teſtimonie of Gods fauour, yet we muſt not begin there, if we will iudge thereof as is

meete. For ſo play the Turkes and Papiſts: if they obtaine the victories, they conclude by and by that they haue God at their becke for ſooth. But when we know him as we ought, his benefiſts ſhall come to vs in their order; to wit, they ſhall ſerue as teſtimonies to aſſure vs of his fauour and power. And yet wee muſt bee exceeding watie how we attribute any thing to our ſelues: for our mindes are no ſooner poſſiſſed with a falſe confidence, but we ſhall be ſo tranſported & caried away with furie, that God ſhall bee found no more worthy afterward to be matched ſo with vs. At the firſt, the wicked will deteſt ſo much as manifeſt an impietie; but when they are once beſotted with diuiliſh pride, to aray themſelues with Gods his ſpoiles, it is then eaſie to fall into this beaſtly ignorance. I grant that *Sennacherib* had ſome ſhew of pietie; for wee ſhall reade afterward, that hee was ſlaine in his Temple whileſt he was worſhipping Niſroch his God, to procure his fauour and good will: but as he here conſounds the Creator of heauen and earth, with the gods of the Gentiles, ſo alſo when occaſion ſhould haue offered it ſelſe, hee would haue made no bones at all to haue railed vpon his owne Idoll.

Verſ. 21. *Then they kept ſilence, and answered him not a word: for the Kings commandement was, ſaying; Anſwer him not a word.*

This is added that wee might yet better conceiue in what a woſull caſe Iudea was: for this good King hauing but weak means left, is conſtrained to put vp all wrongs, and to let his enemy haue the laſt word. He had ſent his Ambaſſadors to appeaſe his furie: when this preuailed not, hee forbids them to commune with him, that they might no further inſenſe this cruell woollfe, who was but too much enraged before. Yet it is not eaſilie diſcerned whether the Prophet ſpeakes here of the Ambaſſadors, or of the people, to whom *Rabſhekeſh* vttered theſe blaſphemies. It is moſt likely that it ſhould be referred rather to thoſe which kept the walles, who notwithstanding ſtood ſtill without tumult, albeit the enemy gaullied them to the quicke by his reproches; becauſe they obeyed the commandement of their King. Whence we gather, that it is a ſingular grace of God to ſee a peaceable and an obedient people, eſpecially when all things are confuſed and at the laſt caſt.

But ſome may obieſt, that it was no time now to command them ſilence, when ſuch blaſphemies were diſgorged againſt God: for we are not to diſemble the matter, whileſt the wicked ſtand breaking their ieiſts vpon his Maieſtie, no, though it were with the danger of our liſe? At leaſt wee ought to make it ſome way appeare, that we cannot indure to heare his honour and glory to be trod vnder foote. But it is not ſaid, that they held their peace, as giuing conſent to that which hee ſpake, or to approoue of thoſe blaſphemies

Chap. 37 386

A good leſſe.

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Turke.

Note.

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Obieſt.

The Turkes
pride ſhall
be reſpreſſed
in due time.

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which he belched out against God, which no doubt vexed them sore, albeit they vttered neuer a word. For the Ambassadors sorrowed and wept, & from their inward griefe which pressed them, proceeded the renting of their garments: by which outward signe, they testified that they abhorred his blasphemies. Now in as much as it had been but time lost, to haue reasoned the case with *Rabshekeh*, they returned quietly without any word at all: the people on the other side, who could haue gotten nothing by contending, are content to oppose their signes against this miscreants pride.

Verse 22.

A commendable magnanimitic.

And truly it is a very commendable fortitude not to be bowed, but quietly to keepe our standings, when it is not permitted vs to answer. Hence learne, that we are not to contend against the wicked at all times, when they teare the blessed name of God in peeces by their outrages; because in so bitter a combat, and amidst so manie railings there is no roome left for defence of the truth.

A good caution.

And yet we must not so giue the raines to our cowardlinesse, that we should thinke our felues excused, if wee keepe silence when the wicked lift vp themselves against God. For our silence is not to be approved of, vlesse in some sort we shew that it greatly disliketh vs, and that we giue them to vnderstand, as much as in vs lieth, that there is nothing more insupportable to vs, then to heare the holy name of God rent in peeces. Wee must giue testimonies of our zeale then, lest the enemies should thinke that we lightly esteemed the honour of God, in that wee are not moued when they blaspheme.

Verf. 22. Then came *Eliakim*, the sonne of *Helkiah*, the steward of the house, and *Shebna* the Chancellor, and *Ioah* the sonne of *Asaph* with rent clothes, and told him the wordes of *Rabshekeh*.

Now wee see that *Eliakim* and the other Ambassadors were not silent, as if they had approved of the impieties of *Rabshekeh*, or, that they temporised in respect of the danger: for they rent their garments, and thereby shewed how much they were offended with these blasphemies. I except the hypocrite *Shebna*, who was forced with thame to doe as others did, though but for fashions sake onlie. The Lewes and other casterne people were wont to rent their clothes, when they meant to shew their great detestation of something: for as their constitutions were much more fierce then ours, who dwell in these cold Countries, so were they more violent in their outward gestures, maner of their attire, goings, and such other signes. We must also note in this place, that those who passed by the iniuries which were done to their owne persons, yet rent their clothes when they heard the name of God blasphemed: for those that are vnreconcilable in a particular iniurie, where patience is required, and are not moued when they heare the holie name of God rent with reuilings, such shew (I say) that they haue no zeale at all in them.

THE XXXVII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. And when *Hezekiah* heard it, he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth, and came into the house of the Lord.



He Prophet shews that nothing remained to this good King but one onely hope of saluation; namely, to poure out his complaints into Gods bosome, who is a iust Iudge: according as

it is said, Psal. 123. 2. The eyes of the faithfull wait vpon him, euen as the eyes of bond seruants wait vpon their masters and mistresses, when they are oppressed. When Ierusalem then scemes lost, *Hezekias* destituted of all humane helpes flees vnto God for his protection. And thus he confesseth, that this is the onely remedie when things are become desperate. Now herein Gods grace shined in such wise, that it was a manifest miracle shewed to all, when the King with all his subiects

were deliuered out of the mouth of the lion. This circumstance therefore is to be noted, to the end wee may take knowledge of the excellencie of so great a benefit.

Here we are also taught what course to take in extreme dangers: wee must not be slothfull nor idle in crauing helpe of God, who by this meanes calles vs vnto him. Wee must not then stand amazed nor dismaied, but rather be prickted forward by our necessities, which presse vs to seeke his assistance: for that vse *Hezekias* makes of his afflictions. He goes forthwith into the Temple, no otherwise then into a place of refuge, to hide himselfe and his people vnder the shadow of Gods wings.

Thereunto hee also ioines the outward signes of repentance, he rents his garments, he puts on sackcloth, and couers himselfe with ashes, & doth other things, which were then solemnic signes of godly sorrow, by which (being vnder sore afflictions) they condemned themselves before God as poore malefactors, and humbly sought pardon of him. Now the modestie of this holy King is wonderfull, seeing he is not ashamed to prostrate himselfe

God calles vs to him by extreme perils, therefore we must not be slothfull in crauing his aid & assistance.

Hezekias his modestie.

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in the preſence of his God, though he had brought ſo worlthic things to paſſe, and was adorned with ſo many rare and excellent virtues. On the other ſide we may behold in him a wonderfull courage of mind, and ſtedfaſtneſſe of faith, in that the weight of ſo great a triall hindred him not freely to ſeeke unto that hand for help which ſharplie aſſailed him. There is not one amongst an hundred to be found but will uirumure if God doe touch him but a little more then ordinarie; yea, they will be readie (if they haue done any good) to twite God in the teeth with it, and thinke themſelues but hardlie recompenced for the ſame at his hands. Others will complaine and ſay, It is but in vaine and time loſt to ſerue God, when they ſee things fall not out as they would haue them. But wee ſee none of theſe things in *Hezekias*, for he is not aſhamed to confeſſe his fault, notwithstanding he was indued with the true feare of God.

Hezekias his Redfall ſaith.

Therefore if we deſire to ſeeke reconciliation with God, and to ſeele his fauor in the day of aduerſitie, let vs giue ſome teſtimonies of our repentance, and francklie acknowledge and confeſſe our ſinnes: for afflictions comes not out of the duſt, *Job. 5. 6.* but God ſolicits vs thereby to amendment of life. I grant that ſackcloth and aſhes ſerue to little purpoſe, vneleſſe the affection of the heart go formoſt: for hypocrites (as we know) are but too forward and ouer-liberrall in their ceremonies. The Holy Ghoſt (as wee haue ſcene before) requires theſe exerciſes, and giues them their iuſt commendation; yet ſo, as they be alwaies vſed to a right end. And no doubt it was alſo a ſigne of ſingular modeſtie and meekneſs, to ſee this good King and all the people by theſe helps to ſtirre vp one another to the feare of God: alſo, in that he clothed himſelfe with this deformed and baſe apparell the more freely to confeſſe his fault, which is an humilitie that Kings and Princes are aſhamed to imitate.

Verſ. 2. *And hee ſent Eliakim the ſteward of the houſe, and Shebna the Chancellor, with the elders of the Priests clothed in ſackcloth, unto Iſaiah the Prophet, the ſonne of Amos.*

3. *And ſaid vnto him, This is a day of tribulation, and of rebuke, and blaſphemie: for the children are come to the birth, and there is no ſtrength to bring forth.*

BY this Ambaſſage he not only meant to call *Iſaiah* to lament this calamitie with him, but alſo to haue ſome conſolation from the mouth of the Lord; for if prayers be not grounded vpon the word of God, they will be but ſo many words caſt into the ayre. Wee know that the vnbeleeuers will make both loude and long prayers, and yet flee away from God, either by deſpising, or in vtter reiecting his promiſes. Here is a ſigne of *Hezekias* his true deuotion then, that being kindled with the zeale of prayer, he addes there-

Prayers vnſtable, vnleſſe they be ſupported by the word.

unto a confirmation of his hope, leſt he ſhould ſant vnder the temptation; alſo, in that he keeps himſelfe cloſe to the means ordained of God, and deſires to heare his voice by the mouth of his Prophet *Iſaiah*. For albeit he reſted vpon none but God only, yet he ieiectis not the teſtimonic of a mortall man like himſelfe: and this is the cauſe why the title of the Prophet is here expreſſie mentionned, becauſe he lent to *Iſaiah* to be confirmed by ſome new propheſie. And thus he names him, not as a priuat man, but as the ſeruant of the Lord, whoſe office it was to comfort the King by ſome word of conſolation.

There are two notable remedies then by which we are ſuccored in affliction. Firſt, we muſt call vpon God for his deliuerance: Secondly, we muſt ſend for the Prophets of God (if they be to be found) that they may giue vs ſome word of conſolation: for it is their charge to comfort and reſtifie the afflicted, by ſetting the pretious promiſes of life before them. But if Prophets be wanting, yet we ſhall haue ſufficient and full conſolation in the word it ſelfe. For we muſt aſke counſell of theſe Prophets which God hath ſent, not only during the terme of their liues, but for euer afterwards, and of thoſe that ſucceed them: for although themſelues be dead, yet we haue their bookes ſtill with vs: their doctrine liues, and ſhall remaine for euer: but the ſumme is, we muſt alwaies aſke counſell of God.

Two ſoueraigne remedies by which we may receive comfort in affliction.

Some may demand, whether *Hezekias* was not ſufficiently inſtructed, and furniſhed with the promiſes, was it not a ſigne of infidelitie in him then to ſeeke for new promiſes of the Prophet? I anſwere, It is not to be imputed to him for infidelitie or diſtruſt that he ſeekes a new promiſe, becauſe being beſt acquainted with his owne infirmitie, he was not aſhamed to ſeeke new confirmations of his faith.

Queſt. Anf.

The fleſh alwaies ſolicits vs to diſtruſt, therefore we ought not at any time to deſpiſe new ſupplies: nay rather it ſtands vs in hand to vie all the beſt meanes we can to heate backe the multitudes of temptations which dayly preſſe vs. For Satan inuitions vs to cloſe on euery ſide, that if we be not well furniſhed indeed, it is not poſſible for vs to wind out of his ſnares and intanglings. Although we be well inſtructed in Gods word then, and haue learned that he will ſurely help vs in the day of trouble, yet when ſome extraordinarie ſurge or waue ariſeth, it is all the need then to get vs to the mouth of the Lord againe and againe, and ſtill to ſeeke out new confirmations to comfort, quicken, and ſtrengthen our faith. We haue no particular propheſies now, but we ought to apply the generals to our particular vies, becauſe they were written for our learning, *Rom. 15.*

The fleſh euer more ſolicits vs to diſtruſt, therefore we ought neuer to deſpiſe new ſuccors.

In that *Hezekias* ſent Ambaſſadors to *Iſaiah*, and went not himſelfe, it was becauſe he praid in the Temple: for it appeares the mourning was generally, in regard that both the elders and counſellers were clothed in ſackcloth, it is alſo very probable that the King had proclaimed a publike faſt. Let vs alſo note, that *Iſaiah* liued not in the Kings houſe to giue himſelfe

Although our hearts be well confirmed in the promiſes, yet vpon new aſſaults we ought once yea twice to get new confirmations from the mouth of the Lords.

to iollitie there : but in his absence, God meant to proue the faith of this good King.

Verf. 4. *If so bee the Lord thy God hath heard the words of Rabshekeh, who the King of Assur his master hath sent to raile on the liuing God, and to reproch him with words, which the Lord thy God hath heard, then list thou vp thy praiers for the remnant that are left.*

Obiect.

IT seems that *Hezekias* doubts whether the Lord would heare or no : for the particule *Vltis* is translated, *if peradventure* ; and it is taken in this sense almost thoroughour the whole Scripture. But we must note that the faithfull are accustomed to speake thus, though they bee most assured that God will succor them. They are indeed somewhat perplexed, but it is onely in regard of the difficultie of the temptation wherewith they are pressed. *Hezekias* might well doubt, if we looke vpon the estate as it then presently stood; but hauing turned his eyes towards the word of God, hee became more certaine of Gods will, and then ceased to tremble any more. Now because it cannot be auoided, but the flesh will alwaies fight against the spirit in the faithfull, and so ouercharge them, that they are faine still to drag y^e wing or to traile the leg after them, they sometimes fit their words according to the difficultie which presents it selfe before them. And in other places we may obserue, that Gods seruants haue spoken in this manner, though the matter were out of doubt. For when *Saint Peter* exhorted *Simon* the Magician to repentance, he addes; *If peradventure* the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee : but hee therein counsels him not to tremble, or to pray in vnbeliefe, because such a praiers had been in vaine : but he sets before him the greatnesse of his sinne, that hee might quicken him vp with the greater feruencie to awaken at the last, that hee might proue a true conuert indeed. This word *if then*, is not put here in a doubtfull sense, but signifies that which we vsually speake, *it may be*, when we dare hope or promise something to our selues.

Act's 8. 22.

Neither doth *Hezekias* speake thus, as if God vnderstand not what the wicked say, or as if he were utterly ignorant of it, but because this principle was fixed in his heart; to wit, that the Lord is neer vnto all such as call vpon him in truth : he now therefore armes himselfe with praiers, and is fully resolu'd to withstand all distrust. And for as much as he could not attaine the goale without great strife, he saith, *peradventure*, or, *it may be*. Note also that he addes here two sorts of *hearing*, which in part resolues this question. True it is that at the first there seemes to be some repugnancie in these words ; *It may be hee will heare the words which he hath heard* : but it is a very apt kind of speech ; for *Hezekias* is certainly perswaded that nothing is hidden from God. He onely disputes in himselfe, whether God would examin this miscreants blas-

phemies. For in regard that he often defers his punishments for a time, and seemes to winke at mens impieties, it seemed that hee now also tooke no knowledge of these blasphemies. Lastly, he takes it for granted, that all things are manifest & naked before Gods eyes: onely he asks in some perplexitie, whether the Lord indeed will shew himselfe displeas'd with *Rabshekeh*s railing, by some outward signe or no; that is, not to let him escape any longer vnpunished? To be short, he desires to see the execution thereof, which is then performed, when God sets those things in order againe, which before were cut of frame and confus'd ; and when hee shewes himselfe the Iudge. For then wee proue by experience, that he hath indeed had respect vnto the welfare of his people. Thus *Hezekias* asks; Lord, couldest thou not heare the blasphemies of *Rabshekeh*, to reuenge the same? or, art thou not able to shew that the glory of thy name is deere and precious vnto thee?

When he calles the Lord *Isaiah God*, his meaning is not as if hee were peculiarly seru'd by one man onely; neither eoth he hereby cut off himselfe from the number of the faithfull : but because praiers flow from doctriens, this holy King speaks honourably of the Prophets ministerie, and testifies, that he is the true seruant of God. Sometimes this relation extends it selfe further; for all the faithfull doe iointly call vpon God, who holds them all in the number of his people. But he is called *Isaiah* and *Paul*s God, in regard of their particular calling.

How God is said to be the God of *Isaiah* and *Paul*.

List vp praiers.] This is the second cause for which *Hezekias* sent his Ambassadors vnto *Isaiah*; to wit, that he might also inioy the benefit of his praiers with others. In which we see, it is not the Prophets office onely to comfort the afflicted, by setting the promises of life before them, but also to pray for their saluation. Let not the Ministers and Preachers of the word thinke that they haue discharged their duty then, when they haue exhorted and taught those that depend vpon them, vnlesse they adde praiers thereunto; for it is all our duties so to doe. But *Hezekias* sent to the Prophet chiefly, that hee might shew the way vnto others by his example.

It is the Ministers dutie not onely to comfort his people our of the word, but also to list vp his praiers vnto God for the in their distresses. What is meant by this phrase, To list vp praiers.

To list vp praiers, signifies nothing else but to pray; yet the phrase of speech is to be noted, for it shewes how our affections ought to be ordered in praiers. The Scripture in euery place wils vs to list vp our hearts vnto heauen, for otherwise we shall pray without any due reuerence at all to Gods Maiestie. Besides, our blockishnesse is so great, that as soone as we enter into praiers, there comes grosse imaginations touching the maifestie of God into our mindes; so as if he should not call vs away from them vnto heauen, we would rather seeke him vnder our setete, then there.

Lam. 3. 4 5.

To list vp praiers then, is so to pray, that our hearts be not glued to the earth, nor yet that we conceiue ought of God, that agrees with carnall or fleshy conceits : but attributing

ring that vnto him which ſutes beſt with his diuine nature; alſo that we aſpire vnto heauen with an ardenſie of zeale, and with all our affectiones. It is in this ſenſe that *Dauid* ſaith; Oh, let my prayer come before thee as incenſe, and let the liſting vp of my hands be as the euening ſacrifice.

Moreover, *Herzekias* deſires *Iſaiab* to pray for the remnant that were left. This circumſtance might ſerue to bow the Lord: not that he is to be bowed, as men are: but thus hee deales with vs, and is contented to ſtoope downe to our weakneſſe. Be it that our care is ſo deſperate then, as we are euen at the pits brinke, as they ſay; yet muſt we lay forth our miſeries before God, that thereby wee may gather ſome conſolation; becauſe himſelſe proteſts, that he hath reſpect vnto the poore and needie. Yea, the nearer we are to deſtruction, with the greater affection ought we to craue his aid and aſſiſtance; as wee ſee *Herzekias* here doth, when all things were become deſperate.

Pſal 9. 10.
10. 17. 8

Verſ. 5. So the ſeruants of King *Hezekiah* came to *Iſaiab*.

6. And *Iſaiab* ſaid vnto them; Thus ſay vnto your Maſter, Thus ſaith the Lord; Bee not afraid of the wordes that thou haſt heard, wherewith the ſeruants of the King of *Aſhur* haue blaſphemed me.

AS the Prophet hath told vs before, that the onely refuge the King had, was to aſke counſell at Gods mouth: ſo now hee ſhewes that it was not in vaine, becauſe hee receiued ſuch comfort and conſolation from him as his heart deſired.

By this example we are admoniſhed, that if we ſeek reſpite from the Lord, by diſcharging all our cares into his boſome, wee ſhall neuer be left ſuccourleſſe. And albeit ſuch Prophets, as *Iſaiab* was, are not alwaies to be had in the world, yet will hee not fail to meet thoſe that wait for his helpe in due ſeaſon, and with ſuch meanes as ſhall be anſwerable to their neceſſities.

Now *Iſaiab* ſaith in the firſt place, that hee anſwered them in the name of God: for hee aſſirms that God is the author of this his meſſage. The Prophets were alwaies to haue regard that they ſpake nothing of their owne heads: alſo, it was neceſſary that God ſhould come betwene with his authority, in a matter of ſo great conſequence. Thus then our Prophet ſhewes, that God preuented (as it were) the prayers of this good King. The falſe Prophets brag much of Gods name, yet falſely: but *Iſaiab* being the very organ of the holy Ghoſt, doth iuſtly come in his name that ſent him: and in that hee forbids him in the firſt place to feare, hee therein would haue *Herzekias* to hold faſt his confidence, or at leaſt to wait in hope and ſilence.

As oft as we heare theſe wordes *feare not*, let vs know that peace which ſaith begets in vs,

is here recommended vnto vs: for all they which in reſting vpon God, doe wait for deliuerance from him out of their trials, ſuch obtaine victory by their patience, ouer all feare; ſo as they inoy ſweet peace in the middeſt of the ſharpeſt troubles. Moreover, that this good King might with the more cheertulneſſe expect a ſoyfull and an happy iſſue, our Prophet plainly ſhewes, that God takes himſelſe as a partie in this cauſe, which hee now minds to take into his owne hands: for hee cannot indure that the wicked ſhould abuſe his name. And therefore they are to looke in the end, that hee will ſhew himſelſe a juſt Iudge in puniſhing them for the ſame.

By the word *ſeruants*, hee amplifies the indignitie of the fact: for had the King himſelſe vitered theſe blaſphemies, it had bin a thing inſupportable, that the Lord of glory ſhould haue bin ſo proudly diſdained and reproched by a mortall man; much leſſe then ſhould hee indure to be railed vpon in ſuch wiſe by one of his *vaffals*. And thus the condition of the perſon that railed, makes the offence more odious.

Verſ. 7. Behold I will ſend a blaſt vpon him, and hee ſhall beare a noiſe and returne to his owne land: and I will cauſe him to fall by the ſword in his owne land.

SOME translate; I will put my Spirit within him: as if the Prophet ſpake of ſome ſecret inſtruſt of heart; but this is too conſtrained. The ſimilitude is very apt, in that hee ſhewes God hath a *whirle wind* in his hand, which ſhall drie *Sennacherib* away before it into another place. The holy Scripture is often wont to vſe ſuch a kind of ſpeech, in comparing the wicked to ſtraw and chaffe; becauſe God is able with the leaſt blaſt of his mouth to ſcatter them whither ſo euer hee will; euen then when they thinke themſelues at the ſtrongeſt. Hee compares the trouble then which fell vpon the hoſt of *Sennacherib*, to a *whirle-wind*, which carried him violently out of Iudea. In the next place, hee ſheweth that it will bee as eaſie for God to chaſe this enemy away, as it is for a whirl-wind to drie chaffe or ſtraw before it. The like is to bee ſaid of all tyrants, bee they neuer ſo ſtrong and mightie.

We may perceiue that the claufe, hee *ſhall beare*, is added by way of expoſition: & therefore I had rather reſolue it into a particule of ſhewing the cauſe, thus, For hee *ſhall beare a noiſe*. For hee ſpakes of this blaſt, which as ſoone as it was blowne, it forthwith repulſed and conſtrained *Sennacherib* to returne into his owne Countrie, by reaſon of the newes which hee heard from Egypt and Ethiopia.

When the Prophet addes, that this tyrant ſhould fall by the ſword, it is as much as if hee had ſaid; hee vexeth others, and induors to enlarge his Monarchy; but God will raiſe him vp enemies in the middeſt of his owne Countrie, which ſhall bring him to nought. Many expound; the Countrie, or, the land of

not: that peace which ſaith brings forth is commended vnto vs.

Pſal. 1. 4.

The enemies of the church compared to chaffe.

If in our diſtreſſes wee powre out our heart before God, hee will neuer diſappoint vs of our hope. Note.

As oft as we heare this voice, Feare

Israel: but it is too constrained, for it is spoken of ſy countie of the Assyrian. And there is in this clause a close opposition: He which conquered the Kingdomes and Cities of other Princes, shall not be able to defend his owne, but shall there be slaine.

Verf. 8. So Rabshekeh returned, and found the King of Assur fighting against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish.

HE shewes now how *Rabshekeh* returned to his King without striking any stroke, and returned not to the place where he left him: for his meaning is, that *Sennacherib* had raised vp his siege before *Lachish*, and was gone downe into *Egypt* to lay siege to *Libna*, which some thinke to be *Pelusium*: others say, it was a Citie of *Iudeah*. For it is very probable, that hauing heard newes of the arming of the enemy, he directed his armie towards *Egypt*, to stop the passages before them. Now albeit the Lord abated the furie of this tyrant by new warres, that he might thereby giue some rest to the Iewes, yet he would not ouercome him by the hand of man, but only manifest and brings his vitamed pride forth vpon the stage, because he ceased not still to belch out his wonted blasphemies, notwithstanding himselfe was in great danger, as we shall see afterward.

Verf. 9. He heard also men say Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight with thee: and when he heard it, he sent other messengers to Hezekiah, saying,

BY that which followes we may coniecture what the cause was why the Assyrian so suddenlie departed frō *Iudeah*. For the Kings of *Egypt*, and *Ethiopia* had made a league one with another against *Sennacherib*, because they saw he grew too mightie, and ceased not to inuade Countrie after Countrie: for they thought if his violence were not resisted betimes, they might be sure to looke for the like measure. These Kings meant not to defend *Iudeah* by working his woe, but respected their owne safetie, because the power of so mightie a man is for the most part worthelie had in suspection of other Princes and their people. It is wisely done of them therefore that in foreseeing dangers, they ioinc their forces together to make resistance ere it be too late: for they had been easily ouerrunne had they been separated one from the other. Thus you see why they ioinc their forces into one, to wit, that they may withstand the violence and furie of this Tyrant.

The Assyrian being intangled in so desperate a warre, sends new Ambassadors to *Hezekias*, thinking by threats to enforce him to yeeld: wherein we may see how Tyrants are caried away with pride, and an ouerweening of their owne greatnes, so as they thinke to make all the world to tremble & quake at their words,

or at the only hearing of the sound of their names, or at the sight of their very shadow. This man being somewhat preuented by a new & difficult busines, thinks notwithstanding to subduc *Iudeah*, whence he was forced to depart. It may be he was ashamed to be thus disappointed of his purpose, and thus abruptlie to raise vp his siege: but he thinks to obtaine that in his absence which he could not accomplish in his owne person. Howsoeuer, the Lord did wonderfullie worke in succoring his poore seruants, who esteemed themselves as sheepe appointed to the slaughter. Now that he might abate the rage of this Tyrant, he occupies his head, and his hands with such intricate busineses, as out of which he could not easily wind himselfe: as if one should hamper a furious beast, or should hold him fast by the snout, as the Prophet will shew anon. I grant, their cruell and reuengefull natures are not tamed thereby, but yet they are so restrained, that they can not doe the hurt they would.

Wee see the truth of this now amongst vs. How many tyrants are there which thirst after the ruin of the Church? How many plots do they lay to bring it about? How busie are they in corners, secretlie taking counsell together? And with what power and policies are they indued? But when they thinke to haue their purpose, it may be the Lord suddenlie descrites their designs, and raiseth vp enemies against them. Sometimes hee sets them together by the eares, and brings the cruelties which they thought to execute vpon his children vpon their owne heads. Yet they continue as obstinate and as fierce as euer they were before, and cease not to imagin mischief still: as this *Sennacherib*; he is hindered of his purpose you see, yet hee is not wearie of molesting this good King, but domineers ouer him with maiesticall tearmes, as if he had been a poore slaue: yea, he commands him as if he were his vassall. And not content with that, he proudly exalts himselfe euen against the Lord of glorie, and goes beyond the pride of his Captaine *Rabshekeh*. For although *Rabshekeh*'s words and his are all one in sense, yet hee offers outrage against the Lord with greater impudencie, and with an open throat as it were.

Verf. 10. Thus shall ye speake to Hezekiah King of Iudah, saying, Let not thy God deceiue thee in whom thou trustest, saying, Ierusalem shall not be giuen into the hand of the King of Assur.

WHAT an horrible blasphemie is this? He accuseth God to be a lier and a deceiuer, as if he plaid fast and loofe with those that put their trust in him. For take away his truth from him, and what remains? That is the thing he most esteemes. But he drew these words out from the mouth of this miscreant, who before seemed to reuerence some god. It is not long you see then but he discouers himselfe to the full. Whereas he saith in the person of God, that *Ierusalem shall not be giuen,*
Some

God will
turne the
counsels of
all Achitophels to foolishnes,
2. Sam. 15. 37.
and 16. 23.

Some do thence conieſture, that the traytor *Shebna* had informed the king of *Aſhur* of *Jſaiah* prophetic, and the words doe ſound ſomewhat that way, but there is no neede of any ſuch coniectures, for the *Aſſyrian* knew well enough that *Hezekiah* truſted in God. The promiſes made to *Dauid*, and to conſequēdy vnto him, were not vnknowne. This is my reſt, here will I dwell for euer, for I haue a delight therein: *Pſal.* 132. 14. Nor that this tyrant ſtudied the prophecies to profite by them; but they were manifeſtly knowne to all, yea, that the *Iewes* did wonderfully glorie in them, and often boaſted of Gods helpe and protection againſt their enemies. This tyrant oppoſeth his blaſphemies againſt the promiſes; *Let not thy God deceiue thee*: and thus he flies in Gods face as it were, as if hee had been too weak to defend *Jeruſalem*; and as if himſelfe was not onely ſtronger then all men whatſoeuer, but alſo ſtronger then the Lord of hoſts.

He goes about to proue this by examples. He firſt had vanquithed other nations which worſhipped other gods. Secondly, he takes an argument from the power of his predeceſſors; They were ſtronger then the gods of the nations, but I am more mightie then they by many degrees: therefore the God of *Iſrael* ſhall not ſtand before me. See how the wicked are wont to grow more and more in their overweening, by hauing good ſucceſſes; ſo as they euen forget that they are men. For they not onely attribute a diuine maiſtie vnto themſelues, but thinke they are a degree about that alſo. Which more is, when they haue reieſted all difference betwene good and euill, they take pleaſure in doing miſchiefe, they glory in the finnes of their anceſtors, and thinke themſelues no ſmall foolles, in that they came off ſuch theetes and robbers. For he that ſhall note the riſing of theſe Monarks well, it often talles out that he which is growne the mightieſt, may well be called the rich ſonne of a great theefe.

This tyrant cares not whether it were by right or wrong, that his predeceſſors conquered ſo many Countries: for ſuch neuer reſpect equitie, when they meane to make themſelues great: let them haue the ſtronger ſide, and then it is no matter by what means they come by it, juſtly or vniuſtly, all is one ſo they haue it; all is fiſh that comes to net, as they thinke. They put in praſiſe the ſaying of a certaine Poet; If a man will bee wicked, let him get might, that he may be ſo. This vice bath not raigned in one age onely, but wee ſeele by experience, that it hath the full ſwindge now more then euer heerebefore.

Verſ. 11. Behold thou haſt heard what the Kings of *Aſhur* haue done to all lands in deſtroying them, and ſhalt thou be deliuered?

1 **W**E muſt here note a double comparison; for he compares *Hezekias* to other Kinges of *Juda* (his predeceſſors) which were

more mightie then hee, and yet were overcome by the Kings of *Aſſyria*. But *Sennacherib* on the contrary, being more mightie then any of the reſt, proudly aduanced himſelfe: it follows then that *Hezekias* is not able to reſiſt him. The other compariſon is of the Kings of *Aſſyria*, and *Sennacherib* himſelfe, with the idols of the Gentiles. If the idols then could not protect the people which honoured them; it thereupon follows, that the God of *Iſrael* is no more able then they, to ſaue his people. But when we read here how ſharply hee reſiſted the ſaith of *Hezekias* was aſſailed by theſe wonderfull tentations: let vs furniſh our ſelues with the like artillerie, and prepare our ſelues to the fight. Yea, whicſt time laſts, let vs carefully ſtore our ſelues, that we may conſtantly and courageouſly reſiſt when the like danger ſhall approach. If Satan obiect vnto vs the ruin of many nations, let vs diſtinguiſh our condition from theirs: for albeit we are indeed ſubiect to the ſame calamities, yet we haue ſure promiſes touching our ſalutation, which the others had not.

We muſt buckle our ſpiritually armour about vs, to reſiſt temptations before they come. We muſt diſtinguiſh betwene inſidels and our ſelues.

Verſ. 12. Haue the gods of the nations deliuered them which my fathers haue deſtroyed: as *Gozan*, and *Haran*, and *Rezep*, and the children of *Eden* which were at *Telaſſer*?

13. Where is the King of *Hamath*, and the King of *Arpad*, and the King of the Cities of *Sepharuaim*, *Henah*, and *Iuah*?

Mention is made of *Gozan*, in 2. King. 17. 6. And thence we may gather that it was a Citie of the Medes, although others affirme that it was ſituated in another Country: but it ſufficieth that it ſtood eaſtward from *Iudeah*. Touching *Charan*, it is often mentioned in the Scriptures. *Plinie* ſaith it was a Citie of Arabia; but it is commonly placed in *Mefopotamia*. Which is confirmed by *Abrahams* voyage, who came thence with his father, when he departed out of *Caldea*: Gen. 11. 31. A. E. 7. 4. The prophane Hiſtoriographers call it *Charras* in the plurall number, and ſay that *Craſſus* and his ſonnes were ſlaine there.

Plinie.

Verſ. 14. So *Hezekias* rooke the letter of the hand of the meſſenger, and read it: and he went vp into the houſe of the Lord, and *Hezekias* ſpread it before the Lord.

The Prophet now ſhewes what reſuge *Hezekias* ſied vnto in his great affliction; to wit, he went forthwith into the Temple to bewaile his miſery (which hee could not remedie) before the Lord, and to diſcharge his cares and ſorrowes into Gods boſome. For it was no conſufed or diſordered complaint, but by praiers & teares he meant to bow the Lord to his requeſt, that hee might yeeld him ſuccour. By this example we

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Tyrants grow proud by hauing good ſucceſſes.

Tyrants glory in their miſchiefe.

A rich ſonne of a great theefe.

The ſaying of a Poet

The onely way to escape out of trouble.

are taught, that there is no easier way to wade out of our calamities when they presse vs, then by casting our burthen vpon the Lord: for all comforts besides, shall doe vs more hurt then good, if this be wanting.

He *spread* not the letters *before the Lord*, as if he had been ignorant of them; but God is well pleased we should deale thus with him: therein applying himselfe to our infirmities. For our praier, teares, and complaints, discover not our necessities before his eyes, seeing he knows them all before wee once begin to open our mouthes; or to aske ought at his hands. But we now speake of that which is profitable for vs; to wit, that God may shew that hee hath heard the blasphemies of our enemies; so as those who haue vttered them, may not escape vnpunished. This is the reason and end wherefore *Hezekias* spread the letters of this cursed tyrant before the Lord, namely, to put the greater edge vpon his praier, and to kindle and inflame his zeale more and more.

Verf. 15. *And Hezekiah praied vnto the Lord, saying;*

16. *O Lord of hostes, God of Israel, which dwellest betwene the Cherubims: thou art very God alone ouer all the kingdomes of the earth; thou hast made the heauen and the earth.*

BECAUSE *Sennacherib* had been the instrument of Satan to shake the faith of *Hezekias*, hee now opposeth his rampart against him; to wit, that God is the *Lord of hostes*, and therefore of infinit power. For there is no doubt but hee rouseth vp his spirits, in assuring himselfe to obtaine that he asks, when he adorne the Lord with these excellent titles. Will we haue our praier, to preuaile with God? let vs hold this principle; that God will be found of them that seeke him: Heb. 11. 6. But this good King had speciall need to lay hold of this sentence; to wit, that Gods power alwaies remains one and the same, albeit the wicked strine to lessen it by their railings & scoffes; and to take heart the more freely and boldly vnto him, to set himselfe valiantly against the lets by which Satan indouered to hinder his course. Now herein we may behold the heroicall magnanimitie of this good King, who ceased not to resist this tyrant for the maintenance of Gods power, but bare a loyall affection inwardly in his heart thereunto, and also made God a witness of his inward affection. Before he begins to frame any praier then, hee breaks through the fallacies whereby Satan went about to put him to the wall: so that hee not onely magnifies Gods power, but maintains the *soveraigntie which hee hath ouer the whole world*.

Now hee meditates on these things, the better to confirme himselfe in the assurance which he had in Gods prouidence, by which all things in heauen and in earth are ordered and disposed. And this foundation ought

all the faithfull first to lay, that so they lose not their labour in praier. The Kings praier had not been of such force and efficacy, if he had onely said, *Incline thine care O Lord, and heare, &c.* or such like wordes: as when hee keeps this principle first in his heart; that God hath care ouer all the works of his hands. For hee perswades himselfe that God will take this cause into his owne hands, and will not suffer the tyrant thus proudly to aduance himselfe; but will rather speedily put him downe, sith the government of the whole world belongs vnto him. Also, seeing *Sennacherib* attributed that vnto himselfe, which of right appertained vnto God; that hee could not escape vnpunished.

Where hee subiecteth *all the kingdomes of the earth* vnder Gods hand and power, he applies it vnto his owne particular vs. In the meane while, such a title neuer agrees to any but to God onely; because hee rules ouer all Kingdomes. Notwithstanding he denies not but Kings, Princes, and Magistrates haue their iust titles; yet so, as these selues be subiect vnto God, & maintaine his right & dominion: for it belongs onely to God to be King of Kings, & Lord of Lords, as *S. Paul* saith. Not that hee therefore aboliseth the names of Kings and Lords, with their dominions, but shewes that all depends vpon God onely, how great or mightie soeuer they be; that they should not thinke themselves haile fellow well met with him, but that they ought rather to acknowledge him to be their Lord and King. Kings then hold their authoritie, as you see; if so be they will keepe the mid way betwene God and men, and will not presume to climbe higher.

Moreover, *Hezekias* gathers this title from the very creation; for it is not possible that the Creator of heauen and earth should euer forsake the workes of his owne hands; nay, doe we not see on the contrary, that he gouernes mankind by his prouidence, which is the chiefest part of the world? It were too absurd a thing then to limit the creation within so narrow bounds, that it should onely serue as a witness of a certaine power of God, that lasted but a while, and stretched it selfe to a few things: no, it ought to be extended to a continuall working in all things. By this it appears, that those tyrants which will take liberty to rule as they list, do therein bereaue God of his honour; and therefore when things fall out otherwise then well vnto them, they may iustly impute it to their owne pride and presumption.

Hezekias also alleageth other epithetes, for the confirmation of his faith. And first, in that he calles him the *Lord of hostes*, hee againe extols his power; but when hee addes, *the God of Israel*, hee notes out a more neere and particular presence: for it was no small signe of Gods loue, to haue taken the safetie of this people into his owne custodie. Hereunto appertaines his sitting *betwene the Cherubims*: as if he should say; Thou hast placed thy throne here, and hast promised protection to such as call vpon thee before the Arke of the promise: now resting my selfe vpon this counte-
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A principle euer to be held, namely, that God will alwaies be found of them that seeke him.

1. Tom. 6. 15.

Exod. 25. 18. I come to thee as to the only gardian of my ſafetie. But *Hezekias* doubtleſſe had reſpect to the ſonne of the Arke, which was ſhadowed with Cherubims. Some expound theſe Cherubims, Angels, as if it were ſaid, God reignes in heauen, and ſits among the Angels. But this expoſition ſutes not. For it is ſaid, that *he ſits betwene the Cherubims*, becauſe of the Arke which was thus compoſed. Now wee know it was a true and certaine ſigne of Gods preſence, albeit his power was not ſhut vp within the ſame: but *Hezekias* in mentioning thereof meant to affirme, that God was there preſent, becauſe he had vouchſafed to gather his people vnto him, by ſtretching his wings (as you would ſay) ouer them. For as much then as there is a great diſtance of place betwene God and vs, *Hezekias* layes hold vpon this notable pledge of adoption, and yet kept he his mind free from being tainted with any carnall conceits touching Gods Maieſtie, whereinto the ſuperſtitious plunge themſelues, who ſtrive by all meanes to draw him downe from heauen: but the King contenting himſelfe with faith in the promiſes which he had receiued, concludes, that he needed not to ſeek farre for Gods fauorable preſence.

Let vs obſerue this phraſe of ſpeech well therefore, which teacheth vs to mount by little and little vnto heauen by the light of the promiſes which doe ſhine clearly before vs: yet ſo, that in ſeeking ſuccour, we imagin not that God ſhould be abſent from vs, ſeeing he hath choſen his dwelling place in the mids of vs. For in regard that his Maieſtie much ſurmounts heauen and earth, it is not lawfull for vs to bound him within the narrow ſcantling of our vnderſtanding: yet we may comprehend him according to the ſmall meafure thereof, becauſe he hath reuealed himſelfe vnto vs by his word: not that we muſt needs pull him downe from his heauenlic throne therefore, but that our minds which are of themſelues weake and dull, might by degrees approach neerer and neerer vnto him: for we haue good reaſon to preſſe with boldnes towards his highnes, in regard he calles vs vnto him by his word and Sacraments.

And if we conceiue of theſe things aright, the ſpiritual knowledge of God ſhall alwaies beare ſway amongst vs, ſo as wee ſhall not need to tie the Lord any more to ſtones nor ſticks. No, we ſhall imagin nothing of him that is earthlic or carnall: for the neerer we ſhall draw towards him, the more will we endeavour our ſelues to vſe all lawfull meanes which he ſets before vs, that our ſpirits may not reſt vpon earthlic things: for he applies himſelfe to our ſhallownes only, to the end that his Sacraments might ſerue vs as ladders to climb vp vnto him by: but this ſuperſtition hath peruerſed and turned it to a quite contrarie vſe.

erſ. 17. *Incline thine eare, O Lord, ana, are: open thine eyes, O Lord, and ſee, & eare all the words of Sennacherib,*

who hath ſent to blaſpheme the lining God.

HENCE we gather in how great perplexitie *Hezekias* was: for the vehemencie of his prayer diſcouers vnto vs a wonderfull meafure of griefe, ſo as a man may ſee that he indured great combats which he ouercame not without much adoe. For albeit the affection and zeale of his prayer ſhewes the ſtrength and power of his faith; yet he therein repreſents vnto vs as in a glaſſe his paſſions that boiled within him. As ſoone then as we are to indure any ſuch ailments, let vs learne from the example of this good King to oppoſe againſt the paſſions wherewith we are toſſed, that which may beſt ſerue for the confirming of our faith, that by the tempeſt it ſelfe we may be brought to a ſafe and quiet hauen. Let not the ſenſe of our weakenes any whit aſtoniſh vs then; no, not when feare and dread ſhall preſſe vs aboue meafure as it were. For the Lord will haue vs wreſtle valiantlie euen till we ſweate and tremble, becauſe we muſt not thinke to goe to heauen in a featherbed, or at eaſe, as we vſe to ſpeake, but after many combates God hath promiſed an happie iſſue to them that fight as they ought to doe, which in the end he will vndoubtedlie beſtow vpon vs.

But why doth *Hezekiah* deſire God to beare? Thinks he that he ſleepes, or vnderſtands not? No ſuch matter. But wee are wont to ſpeake thus in ſome deſperat caſes, either when wee thinke God abſent, or when he ſeemes to make light account of our afflictions. Wee ſee he was ſo perplexed then that God (as he thought) had forgotten him; that is to ſay, according to the ſenſe of the fleſh: for had he not beheld him preſent by the eyes of faith, he had vtterlie quailed. It is as much then as if *Hezekias* had deſired the Lord euen effectuallic and openlie to ſhew ſome worke for his ſaluation, which he had long hoped for before in the ſecret of his heart.

But why doth he pray that God would open his eyes, and ſee? It is as much as if he had ſaid, Lord, let it appeare that thou haſt care of theſe matters. Now he ſufficientlie ſhewes where his paine held him moſt, namely, he longed to ſee ſome vengeance ſhewed vpon theſe blaſphemers which offered ſuch outrage againſt Gods Maieſtie: for albeit this good King tooke great thought for the preferuation of his kingdome and people, yet had he reſpect vnto Gods glorie: aboue all other commodities whatſoeuer. And truly the aduancement thereof ſhould touch vs neerer, and moue vs more then any thing elſe, eſpecially when we know that his glorie and our ſaluation are things that can not be ſeparated.

Thus *Hezekias* hauing brought forth this Tyrant vpon the ſtage as a blaſphemous and hatefull enemy of God, becauſe Ieruſalem gloried in this title, *The God of Iacob*, and in his protection, he thereupon concludes, that God can by no meanes caſt off y^e Citie which he hath taken into his owne cuſtodie, vneſſe therewithall he ſhould renounce his owne

God will haue vs wreſtle till: we tremble and ſweate.

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Hezekias reſpected Gods glorie aboue all things whatſoeuer.

If the ſpiritual knowledge of God beares ſway in our hearts, we ſhall not need to tie his preſence to ſticks or ſtones.

name also. Seeing the Lord then of his infinite Bountie is pleased to ioine his glorie with our saluation, let vs hold fast these promises, and let vs fortifie our selues with them, namely, that although the wicked goe on in a vaine hope, thinking to scape scotfree whilest they blaspheme God, and cast vp that poison out of their hearts which lurked before in them, yet there is *not a syllable thereof which he understands not*, and he will in his due time bring them to an account for the same:

Verf. 18. Truth it is, O Lord, that the Kings of Asshur haue destroyed all lands, and their countrie.

19. And haue cast their gods in the fire: for they were no Gods, but the worke of mans hands, euen wood or stone: therefore they destroyed them.

Herzekias begins here to put a difference betweene the true God and the false, which we also had need diligentlie to do: for the wicked that are not enlightened haue many confused thoughts of some diuinitie, which by and by vanisheth away, so as either they thinke there is no God at all, or if there be, yet they regard him not. But God would not haue vs lightlie touched with some idle or vading conceit of him, but that we should acknowledge him to be the true God, who by the brightnes of his power scatters abroad all the darknes of ignorāce. It is not enough then you see to acknowledge a diuinitie if I can not tell what, as prophane ones do, but God ought to be so knowne and receiued, that he be discerned from all Idols; and the truth separated from lyes. And questionlesse, when he hath once cleared our iudgements; all opinion of false religions which possessed our minds before, will immediatlie fall to the ground.

And so much the rather are we to hold fast this doctrine, by how much the more many please themselves in fond speculations, thinking it sufficient for them if they acknowledge a God at randon. Whether they ought to worship the god of the Turks or Iewes they know not: and thus they houer in the ayre, and touch neither heauen nor earth, as they say. There is not a worse plague to be found, then such an imagination, for thereby the true God and Idols are mingled together, whose Maiestie is then tumbled downe from his throne, vnlesse hee bee held as supreme head, and all false gods with their worship laid at his feet. The beginning of true pietie therefore consists in a wise distinguishing of this only God, from all the troupe of idoll gods.

But Herzekias vseth two reasons by which he shewes they were no Gods. First, because they were made of *corruptible matter*: Secondly, they were the *worke of mens hands*. Now what is more absurd then to see a man so much past shame as to be the forger of a God; not only because himselfe is not eternall, and God is: but because he can not consist by his owne power, not so much as one minute of an

houre. For example, let all the world doe their utmost to put all the wit & force thereof into one man if it could be, yet is he not able to make a poore flea: what pride is it then for a man at his pleasure to put his hands to the worke; and to forge as many gods to himselfe as he list? for seeing all that is in vs is meereley earthlie and transitorie, we can expect but treene gods to come from the worke of our owne hands. Adde further, that it is the greatest follie in the world to imagin vnder pretext of arte, to fasten a kind of diuinitie to a corruptible and an insensible blocky as if a peece of wood or stone began then to be god, as soone as it hath some purtrairure giuen vnto it. Thus we may easily ouerthrow all the superstitions which men haue inuened: for stedfastnes and constancie must be sought further off then in mens shallow braines: nay, I say more, all that which they haue inuened in that shop, is condemned as lyes, and things of nought.

All the world not able to forme a sillie flea.

No follie like this, to imagin that as the workman by arte hath giuen some forme or shape vnto it.

Verf. 20. Now therefore, O Lord our God, saue thou vs out of his hand, that all the kingdomes of the earth may know that thou only art the Lord.

Now this good King in the conclusion of his prayer ouercomes all feare, against which he had fought a long time; for there is no doubt but the helps wherewith he hath hitherto furnished himselfe, did much encourage him with boldnes to adde this short clause. Now albeit God deliuers vs not alwaies from outward troubles, yet in regard he had promised to preserve and keepe the Citie, Herzekias was bold to beleue that this tyrant which plotted his ouerthrow, should little auale by any of his deuices. And whereas he againe vrgeth the Lord with this mortue, That his glorie shall be wonderfullie aduanced, by the deliuerance of this Citie: thence we gather, that we ought to wish nothing more then to see the same flourish euery maner of way: for it is the principall end of our saluation, from which we must not turne one iot, if we thinke to find him mercifull vnto vs. In the second place we gather hence, that such are vnworthe of Gods help, who contenting themselves only with their owne saluation, either forget, or set light by the end for which they are saued. For God by this vthankfulness is not only dishonored, but they therein offer him great outrage in separating those things which at any hand ought to be ioined together. Doth not the glorie of his name shine in our saluation? And is it not the chiefest comfort and consolation we haue, that it doth so, as we haue said already? Yes doubtlesse.

Moreouer, Herzekias not only desires the God of Israel may be *only exalted of men* but would haue him exalted so farre forth, that all Idols also might be abolished for many Idolaters at that time would be content that the true God had bin *ship-ped amongst the rest of their dunge* gods; but because he can away with *ie to sit* *reck-mate*

What knowledge of God is required to be in Christians.

check mate with him, all the gods which men have forged muſt bee brought to nought, that hee onely may obtaine the ſoueraigne Monarchy.

Verſ. 21. *Then Iſaiah the ſonne of Amos ſent vnto Hezekiah, ſaying, Thus ſaith the Lord God of Iſrael; Becauſe thou haſt praied vnto mee concerning Sennacherib King of Aſhur,*

22. *This is the word that the Lord hath ſpoken againſt him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion hath deſpiſed thee, and laughed thee to ſcorne: the daughter of Ieruſalem hath ſpoken her head at thee.*

NOW behold the fruit of prayer: for things being brought to an afterdeale, God ſuddenly reacheth Hezekias his hand, by the miniſterie of our Prophet Iſaiah. Not that hee ſo reached or ſtretched it forth, that the enemie was forthwith put to flight; but in promiſing deliuerance by Iſaiah's mouth, he ſtill exerciſeth the faith of his ſeruant. Now as the Prophet for his part, could not of himſelfe haue given this conſolation; ſo had it been but a ridiculous thing to haue promiſed it, vnleſſe Hezekias had alſo beleecued that this meſſage was ſent him from God. He therefore contented himſelfe with this bare promiſe, waiting in ſilence till God ſhould manifeſt his power. Now by this wee are taught, that it is our dutie at all times to aſke counſell of the Lord, if we meane to ſeele his comforts in our afflictions and diſtreſſes: for if we ſet light by the meſſage which he ſends vs by the miniſterie of his faithfull ſeruants, we are then viterly vnworthy to receiue any conſolation from him. But albeit wee be neuer ſo well inſtructed, and filled as it were with the knowledge of this doctrine, yet it ſtands vs in hand to know it euery day better and better, ſtill drawing thence new teſtimonies to confirme our faith withall, to the end we may haue remedies at hand when new aſſaults ſhall befall vs, and may not at any time bee deſtitute of comfort in the middeſt of our greateſt calamities: for hee that is beſt furniſhed and fortified this way, can neuer bee too well provided. We haue in Hezekias here a ſingular example of faith and conſtancie; and yet the Lord contents not himſelfe to haue comforted him once, and by one prophecie onely, as in verſe 6, 7. but he now confirms his faith many waies; that we who are far ſhort of that conſtancie which was in him, might learne to know what need wee haue of many helpes for the ſuſtaining and vpholding of our faith continually.

Becauſe thou haſt praied vnto mee. The holy hiſtorie expreſſeth no more but this verbe, *I haue heard thee:* the word *becauſe* therefore is a relative in that place: but here it is an expoſitive, or a particle of giuing a reaſon, as in many other places. For it is forced and conſtrained to ſupply the verbe *To heare*; as na-

nie expoſitors doe: and the ſentence runnes well being reade as it is; when God therein ſhewes that he will ouerthrow all the practiſes of Sennacherib, and repreſſe his violence and furie, *becauſe Hezekias hath praied.* As if he ſhould ſay; *I giue thee ſuch an answer as fits thy request.* And doubtleſſe whoſoever he be that directs his prayer vnto God, hee ſhall in the end feele how much the Lord is inclined to answer: in deede hee often holds his peace, and offers vs no conſolation by his word, but it is becauſe wee haue been ſlute in our afflictions.

The ſumme of the prophecie comes to this; that Hezekias, as feeble and deſtitute as hee was of all ſuccour, yet needed not for all that to feare in beholding this tyrant ſo to aduance himſelfe: for God would be the moderator in this caſe, who proteſts that hee will take the quarrell into his owne hand; as if he ſhould ſay; *Sennacherib* indeed hath offered outrage againſt thee and thy people, but the weight of it *failes vpon my Maieſtie.* And thus he ſhewes that hee will be reuenged of the heathen that knew not his name; and withall admoniſheth the faithfull not to ſorrow as men without hope, if the world for a time doe tread them vnder foote, for he hath ſtore of ſuccours readie in heauen to ſuſtaine their infirmities. But it hath much greater force, in that he ſpeakes to the whole Church; then if he had ſpoken to Hezekias particularly: for this circumſtance augments the indignitie of the fact, becauſe Sennacherib ſcorned the meane eſtate of this poore people, as if Gods helpe had been a matter of nothing. The Prophecie then taxeth the blindneſſe of this Tyrant, who hauing no reſpect vnto God, thus proudly inulteth ouer his poore and deſolate Church.

It is an vſual thing in the Scriptures, to call Cities daughters: ſometimes goodlie Cities alſo are called virgins, as we haue noted before in another place. But heere Iſaiah meant to note out Ieruſalems weakneſſe, who was as a poore virgin, ſuccourleſſe and comfortleſſe, which this vile ruſſian; and curſed cutthroate vexed and reuiled: whereas God on the other ſide, as the father to whom this iniury was offered, ſhewes that he is acquainted well enough with the plotes of this mixture, as alſo in what eſtate the whole land of Iudea was.

Verſ. 23. *Whom haſt thou railled on and blaſphemed? And againſt whom haſt thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? euen againſt the holy one of Iſrael.*

IN the verſe before going, he deſcribed the matter as if it had been ſeen and heard of all: now hee raiſeth their thoughts higher; ſhewing that the Tyrant hath not onely bent himſelfe againſt Ieruſalem, but againſt her God alſo. Let this place come to our remembrance as oft as we are expoſed to the ſcoffes and taunts of the wicked: for albeit wee are ſorlorne, and there be no eye to pitie vs, nor

Aske, and it ſh. 1b. g. ven you: M 179. 7 See Ezech. 36. 37.

This ſentence ought to be called to mind when the Church any is afflicted.

any to plead our cause, in regard of the enemies rage which is more and more inflamed against vs, yet our God is at hand, who will coter vs in such wise, as we shall haue strength and defence sufficient: for all they that persecute vs, doe not onely war with vs, but with him which is the liuing God. These things were not written for onc age alone; but rather as this promise is perpetuall, I will be thy buckler, and thine exceeding great reward:

Gen. 15. 1.

God perfects his power in weaknes.

A friend to thy friends, and an enemy to thy enemies: Gen. 17. 7. so, euen then when we haue least meanes and strength to resist, let vs bee so much the more resolu'd, that the hand of our God is the nearer to deliuer vs. Since God had been pleas'd then in the person of *Abraham* to strike a covenant with vs, vpon condition that himselfe will alwaies take our quarrell into his owne hands: let vs assure our selues, that he will faithfully performe his promise, and will manifest it, that the wrong which is done vnto vs, redounds to his owne person. In a word, he is so made one with vs in his Christ, that hee will haue ours made his, and that which is his, made common to vs.

To be short, hee is so conioined with vs, that he meanes to make a communitie of all that is his and ours together. And therefore hee tooke the outrages and wrongs which *Sennacherib* did to the Church, as done to his own person: to shew, that wicked men greatly abuse themselves, when they are puffed vp with an ouerweening of their own greatness, as if therefore forsooth they should escape vnpunished, when they haue trod the poore Church vnder their feet. For we know they basely esteeme of God his prouidence, and especially when they see the faithfull lie panting vnder the burthen of the Crosse and afflictions, they thinke them vnworthy the succor of God: who for that cause awakes himselfe as it were, and declares by vnanswervable arguments, that he is no lesse wronged when his little flocke is thus halled to and fro, then if open violence were offered to his owne Maiestie. Let it be granted then that our enemies thinke our God cares not for vs, when outward meanes faile vs, and that they then spoile with greater liberty, as if we were giuen into their hands for a pray; yet God on the contrary affirms, that our saluation is deere and precious still vnto him.

But our Prophet with many wordes sets forth the pride and insolencie of this tyrant, as of a man altogether insupportable; to wit, in his *speeches, looks,* and gestures which hee vsed with head, hands, feete, and all the parts of his body: for as such proud tyrants haue a vaine conceit of their owne greatness, so they aduance themselves, and behold others with a scornfull eye; as if they were some pettie gods, newly fallen from the cloudes. For a conclusion, *Isaiah* adds, that albeit the affaires of this people went but meanly forward, yet God notwithstanding, who holds them vnder his protection, remains in heauen, and is as almighty as euer he was: wherein he taxeth the madnesse of *Sennacherib*, who esteemed the people according to the out-

ward appearance, neuer considering that they were dedicated and consecrated vnto God. That wee then may rest safely and securely vnder his power and protection, and that he may spread his armes ouer vs for our succour in the time of neede; we must for our parts be sure that we be *bi Israel*; which wee shall be, if resting vpon his word and promise, wee quietly sit vs downe vnder the shadow of his wings.

Verf. 24. *By thy seruants hast thou railed on the Lord, and said; By the multitude of my chariots, I am come vp to the top of the mountaines, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut downe the high Cedars thereof; & the firre trees therof: and I will goe vp to the heights of his toppes, and to the Forrest of his fruitfull places.*

See how the indignitie and spightfulnessse of this outrage is further amplified; for the iniurie that is offered by a *seruant*, is not so easilie put vp, as when it is done by the master; becaue the baseness of the person makes the wrong euermore intollerable. And therefore the proud ones of the world, when they will threaten in the most despightfull sort, they will brag that their wils shall be executed by their *seruants* and horsekeppers: that they may make it knowne, how basely they esteeme of those whom they purpose to mischief. By this circumstance then the Prophet meant to shew how execrable this blasphemie was, when *Sennacherib* was not content to vomit it out of his owne mouth; but had set on his seruant *Rabshakeh*, to make him rent the sacred name of God in peeces.

As touching that which is recited afterward in the person of *Sennacherib*, some take it generally for the former victories which hee had wonne, and by this meanes had subdued many nations, as we haue said before: but I had rather take it more particularly, in referring it to this last siege. For when he saw the whole land in a manner vnder his obissance, and the *mountaines* which inuironed all the Country, possessed by his souldiers, he brags as if he had gotten all, and threatens that hee will inioy the castles, *mount Libanon* with his *Cedars, fir-trees*, and other commodities: as if he should say; Nothing shall let me to be master of all the forts of Iudah, and to deale with the Country as I thinke good. See how Tyrants glory that the good successes of their warres are in their owne hands, although often constrained to acknowledge the fight to be dangerous.

Verf. 25. *I haue digged and drunke the Waters, and with the plant of my feete haue I dried all the riuers* ^{*Or, of the} *clo-* ^{siege.} *sedin.*

This Tyrant proceeds here, glorying still in his forces, and threatens to bring so mightie

nighie an armie, that the multitudes of his ſouldiers ſhall be able to *drinke the fountaines and rivrs of Iewrie drie*. By the *riuers of the ſiege*, ſome vnderſtand the riuier Shilo, and the Ciſterns which the beſieged Iewes could not loſe but they muſt forthwith periſh for thirſt. Yet in the firſt member he ſeemes to aſſume, that he feares no want of water, though the whole countrie were deſtitute of it, becauſe he hath men enow to *digge pits*. In the ſecond place he ſaith, he is furniſhed with meanes ſufficient to drie vp all the waters of the Citie, thinking thus to terrifie the Iewes. His meaning in a word is, that Ieruſalem will not be able to indure the ſiege, nor be able to ſtand out long againſt him, but muſt forthwith be conſtrained to yeeld. Now when the wicked make their vants on this maner, God ſits in heauen, whence at the laſt he will denounce his iuſt ſentence againſt them. For the Prophets diſcourſe tends to informe vs of Gods iuſt and wonderfull iudgement againſt this Tyrant.

The prophets drift in this narration.

Verſ. 26. *Hath thou not heard how I haue of old time made it, and haue formed it long agoe? And ſhould I now bring it, that it ſhould be deſtroyed and laid on ruinous heapes as Cities deſenced?*

THE expoſitors for the moſt part expound this verſe as if the Lord ſhould ſay, That this Tyrant neither hath done nor ſhall doe any thing but that he hath foretold by the mouth of his Prophet, and thus affirms, that himſelfe is the author of theſe things. But I expound it otherwiſe; to wit, that Ieruſalem ſhall be deliuered by Gods aſſiſtance, becauſe he is the protector of it: and that his ſpeech might haue the more weight, he names not the Citie, but vſeth the pronoun *demonſtratiue*, as if all other Cities were nothing in Gods account in compariſon of this.

Others referre theſe words, *I haue made it*, to the deliuerance which depended vpon the ſecret counſell of God: but whoſoeuer ſhall diligencie weigh the ſcope of the Prophets words, will confeſſe that it is here ſpoken of Ieruſalem. God complained, as we haue ſeene, that he was ſo deſpightfullie blaſphemed; and yet in reciting the words of *Senacherib* he only mentioned Libanon, and the quarters adioining: now to ſhew that vnder the name of Libanis, warre was proclaimed againſt himſelfe, he affirms (as in many other places) that Ieruſalem was founded with his hand, and built at his command: whence it follows, that *Senacherib* could not ouerthrow it, vneſſe he firſt plucked God downe from his throne.

This doctrine is often met withall in the Scriptures, and wonderfull comfort is conieined in it, vpon which the faithfull may at all times boldlie leane in all their trials and afflictions, be they neuer ſo hard and difficult to be borne; to wit, that they ſhall euer be preferred vnder Gods protection, becauſe he hath elected them. For thus ſtands the argument, *I haue made and formed the Church: the*

Gods argument in this place.

ſaluation of it ſhall ſtand for ever, becauſe I will not leaue the worke that I haue begun vniſhished, but will bring it vnto perfection. In a word, the Lord teſtifies that he will goe on with his worke, and will preferre it, becauſe it concernes his owne honor, and our ſaluation.

Phil. 1. 6.

Moreouer, he is called the *former* of his Church in another ſenſe then that in which he is ſaid to be the Creator of heauen and earth: for we are his peculiar workmanſhip, ſaith *S. Paul*, being reformed by his Spirit: of which point we haue ſpoken heretofore in other places. This worke therefore of all others is the moſt excellent, yea, aboue the creation of the whole world. Be it farre from any man therefore to aſſume that he was incorporated into the Church by his owne power or induſtrie: for it is not without cauſe that we are called *his workmanſhip*, *Eph. 2. 10.*

Ephes. 1. 10.

But it may be demanded why the Lord ſaith *he formed Ieruſalem long agoe*, for there were many Cities more ancient then it. I anſwere, that this ought not to be referred to the outward forme or building, but to the eternall decree of God, according to which he had choſen this Citie for his dwelling place. For albeit it was then only ſaid when the Arke was made, This is my reſt, here will I dwell, *Pſal. 132. 14.* And by *Moses*, I will come vnto thee into the place wherein I ſhall put the remembrance of my name, and I will bleſſe thee, *Exod. 20. 24:* yet had God long before ordained it. For we were choſen before the foundations of the world were laid, as *S. Paul* teacheth, *Ephes. 1. 4.* And *S. James* ſaith, That we were *begotten* by the word of truth, that we might be the firſt fruites of his creatures, *Iam. 1. 18.* He will then conſerue vs aboue all his creatures, and will neuer ſuffer vs to periſh. Now as *Chriſt* is called the firſt borne of euery creature, *Coloſ. 1. 13.* ſo the Church alſo, which is his bodie, obtaines in this world the preheminance of dignitie and honour.

Quest.

Anſ.

I leaue the Rabbins to their rauings, when they ſay, that God created the Meſſiah and Ieruſalem with a throne of glorie before he formed heauen or earth. But we muſt hold this principle, that he will be the faithfull gardian of his Church, ſeeing he hath vouchſafed to preferre it before all the world beſides.

Rauings of the Rabbins.

As touching that which followes in the end of the verſe, *And ſhould I now bring it to this point?* Some draw it to a ſenſe altogether wreſted. I denie not but the Prophets words are in the preterperſectence; Now I haue brought it, and put it: but becauſe y change of the tence is very familiar and vſuall in the Hebrue tongue, it is certaine that the Prophet hauing affirmed that God is in ſuch wiſe the *former* of his Church, that it is the chiefſt of all his works, he now thence concludes, that it can not be ruined as other common things are. It muſt be read by an Intergogation then, *Shall I bring it now, or, ſhould I ſuffer it to be brought?* As if he ſhould ſay, *Should I ſuffer it to be racted at other Cities which are quite ouerthrowne and laid on heapes?* For he compares Ieruſalem with other Cities which were deſtroyed and ſubdued by the *Aſſyrians*, that ſo

they might know that this Tyrant should not so easily obtaine that which he desired, because the difference is great betwene it and other Cities which haue bene reared to the foundation. It must not be compared then with other Cities how well fortified fouer they be, because they with the earthlie matter of which they consist, shall easily fall: but albeit the Church be but weake and feeble in outward shew, yet hath shee such a stable and firme foundation laid in Gods secret election, that it can neuer be ouerturned by any ten:pests whatsoeuer.

We see strange changes haue befallen the world: Commonwealths haue bene turned topsie turuie, Empires abolished, mightie nations subdued, and their renowne and glorie extinguished. What is now become of the glory of the Roman Empire? What is become of the Nobles of this people, who were the Lords of all the earth? If any reliques thereof remaine (which is very small) is it not buried vnder the miserablie slauerie of that cursed monster, I meane Antichrist, who exerciseth his tyranny ouer all the earth? Where is now the liberty which Rome once inioiced? Where is that goodly forme of a Commonwealth, which was once to be seene there? Rome may now well be called the shop of all mischiefe and impietie, and a cage of euery horrible confusion, the Lord shewes that he wil preserve *Ierusalem*; that is to say, his Church: and albeit among these changes, she be tossed vp and downe, and diuersly afflicted, yet she shall stand fast notwithstanding. At least, the shakings and persecutions which she suffers, shall not hinder her so, that by many resurrections (as it were) she should not still be renewed and multiplied from age to age. Now although the members of the Church are not alwaies of one ranke in this world, yet it is one and the same body knit by joints and bands to one head Iesus Christ. Thus then, *The Lord will keepe and defend the Cisse, and will cause the children of his seruants so to conuince, that their seede may be established for euer: Psal. 102. 28.*

The glory of the Roman Empire gone.

That Antichrist of Rome, an execrable monster.

Rome may now be called the shop of all impiety.

*Or, For the *Ebr. are short in hād.

*Vers. 27. * Whose inhabitants haue small power, and are afraid and confounded: They are like the grasse of the field and greene hearb, or, grasse on the house toppes, or corne blasted before it be growne.*

THe Prophet now better expresseth that which hee touched in briefe before, to wit, that the estate of the Church is not to be iudged according to that which she is in this world: for though the strongest Cities be taken, that the most valiant doe faile in heart, and fall into their enemies hands; yet the Church shall remaine and flourish, because the rests not vpon her owne strength, neither hath she her foundation from earth, but from heauen. For there is a close opposition here betwene strong Cities which the inhabi-

tants cannot keepe, because they are frightened and troubled; and the Church of God, which being upheld by his onely grace, sustaines all assaults, and is neuer vanquished: for she referres all things to God onely, who giues her beginning and being, continues her strength, indues her with constancie and all sorts of benefites: in a word, with all the parts of her saluation. Hence we are taught, that all the fortresses in the world are nothing, vnlesse God be the watchman. All the forces of men are but as shiuering reeds, vnlesse they be sustained by his power: castles, ramparts, and weapons, bee they neuer so many and inuincible, without him, shall serue their turnes nothing at all.

This is yet better expressed by the similitudes which are added. For it was necessarie that the faithfull should bee well informed touching the loue and singular affection which the Lord bare towards them, lest they should be offended at the prosperitie of the prophane and wicked. Albeit humane forces then be neuer so glorious in outward appearance, and make all the goodly shewes that can be deuised; yet the Prophet affirms that it is but like *the grasse* and flowers of the field, which are greene and flourish for a time, and suddenly are gone. He abasheth them more by the other similitude which hee adds touching *the grasse upon the house tops*, whose stalkes are high and easie to be seene of all: but if they grow vpon any high place, then are they nearest their withering, being neuer fit for any vse: as the Psalmist saith; *for the reaper fillen not his hand, nor the gleaner his lap*; and therefore the passers by say not so much as God speed you: *Psal. 129. 6, 7.* So albeit the enemies of the Church be like the tall Cedars, whose toppes touch the heauens as it were, and flourish by inioying the world at will, yet shall they in a moment wither and come to nothing. *As the corne then which grows on the ground, serues to much better vse then the vnfruitfull grasse which grows on the house top,* so the Lord shewes that *the base and abiect condition of his seruants, is much more excellent then theirs, who by reason of their power, exalts themselves so farre, as to iustle against the Lord of heauen and earth.*

The first Simile.

The second Simile.

Some thinke that that which is added touching the *corne blasted*, should be the fourth similitude: but as I thinke the Prophet would haue it serue as an exposition of the former similitude: as if he should say; *This grasse shall wither away afore it is come to a stalke or to any ripenesse.* As the Psalmist also saith, *It withereth before it be plucked vp.*

Vers. 28. But I know thy dwelling, and thy going out, and thy coming in; and thy furie against me.

HE returneth and toucheth the insupportable pride of this Tyrant, who attributed I wot not what to himselfe, as if he had been inferiour to none: yea, he durst blasphemie and raile vpon the liuing God, as if he had been nothing in comparison of him. But God takes downe his pride and arrogancie:

tie: as if he ſhould ſay, yet doe I know all thy haunts well enough; yea, thy ſitting downe, and riſing up. The wicked exalt themſelves, thinking they ſhould be ſubiect to none, no not to the providence of God it ſelfe: but he ſhewes, that they have no more power but that which is giuen them from above.

Sitting and going forth is taken here for conſultations, imaginations, and enterpriſes of the profane and wicked, who inuent ſundry plots how they may overwelme and deſtroy the people of God: but on which ſide ſoever they turne themſelves, and what way ſoever they take to bring their purpoſes to paſſe, yet they ſhall not performe a jot more then God hath willed. For they are reſtrained by his providence, which driues them to and fro, and often turnes their wicked plots to a good end, though they meant the cleane contrary. But God (whoſe proper office it is to direct mens paths, Pro. 20. 24.) conducts them which way it pleaſeth him.

He ſaith alſo, *I know thy ſurie*: thereby minding to ſhew, that whileſt the wicked play the beſlems on earth, God ſits ſtill in heauen laughing their madnes to ſcorne. And becauſe Sennacherib behaued himſelfe malepertly, and thought to goe ſcot-free, the Prophet adds theſe words expreſſie, to the end the faithfull ſhould not imagin this to be new, or vnknowne to the Lord, or as if he eſteemed them not.

Verſ. 29. *Because thou rageſt againſt me, and thy tumult is come vp into mine eares, therefore will I put mine * booke in thy noſtrils, and will bring thee back againe the ſurſe way thou cameſt.*

* Or, ring.

THe more the wicked are caried away with rage, & furioſlie exalting themſelves againſt God, the more ſeuerely doth he at the laſt oppoſe himſelfe againſt their pride. He lets them take their ſwinge for a time, and ſuffers them to inioy the world at will, but after long forbearance he tames them, and reſtrains them, leſt they ſhould thinke they had all vnder their command. Sennacherib is a ſingular example hereof, for the more audacious he is to ſome out his rage and ſurie againſt God, the more heauiſe did he feele his wrath to fall vpon him whom he thus braued: which all the pack of perſecuters ought to expect as well as he.

Now he doth aptlie and pleaſantlie ſcorne the ſond ouerweening of this Tyrant, as if he ſhould ſay, I ſee well enough how the world goes, I ſhall gaine nothing by handling the gentle, becauſe thy wrath is become deſperate: ſceing then thou canſt not be tamed, I will hemper thee like a wilde beaſt. And thus God ſhewes more plainly, that he is not only acquainted with the plots and imaginations of this milcreant, but ſo moderates and holds back his tyrannie, that in ſpight of his teeth he leades them whither ſoever he liſt: as if a wilde beaſt haue a ring put thorow his ſnout, a man may leade him whither he will. Some

Verſe 28.

translate the word *Kaki*, an hooke, but I had rather expound it a ring: becauſe an hooke is fitter to catch fiſh withall then wilde beaſts. Sennacherib then was conſtrained to turne from whée he came, and haſtned away without doing any thing; although his purpoſe was to haue poſſeſt Egypt and Iudah whollie: neither would he haue been diſappointed of his purpoſe willinglie if God had not drawne him away by his ſecret worke.

Verſ. 30. *And this ſhall be a ſigne vnto thee, O Hezekiah; Thou ſhalt eate this yeere ſuch as groweth of it ſelfe: and the ſecond yeere ſuch things as grow without ſowing: and in the third yeere ſow yee, and reape, and plant vineyards, and eate the fruite thereof.*

NOW he directs his ſpeech vnto Hezekias and to all the people: for he ſpake not before to Sennacherib as if he had heard him, but it was to the end he might the better quicken vp the people to be of good courage, ſceing the Lord did thus deſpiſe this Tyrant. If he had only ſaid, Hezekias, be of good comfort, albeit Sennacherib inſults ouer thee, yet I will repreſſe his pride when I ſee it fit; theſe words (I ſay) had not been of ſuch efficacy, as when together with the ſame he turnes his ſpeech towards the Tyrant himſelfe, in thundring from heauen vpon him: for by this meanes he imbouldens the faithfull to ſee light by all his threats. I therefore hauing firſt ſpoken to the Tyrant, now he turnes himſelfe very ſittie vnto Hezekias and to the people, promiſing them deliuerance: and that not only out of the pawes of this cruell beare, but alſo that Hezekias ſhould inioy his kingdome ſtill in peace and proſperitie, and that the reſt of the people ſhould likewiſe haue all things neceſſarie for an happy and quiet life. And thus he amplifies the benefit of their deliuerance, the rather to ſhew that he will not only ſuccor his people in one kind only, but many waies: for in deed his deliuerances are not only limited to once or twice, but he would haue vs feele his benefits in large and in abundant meaſure, that the fruit thereof might laſt for a long time.

But it ſeemes the Prophet ſits not his ſigne to the preſent purpoſe, ſceing that which he promiſeth came not to paſſe till after they were deliuered: for if God meant hereby to comfort theſe poore beſieged ones, it was now ſittieſt time (one would haue thought) to haue ſhewed his power, and not to haue deſer'd it till the ſiege had been raiſed. I anſwere, there are two ſorts of ſignes, one goes before, and leades vs by the hand as it were to the thing promiſed, the other comes after and conſirms it, that it may ſtick faſt in our memories, neuer to be raced out. As for example, when the Lord brought Iſrael out of Egypt, he gaue many ſignes afore hand vnto Moſes, but afterward he ordained one which ſhould follow the deliuerance: to wit, You ſhall ſacrifice vnto me three daies, Exod. 3. 12. Why ſo? To the end they ſhould not forget

Obic.

Two ſorts of ſignes.

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so great a benefit, but might yeeld him thanks, after they had had experience of so exceeding a fauour.

Such a *signe* is y^e which *Iſaiah* here describes: & questionles, it serues also for a good cōfirmatiō of our faith, to haue such an euerlasting testimonie as it were first before our eies, which may cause vs to consider how many mercies y^e Lord hath shewed vs. Now though the enimie was driuen back, yet there was great likelihood of famine to insue, which vsuallie followes warres: for it is not possible but great dearth must ensue where the fields haue beene wasted and spoiled. But against this necessitie which was likely to befall, the Lord promisseth continuance of foode, and propounds this as an euident signe of their deliuerance, the better to perswade the people that he was the author thereof, or at the least, to fixe the memorie of it the faster in their minds. This was a thing incredible, and seemed farre to surmount all their capacities: but it was needfull that the faith of *Hezekias* and the peoples also should be thus awakened, that hauing intelligence of so rare a deliuerance, they might be the better prepared to hope, and that the issue also might shew how it came not to passe by chance or fortune; vnto which, for the most part, these so many admirable workes of God are attributed.

The Prophe^ts meaning then is, *After the Lord shall haue ſraied the enimie away, he will hold him ſo ſhort, that he shall neuer be able to renew his arme againe: and thus thou shalt liue quietly in thy kingdome, which shall bring thee forth fruit in ſuch abundance, that thou shalt want nothing.* Now in regard that part of their store was spent, and the rest wasted, as it comes to passe ordinarily in such publike calamities, and that it was not permitted them to till the earth, being now either besieged, or else fled; hee promisseth them corne without sowing, vnto the third yeere.

Verſ. 31. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Iudah, shall againe take roote downward, and beare fruit upward.

THis appertaines to the former sentence: for his meaning is, that the Lord will deliner Ierusalem in such wise, that he will care for it also for the time to come, and will keepe it vnto the end. Truely all the benefits the Lord bestowes vpon vs, are so many signes and testimonies of his perpetuall good will towards vs; to the end wee might assuredly know, that hee will neuer leaue nor forsake vs. But in this sentence wee are chiefly to obserue that which we haue also touched before; to wit, that the Lord defended Ierusalem, because hee had pitched his Sanctuarie there, out of which also the Messiah was to come. The word *Peltash*, properly signifies Deliu^{er}ance; but it is here vsed as a nowne collectiue, which signifies those that are deliuered, or, are *escaped*: as in other places the word captiuitie, is taken for the captiues.

Now it is not without cause that hee promisseth *increase* to this little remnant: for albeit the siege was raised, yet the people being much diminished, they had small cause to reioice: & it was a thing very vnlike to expect a full restauration of such an handfull of people.

That he might a little reuiuie their sorrowfull hearts then, he shewes that the Country shall be filled with inhabitants, no lesse then if a faire and goodly plump of trees should fill the granges which were emptie before. But it was not onely the waste of the land of Iudah, which wounded the hearts of the faithfull thus with sorrow, but the great diminution of the ten Tribes their brethren, which had also beene carried away captiues. Now albeit they were thus scattered, yet *Iſaiah* promisseth that God would set them againe into their first estate, so as they should multiply into an infinit number: for the Lord often suffers his to be diminished & brought to nothing, that his glory may the better appeare afterwards in their deliuerance. And we at this day are to expect the like fauour from God, which he hath heretofore shewed to his people, that when wee see the Church at y^e last cast, giuing vp the ghost as it were; yet the we may assure our selues notwithstanding, that God hath meanes enow readie at hand to multiply this small remnant againe. For such a restauratiō on must not be measured according to the scant ell of our reason.

But hee faith, the Church shall be brought to so low an ebbe, that euerie one will esteeme it quite forlorne, euen as if it were plucked vp by the rootes: and truly the kingdome of Israel was a most sorrowfull spectacle of this plucking vp. Yet the Prophet in the name of God promisseth such an increase, that the tree which was stubbed vp by the rootes, shall againe take *deeprooting downward*. Albeit the church then haue not that goodly outward hew & beautie which the kingdomes of this world haue, yet will the Lord giue it such an inward and secret power, that by meanes thereof thee shall flourish and grow; contrary to all hope and reason of flesh and blood. Let vs not be out of heart then though the Church seeme to want *rootes*: neither let vs not thinke she hath none, because they appeare not to our sight; for the Lord hath promised she shall take roote downward.

Now hee addes the *fruit* also; because the Church flourisheth not onely as the grasse on the house top, which is the estate of the wicked, as we obserued in the 27. verse; but shee shall bring forth plentifull increase: and thus the Lord will finish in her the good worke he hath begun.

Verſ. 32. For out of Ierusalem shall goe a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the xcale of the Lord of hosts shall doe this.

BEfore, hee promised the deliuerance of the Church vnder the similitude of *rootes* and *fruits*: now hee sets it forth in plaine termes, without any figure. In these words therefore

God often suffers his people to be brought to low ebs, that his glory might the better appeare in their deliuerance.

The Church of God must liue by faith, and not by sight.

therefore he alludes to that ſiege of Sennacherib, which incloſed this ſmall remnant of people vp in Ieruſalem, as in a priſon; by meanes whereof they were brought to great extremitie. Now ſaith he, they ſhall come forth; that is to ſay, all paſſages ſhall be laid open, ſo as you ſhall walke to and fro againe at libertie without any annoyance. For going forth, is here oppoſed to the ſtraits into which the poore Iewes were brought, in regard of the feare of their enemies. Albeit, this word not onely ſignifies libertie to goe and come, but the multiplying of the people which were few in number. When the land of Iudeah then was ouerſpread againe with great troopes, and that out of theſe ſmall remnants there came forth men and women like flocks of ſheepe, which were diſperſed into all the quarters of the world, it could neuer haue bin brought to paſſe, vnleſſe the Lord of this little handfull, had created, I will not ſay one, but many peoples.

He not onely oppoſeth the zeale of the Lord againſt the counſils of men, that hee might magnifie the excellencie of his worke; but alſo admoniſheth vs that it ſufficeth of it ſelfe for all reaſons wherefore the Lord ſhewes ſo wonderfull and admirable ſignes and tokens of his power. The matter in outward appearance was incredible, as we haue ſaid: for there were many impediments on euery ſide, and helpes none at all. Thus God manifeſts then, that the Ioue he beares to his Church is ſuch, that it ſhall be no hard matter with him to worke extraordinarily for the maintenance of it. He vſea the like praife of ſpeech in Chap. 9. 7.

Verſ. 33. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord concerning the King of Aſſur; Hee ſhall not enter into this Citie, nor ſhoote an arrowe there, nor come beſore it with ſhield, nor caſt a mount againſt it.*

Now he comes to the deliuerance whereof he ſpake before: for firſt, God promiſed to driue away Sennacherib, verſ. 29. ſecondly, hee promiſeth to furniſh the people with neceſſarie foode: albeit the Country was piled and waſted: verſ. 30. Laſtly, that he will cauſe this ſmall remnant to increaſe into an infinite multitude: verſ. 31. Now hauing ſpoken of the two laſt points, he returns againe to the firſt; becauſe without it, the other twaine had beene little to purpoſe; or wit, vnleſſe the people had bin deliuered out of the hands of this Tyrant. God therefore promiſeth that himſelfe will ſtand as a braſen wall, to keepe him from entering in vpon them: yea, he wou'd ſo preuent him, that he ſhould not ſo much as come neere to aſſaile them at all. For he ſaith, the enemies ſhall not ſhoote an arrowe there. I thinke the word *sollah*, ſhould be taken here for a croſſe-bow or other inſtrument of war, with which they ſhot darts; rather then for a mount, for mounts cannot be caſt.

Verſ. 34. *By the ſame way hee came ſhall hee returne, and not come into this Citie, ſaith the Lord.*

We haue ſaid before, that to returne by the ſame way, ſignifies, To goe his way without performing any thing; as wee vſe to ſay in our common prouerbe; Hee went as wiſe as he came, when one returnes without doing that which he came for, and is preuented in all his enterpriſes. To confirm this, he adds that the Lord hath ſaid it. For no ſooner hath he (which cannot lie) ſpoken, but we ought forthwith to receiue and embrace his word; and that no leſſe then if all impediments being taken away, we ſaw the effect by and by to take place.

Verſ. 35. *For I will defend this Citie to ſaue it, for mine owne ſake, and for my ſervant Dauids ſake.*

This is the confirmation of the former ſentence, why Sennacherib ſhall not come into Ieruſalem; to wit, becauſe the Lord is her protector. The Prophet here then commands Hezekias and all the people to turne their eyes towards God, in regard the fight of this Tyrant was ſo terrible vnto them, that they could doe nothing but tremble. As when we at this day ſhould conſider the power of our enemies, it would make vs quake for feare; in ſo much y there ſhould reſt ſcarſly one dram of hope in vs: but we muſt norwithſtanding looke direclly vp vnto God, and lay hold vpon his promiſes, and to ſeile our ſelues with them, as with a ſhield. It is to him, to him alone, I ſay, that we muſt turne our eyes, ſeeing he hath power enough in himſelfe for vs to repreſſe the power of mortal man. For this promiſe muſt not be reſtrained to Hezekias his time onely; but it extends it ſelfe to all ages. And yet the Prophets words haue a more ample ſenſe: for he affirms, that God himſelfe is the protector and keeper of the Citie, becauſe he had taken it into his cuſtodie. Thence therefore he concludes, that it muſt needs be out of danger, becauſe his defence is all ſufficient.

When he ſaith he will do it for his own ſake, he thereby brings Hezekias and all the people to the conſideration of the free couenant. The Iewes had beene often rebuked, and that very ſharply; yet did they not ceale euen of ſer purpoſe to prouoke the wrath of God againſt them: in which regard, they not onely deſerued to be left to themſelues in the time of need, but that he ſhould inſiſt vpon them euent ſignes of his fearefull wrath and indignation. That deſpaire might be preuented then, hee teacheth them that God will be their defence: nor that hee findes the cauſe thereof in them, but becauſe he reſpects his own name. Why ſo? Firſt, that his world might ſtand faſt, which was, that hee would neuer caſt off the poſteritie of Abraham, which hee had adopted, nor aboliſh his worſhippe, nor

l. ven eſt reſourne come il eſt venna.

This promiſe muſt not be reſtrained to Hezekias his time onely, but to ours alſo.

Ezek 31. 32.

Jer. 30. 16.
17. 18. 19.
20. 31.
30. 11. 12. 13.
Zach. 8. 2. 3.
4. 5. 6. 7. 8.

1
2
3

put out the remembrance of his name, though the Sanctuarie should be destroyed: secondly, lest hee should expose his name to the blasphemies & scornes of the heathen. There is therefore a secret rebuke included here, which this people deserued to be galled withall, and that iustlie: for *Hezekias* no doubt had more adoe to quiet and still the Iewes from their murmurings, then to chase away the enimie: for they tooke on no lesse, then if all had been lost. We must not thinke then that God had respect to the deserts of the people, or to any other particular cause, but solely to his owne glorie. For wee must supplie a close antithesis here, which is expressed by *Ezechiel*: *I do not this for your sakes O house of Israel, but for mine holy names sake*, *Ezech. 36. 22.*

What refuge we are to flee to, in the conscience of our vn-worthines.

Now seeing the same reason holds still in respect of vs, let vs boldlie oppose this buckler against all our finnes: Lord, although we are worthy by thy iust iudgements of a thousand deaths, yet be thou pleased to accept of thine owne free mercie and goodnes to keep thy promise with vs. I grant, that hypocrites gaine nothing by this, that God is said to be the perpetuall protector of his Church: but vnto this rock must all the faithfull learne to flee for refuge, though they come empty handed of any thing of their owne to appease his wrath withall: for he will neuer suffer his Church to perish, because he hath built and established it with a purpose to keepe it: but the cause that moues him to doe it is nothing else but his owne free and infinit loves sake.

Furthermore it is diligentlie to be noted when he addes, for *Dauid my seruants sake*: for albeit it had been sufficient for God to haue sought the cause of our saluation only in his free and vnderseeded loue which he beares to his people: yet it is not without cause that he placeth a most certaine pledge of it in *Dauid*, in whose hand he had renewed the covenant, promising to be his father. Neither doth the Prophet propound him here as a priuare person, but as that holy King, whose throne was established by God, that vnder his government his Church might inioy peace and safetrie. In a word, he was the mediator as it were betwene God and man, in which respect he was superior to the very Angels: for he represented the person of Iesus Christ.

Ezech. 21. 26, 27.

Now albeit soone after his Throne was throwne downe, and the Diadem torne in peeces, yet was not this confirmation vaine, that God would still for a time *keepe the Citie*, because he would in no sort breake his promise made to *Dauid* in his truth, touching the perpetuallie of his kingdom. For wee know that his successors lost not the principalitie by the exile of the people till Christ came; who for this cause in *Hosea 3. 5.* is called *Dauid*. By this we see how ridiculous the Papists are, when they affirme we are pardoned by the merits of Saints: for there is great difference betwene the Saints and *Dauid*, in regard of the promise which was made vnto him. He might as well haue named *Abraham*, or any other renowned Patriarke in the Church: but because he now speaks of the Church, and of the eternitie of Christes kingdom, he

speciallie names *him*, whom about all others had expresse receiued this promise. Behold, this is my rest, here will I dwell: for I haue a delight therein, *Psal. 132. 14.* Seeing the Prophet then respects the promise, and not the person, the Papists then are worthilie branded with the name of absurd Doctors, in thinking that the intercession of Saints (a dreame of their owne deuising) can be any whit confirmed by this place. Nay, that which they pretend here, directlie crosseth their error: for *Dauid* which is heere placed betwene, beares the image of the only Mediator, who abolisheth all newfound intercessions. Reade *1. Tim. 2. 5. 1. Iohn 2. 1. 2.*

The Prophet respects the promise, not Dauids person.

Verf. 36. Then the Angell of the Lord went out, and smote in the Camp of Asshur an hundredeth fourscore and sine thousand: so when they arose early in the morning, Behold, they were all dead corpses.

Now the Prophet shewes what befell the Lords words to be but winde: he testifies then that his propheticke tooke effect in deed; that so they might be the better perswaded he was sent of God, and had spoken nothing of his owne head. But this so admirable worke must not be restrained to this one prophesie alone, but to the whole scope of his doctrine, which by this miracle was authorized, himselfe knowne to be the seruant of God, and his calling ratified and confirmed. For doubtlesse he annexeth this notable and rare example of Gods iustice as a thing then very fresh in mind, to testifie to the end of the world that it was God which spake by his mouth.

But now where the Angell made this slaughter, it appears not. The common opinion is, that it happened whilest Ierusalem was besieged; but it might well happen also in the way, that is to say, when *Sennacherib* came to lay siege against Ierusalem. But I leaue it as a thing in suspence, because it is of no great moment: albeit we may easily iudge by the scope of the text, that this Tyrant came not so neere that he could throw any of his darts against the Citie.

Moreover, we are to reiect an inuention of Satan, who hath inuentioned by help of prophane histories to darken so manifest and admirable a iudgement of God, which affirms, that part of *Sennacheribs* host died of the plague in the watter of Egypt, by reason whereof he was enforced to returne home into his owne countrie. But who will say that there died so many men of the pestilence in one night? This father of lies (according to his ancient custome) honors the Egyptians with this miracle, which God purposely wrought in fauor of his Church. The fact it selfe makes it more then manifest, that Ierusalem was miraculously deliuered, as from the gates of death, speciallie if we way the message which *Isaiah* brought, as we haue seene before: by which he apparantlie testified that God wrought this

Psal. 132. 11.

Iere. 30. 9.

Ezech. 37. 24.

Papists ridiculous in vrging the merits of Saints as a cause why God should pardon vs.

this worke rather for the Iewes then for the Egyptians.

And leſt any man ſhould imagin this miracle came to paſſe by naturall cauſes, it is expreſſie added, that all this multitude was ſlaine by the *ſtroke of an Angell*. Now it is no vnwonted thing for God thus to uſe the miniſterie of *Angels*, in procuring the ſafetie of the faithfull, for whoſe ſakes he hath created all the armies of heauen. It alſo ſerues greatly for the confirmation of our faith, when we ſee there are ſo many *thouſands* of them which wait for our ſaluation. The Lord himſelfe is ſtrong enough, and his truth it is which onely keeps vs: Kom. 8. 38. For the *Angels* are but his hands as it were, in regard whereof, they are called powers and principalities: but hee prouides exceedingly for our weakneſſe, by giuing ſuch celeftiall miniſters to be our gardians and protectors. And yet the whole glorie muſt be aſcribed to God alone, we are to acknowledge the *Angels* but his instruments; for otherwiſe wee ſhould eaſilie ſlip into the error of the *Papiſts*, who aſcribing more then is meete to them, doe rob God of his power, to clothe them with it. With which error alſo, the learnedſt men of our time haue bin bewitched, as we know.

Now we cannot affirme certainly whether this were done by the hand of one, or manie *Angels*; neither is it much materiaſl: for the Lord is able eaſily to effect one and the ſame thing, by one or a thouſand of them. For he vſeth not their miniſterie, as if hee ſtood in need of their helpe, but rather to ſupport our infirmities, as we haue ſaid before: yet it is moſt probable, and answers beſt to the *Propheſie* words, that one *Angell* alone had commiſſion to doe this ſeruiſe. Euen as in the ancient deluſion, one *Angell* paſſed thorow the land of *Egypt* in a night, to ſlay their firſt borne: Exod. 12. 29. Sometimes God alſo executes his iudgements by wicked *angels*: but he choſe one of his voluntarie ſeruants here, to deliuer his Church, as by his hand.

An hundred, fourſcore, and ſix thouſand.] We are not to maruell that this was ſo great an armie, as ſome ignorant doe, who eſteeme it but a fable, when they heare tell of ſuch an huge multitude of ſouldiers; becauſe a leſſe number ſerues the turne now a daies. But *hiſtories* doe plainly reſuſe, that the eaſterne people managed things cleane contrarie to vs; and it is to be ſeene among them yet at this day. It was no maruell they brought ſo many forth to battel, becauſe they were much more inabled to indure cold and heat then we, they had more able bodies to labour, they were more ſparing in diet; neither were they giuen to delicious and dainties fare, with which vice our ſouldiers are corrupted.

As touching the manner of this diſcomfigure, here is nothing ſet downe for certaine. The *Rabbins* without any testimony or likely coniecture, affirme, that they were ſmitten with thunder and lightning. For as they are bold to come fables, ſo are they not afraid to auouch any thing that comes in their heads, euen as if they had found the

ſame recorded in ſome authentique *hiſtorie*. But the words ſhew, that this was no ſuch apparant ſlaughter: for the *Prophet* ſaith, that they lay all dead vpon the earth: if they had bin ſmitten with lightning, euery one would haue perceiued it, neither would the *Prophet* haue concealed it. The coniecture of the *Rabbins* then you ſee, is confuted out of the very text: but I had rather laue off in the mid way. It ſufficeth that we know thus much; the Lord was minded to deliuer *Jeruſalem* out of the hand of the *Aſſyrians*; and he ſinore the hoſt with ſudden death, altogether without mans helpe.

Verſ. 37. So Sennacherib King of Aſhur departed, and went away, and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

Now *Iſaiah* ſhewes, with what diſhonour this Tyrant retired; who before, in his conceit, had deuoured all Iudeah, and durſt challenge the Lord himſelfe. In that he expreſſeth his recoiling backe, with ſo manie words to one purpoſe, it is to caſt diſgrace vpon his cowardly flight: for it is no ſuperfluous repetition when he ſaith, he departed, hee went his way, and he returned. The name of *King* is alſo added to his further ſhame. As if he ſhould ſay; See this King, this great King, Chap. 36. 4. whom *Rabſheke* extolled ſo highly, becauſe of his power. Hee came not into Iudeah to returne with infamie; but God for his mercy and truthe ſake droue him out thence, euen as chaſſe before the wind.

Where it is ſaid, hee returned to dwell in *Nineveh*, it ſhewes vs further, that hee not onely left his courage, but his forces alſo quailed; for hee would not willingly haue ſtaed at home, if deſpaire had not beene as a chaine to keepe him in: he contented himſelfe with his kingdome then, whereof *Nineveh* was the mother Citie. Afterwards when the *Caldeans* had ſubdued the *Aſſyrians*, the Monarchy was transported vnto *Babylon*; to wit, ten yeere ſaſter the death of *Sennacherib*, in which time *Eſar-baddone*, (of whom mention is here made) reigned. For *Parides* being winked at, and ſupported by many, the forraigne enemies might eaſilie conquer and ſubdue a nation full of factions: and therefore *Merodach* hauing made uſe of this occaſion, invaded the *Aſſyrians*, and brought them vnder his command.

Verſ. 38. And as hee was in the Temple worshipping Niſrock his God, Adramelech and Sharcezer his ſonnes ſlew him with the ſword: and Eſar-baddone his ſonne reigned in his ſtead.

The *Rabbins* giue themſelues the like liberty heere to come deuices; for they ſaie that *Sennacherib* asked his idoll, why he could not vanquiſh the Iewes: and it answered, becauſe *Abraham* meant to haue ſacrificed his ſonne to God. And then this Tyrant following this example, determined to offer

Il parit, il s'en alla, il retourna.

Rabbins bold in coining fables.

Eph. 1. 21.

Rabbins too bold in coining fables.

vp his sonnes, to get the fauour of his god, but his sonnes being prouoked to wrath by the crueltie of their father, slue him in the temple of his Idols. But what haue we to doe to hearken to such coniectures, in which the Iewes bewray their (more then) shamelesse impudencie?

The miserable end of Tyrants.

We may see heere as in a glasse, the wretched end of Tyrants, whom the Lord cuts off without mans hand, euen then when they thinke to swallow vp all by their furie: and not only so, but exposeth them and their rage to the scorn of all posteritie. *Sennacherib* came into Iudeah with a mightie host, and returned to his owne house with a few followers, and God the Conqueror leades him captiue by way of triumph. But this is not all, for in the middes of his kingdome, in the middes of the chiefe Citie of his kingdome, yea in his very Temple (the reuerence whereof would haue been a meanes to haue preserved the meaneest abiect) he is slaine: not by forren enemies, not by popular sedition, not by traitors, nor by his seruants, but by his owne sonnes, that so his end might be the more ignominious, *Hercin* let vs consider, that

these insatiable gulfes who haue delighted to bathe themselues in the blood of others, are slaine by those that are neere vnto them: and cut off by those, of whose loyaltie they seemed to be most secured. Such an act is much more horrible, then if strangers had done it: but thus the Lord punisheth the crueltie of those who with an ambitious desire aspring to be aloft, spare not the very innocents. There are diuers examples of such things in prophane histories, where the iust iudgements of God may easily be discerned. *Senacherib* therefore receeueth y^e iust recopence of his insatiable couetousnes, in that he plotted how to enlarge his Monarchy, and in the meane while takes no order for his busines at home, how to bring vp his sonnes in vnicite: for because he loued some, and cared not for the rest, thence proceeded this conspiracie. To conclude, this Tyrant was not only murdered; but his kingdome also soone after was brought to nought, as we haue said before: and, that his successor might not deuise any thing against the Iewes, God occupied them at home with ciuill warres, and dissentions.

THE XXXVIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *About that time Hezekias was sick vnto the death, and Isaiah sonne of Amoz came vnto him, and said vnto him, Put thine house in an order, for thou shalt die, and not liue.*



OW the Prophet shewes how sharply this good king was assailed with another kind of rentation; to wit, with so dangerous a sickness, as there was no hope left of his recouerie: and

not only that, but he was also greatlie grieved in regard he receiued sentence of death from the mouth of the Lord, no lesse, then if he had struck him on the head with a thunderbolt from heauen. We cannot certainly asseure in what time this happened, whether afore, or after the siege, neither need we stand long to discusse the matter. It may easily be gathered from the holy historie, that this sickness fell out about the fourteenth yeere of his reigne, either about the time that the Assyrian came to lay siege to the Citie, or after his deliuerance. For he reigned 29. yeeres; in the fourteenth *Sennacherib* inuaded Iudea: fifteene yeeres are added to his daies by promise made him here from the Lord; here are the 29. yeeres then. Thus it appears that *Hezekias* was sicke in the fourteenth yeere of his reigne. All the difficultie is, whether it were in, or after the siege. The likeliest coniecture as I thinke is, that he fell sicke after the siege: my reason is, if it had happened during the siege, no doubt but the Prophet would haue made some mention of it. But he shewed be-

fore that *Hezekias* sent Ambassadors to pacifie *Rabsheteh*: also, how he went vp into the Temple and spread the letters before God; lastly, that he sent messengers to aske counsell of the Prophet: now all these actions, as you know, should hardlie agree to a sick man: for had this affliction fallen out with the other, the Prophet would not vnicerlie haue passed this circumstance ouer in silence. In a matter which is somewhat doubtful therfore let vs follow that which is the most probable: to wit, that this good king being rid of the enemie, fell forthwith into a grieuous sickness which had almost cost him his life.

In the meane while it is not without cause that this historie is annexed to the former, one following as it were in the neck of another: for thereby we perceleue that God gaue him scarcely so much respite as to take his breath: being escaped the sands, he then falls by and by vpon the rocks. Let vs be admonished therfore that the faithfull are subiect vnto diuers temptations, so as they are first tried by warre, then by sicknesses: yea sometimes afflictions come in so thick and threefold vpon them without intermission, that they indure combates all their life long. Why so? To teach them, that when one billow is ouer, they must expect another to follow presentlie. For they ought to be in such readines, that if the Lord shall be pleased to heape sorrow vpon sorrow, yet they must not breake in sunder, nor yet be discouraged vnder any calamitie whatsoever. If he giue them leaue a litle to take breath, let them know he doth it in respect of their weaknes: but I aduise such not to imagin that these short trucees should presage any long time of peace

The faithfull subiect to diuers temptations, sometimes all their liues long.

Note.
vnto

vnto them; no, let them rather in the meane while gather new strength, that hauing finished their course, they may looke for rest when they haue attained the quiet haue of Gods kingdom.

Vnto death.] Such a sicknesse might well trouble this holy personage; for such diseases are commonly dolorous, especially if the vicer be inflamed. But that which most afflicted him was, because some signes of Gods anger were mixed therewithall, whereby he might iudge that hee was now become his aduerse partie, because being but lately passed out of one greuous calamitie, he is now suddenly seized vpon by death, as one vnworthy to hold his kingdom any longer. Besides, hee had then no children; so as it seemed after his death things were likely to be wonderfully confuted. Thus then the apprehension of Gods wrath doth more wound the consciences of the faithfull, then any bodily infirmities whatsoeuer: neither can it be auoided, but they must needs forthwith be overwhelmed, hauing lost the sweet taste of his fauour. But the Lord minding indeed to adde affliction to affliction, in expresse termes tells him, *thou shalt die.* And that it might strike the deeper impression, he takes from him all hope of life: for these words, *thou shalt not liue,* are not superfluous; but are added by way of confirmation, or augmentation of the thing; As if he should haue said; there is no way but one with thee. Men are wont to trifle out the time when death hath but arrested them, and they turne their eyes euery way to spie out some startingholes: to the end therefore that *Hezekias* should not suffer his mind to roue vp and downe (as we are wont to doe in vn-certaine things) hee telles him twice for failing, *that hee must die.* And that he might indeed bid the world farewell, the Prophet warnes him to *set his affaires in order* with all speede, that his Counsell might know what to doe after his death: as if he should haue said; if thou wilt haue death to respit thee a while, then set thine house in an order quickly.

Here we see then (but I will speake it by the way) that God approves of the practise which is vsuall among men. What is that? Men that die giue their kinsfolks or neighbours charge to performe their will, and to take order also for disposing of the familie.

Jonathans hath translated; *Leaue thine house to some one:* but the construction of the words teach the contrary. Well, we see that euery one which passeth out of this life, ought to shew that he stands charged with a dutie; to wit, to take order for his familie for the time to come. Notwithstanding the chiefe care consists not in testaments and heires, but concerning the saluation of those whom God hath committed vnto our charge.

Verſ. 2. Then Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and praied vnto the Lord.

Now hee shewes how *Hezekias* was affected with this message, that his faith

and pietie might the better appeare vnto vs. He neither fumes nor frets as the vnbeleue-ers doe, but takes vp his crosse patiently: he stands not to reason the case with God; to wit, that he had sustained sorrow enough already at the hands of his enemies, and therefore needed not now presently to bee so roughly dealt withall, by a new kind of affliction. This is indeed the triall of true patience, euen to beare the crosse quietly: that is to say, not for once, but to perseuere vnto the end, and to bee alwaies ready to indure new assaults. But aboue all, we are to bow vnder Gods iudgements; and not to murmur at his seueritie, how hard so euer the case gne with vs: *Dauid* also confesseth, that hee held his peace, because God had done it: *Psal. 39. 10.*

To this appertaines that which is added, *that he turned his face to the wall.* For being cast downe with shame and sorrow, he gathers in his thoughts, as if hee would leaue the presence of men, to turne himselfe wholly vnto God, and satisfie himselfe in him alone. The gesture which he vseth is a thing indifferent in it selfe; but we aduantage our selues much when we turne our eyes from all such objects as might carry away our thoughts in prayer: for so, wee get the greater freedom of spirit to powre forth our desires in the presence of God. Surely we are all of vs thereto witted by nature, a little thing easilie distracts vs: and therefore we cannot be too carefull in vsing all meanes to hold our thoughts short from wandring. If we be to pray with others, shame hinders vs from doing it with ouermuch vehemencie, lest wee should be taxed of pride and hypocritie; or we feare to vse those gestures that might be thought vnseemly: it is therefore fit wee should prevent all lets and impediments. *Hezekias* turnes not his face to the wall then, as one in a passion, or rebelliously and disdainfully reiecting the message that was brought vnto him; but as one who by this gesture framed himselfe with the greater ardenzie to this dutie of prayer.

Whereas hee vtters nothing in expresse words, as he did before when he went vp into the Temple in the sight of the people; it was a signe that his thoughts were much perplexed, so as it seemed his whole body was as it were shrunk in with heatinnesse. And yet he leaues vs a singular example of pietie, that being iudged to death, he yet ceaseth not still to call vpon God.

But these words, *thou shalt die, and not liue,* did not onely tend to gall him a little, but to pierce and wound him to the very heart: as if God had meant at once by his soueraigne power to haue destroyed him. For it was a signe of his fearefull displeasure thus on a sudden to cut him off in the flower of his youth, and to take him from off the earth; as one vnworthy to inioy the societie of men any longer. Doubtlesse hee wrestled not against death onely, but against hell it selfe, and the torments thereof, wherewith for a time he was sharplie assailed. Whence it folowes, that hee concoined somewhat more in his thoughts, then the Prophet mentions: but howsoeuer

The true triall of patience.

Our prayers are much furthered by hauing our senses freed from outward objects.

Wherefore Hezekias turned his face to the wall.

The apprehension of Gods wrath wounds the consciences of the faithfull, more then any affliction whatsoeuer.

Mens last wills and testaments are respected in ap-proued.

Two things ought to be respected in testaments.

1

2

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I
3

Ren. 8. 26.

howsoever he could not by and by dispatch himselfe out of these incumbrances, yet the holy Ghost did suggeit into this confuled and perplexed spirit of his, such groanes, as could not be expressed. And in truth it had been an vncouth and absurd message, if so bee God had not comforted him inwardly by the secret worke of his Spirit, who was now as good as stricken downe to hell with the outward sound of the Prophets woies. Now for as much as hee would neuer haue repented, being leas'd on by despaire, mortification went foremost; next, followed that secret worke of the Spirit, which consecrated this poore dead body a liuing sacrifice acceptable vnto God.

Verf. 3. *And said, I beseech thee, Lord, remember now how I haue walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and haue done that which is good in thy sight: and Hezekiah wept sore.*

IT seemes here that he meant to reason the case with God, and to tip vp his former life vnto him, as one being wrongfully afflicted: but he meant nothing lesse. He rather furnisheth himselfe with arguments to buckle against the sharpe and dangerous temptations which might follow. For when the Lord dealt thus roughly with him, he might thinke himselfe forsorne, forsaken, and reiected, as if God had disliked of all that he had done before: for which cause he fortifies & cheeres vp himselfe, by protesting that *all his actions proceeded from the uprightnesse of his heart.* In a word, hee concludes that his inducers were not displeasing vnto God, though hee were presently taken away: and thus he makes way for good hope and praier.

Hee oppoeth not his merits then to the righteousnesse of God, neither complains he as if he were punished vniustly; but armes his selfe against a sharpe temptation, to the end Gods dealing might not seem too seuer in his eyes, in regard that hee had so well reformed, and taken away corruptions; which haue then the full swing in his kingdome, but chiefly in the Church.

A denie not but the Lord sometimes admits his children to reioice in the things which they haue well done: not as wanting of their deserts in his sight, but to acknowledge his benefits, and to be so touched with the remembrance thereof, that they may the better fit themselves thereby to beare all their aduersities patiently. Sometimes also the importunitie of their enemies constraines them to glory with an holy boasting, that they may commend their cause to God, as to him that is the Iudge and defender of it: and so *Dana* boldly opposeth his innocencie against the flanders of his aduersaries, and that *even before the iudgement seate of God:* Psal. 7. 9. and 17. 3. But *Hezekiah* meant here to prevent Satans sophistrie, whereof the faithfull haue sufficient experience, whilst vnder pretence

of humilitie, hee ouerwhelmes them in despaire. We must be very warie therefore, that our hearts be not swallowed vp of it.

Besides, from his words we gather the true rule of a well ordered life; to wit, when the integrity of the heart holds the first place: for there is nothing that displeaseth God so much, as when we goe about to cozen either him, or me by our dissimulatio: for as a glistering shew of works is wont to dazle our eyes; so nothing prouokes his wrath more the feined holinesse, in regard his name is thereby most profaned. We know he is a spirit: is it not good reason then that he should be worshipped spiritually, especially seeing he protesteth that a *double heart* is an abomination vnto him? *Hezekiah* therefore had good cause as you see, to beginne at the uprightnesse of his heart.

The word *Chaiem*, which is translated perfect, is nothing else but that integritie and soundnesse of heart which is opposed to hypocrisie; which also appears by the word *truth*, according as *Saint Paul* saith, that the end of the law, is loue out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith vnfeined. Moreover, *Hezekias* sets downe the fruits which issue from a pure heart, as from the roote; not onely to animate himselfe, but others also, especially concerning those things which might giue them any occasion of stumbling. Hee staggered not then, but meant to remove the impediments which peraduenture might discourage many.

Againe, let vs note how our life must be ordered, if we desire that God should approue of vs; to wit, that we doe nothing without his commandment: for as hee reiects and condemnes all outward shewes, whereby hypocrits would bee thought inly fellowes; so esteemes hee nothing at all of any newfound seruices, wherein the superstitious sort trauaile in vaine, thinking they merit much at his hands, whilst they cast his word behind their backs. But *Hezekias*, who knew that obedience was better then sacrifices, 1. Sam. 15. 22. saith not onely that he ran, (which some often doe, though cleane out of the way) but also that he squared his whole life to the commandments of God, which onely is the competent Iudge thereof. Now from this place wee may gather, how much this holy performance was kindled with the affection of praier: for albeit he sees nothing about him but signes of Gods wrath, yet hee ceaseth not to haue recourse vnto him still, and exerciseth his faith, by powring out his praiers & teares in his presence; which all faithfull hearts ought carefully and diligentlie to practise, and that euen in their deepest distresses.

Verf. 4. *Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying;*

*I*saiah went his way, and left his sling behind him, as they say; leaving him as a dead man, whom in the name of the Lord he had adiudged to die. In the meane while we may gather from his song, how restless his thoughts

militie, to
dine vs into
despaire.

The rule of a
well ordered
life.
The first
rule.
Nothing
prouokes
God more
then feined
holinesse.
Iob. 4.

1. Tim. 1. 5.

The second
rule.

And haue
done that
which was
good in thy
sight.

Hezekias
not onely
ran, but he
ran well.

God must be
sought vnto
by praier,
when hee
seemes most
angrie.

Hezekias
opposeth not
his merits
against Gods
righteousnes,
but armes
himselfe a-
gainst a
sharpe tempta-
tion.

God admits
his children
sometime to
glory in their
well doing.

It is an old
practice of
Satan, vnder
colour of hu-

thoughts were, or rather, with how great terror he was surpris'd. It is not easie to define of the intermission betweene the Prophets departure, and his returne: yet it is out of question, that the promise both touching his recovery, and life, was not made till he had felt himselfe forlorne; yea, after he had a long time been toyled vp and downe with furious stormes and tempests. For his faith was tried to the ymmost when God thus hid his face from him, and suffer'd him to lie plunged in the darknesse of death: yet we haue told you already, that the faith of this King was not so quenched, but that some sparks thereof appeared, though hee, were left destitute of all outward comforts. For by the secret instinct of the holy Ghost, he breathed out vnumerable groanes from this bottomlesse gulfe, which ascended vp into the eares of the most high. From whence we gather, that the faithfull are so heard in the day of their distresse, that the fauour of God manifests not it selfe vnto them at the first cry, but hee deferses of purpose to let them feele it, till hee sees they be thoroughly humbled.

Now if it were needfull that so excellent a king and seruant of God should be in a manner thus overwhelmed with sorrowes, that he might be the better fitted and prouoked to desire Gods fauour, and to sigh and grone vnto him, being at the last call, and almost swallowed vp of the lower hels: let vs not wonder if sometimes he Ieaxes vs perplexed with feare and anguish, and deferses that comfort long which we desire. But some may thinke it strange that God forthwith called back his sentence, as if he repented himselfe of that which was gone out of his lips: for there is nothing lesse agreeable to his nature then to be changeable. I answer, *Hezekias* was not adiu'dged to death in the decree and counsell of God: but his meaning herein was to trie and examin the faith of his seruant. Wherefore in this denunciation there must be a condition supplied; for otherwise *Hezekias* could neuer haue bowed the Lord, nor disanull'd his irreuoicable decree neither by his prayers nor teares. But the Lord threaten'd him as he did *Abimelech* king of Gerar for taking *Sarah*, *Abraams* wife, Gen. 20. 3. And as *Ionas* did the Nineuims, *Ionas* 1. 2. & 3. 4. But it will be further objected, that it is contrarie to Gods nature to speake one thing & thinke another: for thus his words shall lose their authoritie, because men will esteeme of his promises and threatnings as things of little weight. But wee must iudge of the forme of theic words, as of the sense of those which I haue already expounded. God gaue sentence of death vpon *Hezekias*, because he would not that he should die: neither had it been needfull nor profitable to haue sent him this message, had not the remedie been neere at hand. Besides, as it was the meaning of God to humble his seruant with feare and astonishment, that by a voluntarie condemning of himselfe he might by prayers and teares escape this chastisement: so also it was no lesse his purpose to bring him low by this sharp and biting speech, *Thou shalt die*, to the end

he might require life, and to haue it restored as to him that was now shut vp as it were in his sepulchre. The Prophet supplied an infolded condition therefore, which *Hezekias* easily espied, although he perceived it not at the first. We can not conclude then that God vsed any dissimulation hete, seeing he fits his speech to the capacite and reach of the person to whom he speaks: for it is no vniuented thing with him to kill before he quicken. He only then holds part of his speech in suspense, that by the outward appearance of death, *Hezekias* might by little and little be framed to newnes of life.

He only held part of his speech in suspense.

Vers. 5. Goe, and say vnto Hezekias, Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, I haue heard thy prayer, and seene thy teares: behold, I will adde vnto thy dayes fifteene yeeres.

In his first ambassage, vers. 1. he meant only to terrifie *Hezekias*, and therefore contents himselfe with a bare propounding of the name of God, *before whose iudgement feare he summoned this poore guiltie person: but now when hee brings message of consolation, he addes a particular title, *to shew from what fountaine this fauour proceeded: as if he should say; God is now moued to shew mercie, so as he will not deale extremely with thee, because he respects the Couenant which he hath made with *David*.

Why God propounds his name to *Hezekias* in a diuers forme. *As in vers. 1. *The God of *David* thy father.

We know there is nothing more hard then to chere vp the hearts of such as haue deeply tasted of Gods wrath, with good hope of mercie; and to cause them indeed to feele that God is now become fauorable and gracious vnto them. This confirmation therefore was necessarie, to the end this good king, being forlorne in himselfe, might perceiue that life was to be restored him, whereof he was in a manner vtterlie deprived, because the promise touching the perpetuities of the kingdome of Iudah could no way be broken.

Nothing more difficult, then to comfort the hearts of such as haue tasted deeply of Gods displeasure.

Thus he being in a manner halfe dead by reason of this message, Thou shalt dye, the Prophet to encourage him puts him in mind of that promise which was then familiarly knowne of all. I haue sworne once by mine holines, that I will not faile *David*; His seed shall indure for euer; and his Throne shall be as the Sunne before me, *Psal. 89. 35, 36*. Vpon this boord or planck, *Hezekias* calls himselfe to saue his life from shipwrack in these boysterous stormes: for he speaks not of *David* here as of a priuat man, but as of an eternall King, which had the promise, whereupon *Hezekias* might stay himselfe. I say eternall, not in himselfe, but in the blessed seed. Now because this eternitie was to be manifested at the length in Iesu Christ, of whom *Hezekias* and the rest of the kings of Iudah were figures, he had good cause to hope well, in regard himselfe was the sonne and successor of *David*.

As often therefore as our finnes do shut vp the way againe vs from approching vnto God, that we might haue part in his fauor;

First objection.

Obiect.

Ans.

A condition must be supplied in the denunciation.

Obiect. Second objection.

Ans.

let this preface be present before vs. For howsoeuer by our own default he be estranged from vs, yet he is the father of Christ our head, in whom our saluation lies alwaies hidden for vs. To be short, God who a litle before spake as a Iudge, speaks now as a louing father, by looking vpon the mediator Iesus Christ, who euer appeaseth his anger.

Having left him way for hope, he now tels him that his prayers were heard of God: which doubtlesse should be as a good in our sides, to pricke vs forward to the dutie of seruent praiser. For albeit God of himselfe be carefull enough of our saluation, and hath euermore prevented vs by his louing kindnesse, and that not onely whilst we slept, but euen before we were borne: notwithstanding when he signifies vnto vs that all the benefits hee bestowes vpon vs, are as the fruits of our prayers, our storchfulnesse is vtterly inexcusable, if being so liberally inuited to come vnto God, we scorne to open our mouthes to call vpon his name. Yet we must not thinke that our prayers doe therefore merit, because God accepts so fauourably of them; but in giuing that freely, which of fauour he hath promised, he addes this declaration of his liberality, to the end he may the better exercise our faith. For it is no small priuiledge to haue access into his presence at all times, & frankly to powre out our hearts before him, and familiarly to cast all our cares and anguishes into his bosome. Had not Hezekias praied at all, yet the Lord no doubt would haue taken order by some other means, that the gouernment of the kingdome should still haue continued in the stocke of Dawid: but that which he was bound to doe in respect of his rrruth, is attributed vnto Hezekias praiers, to the end hee might acknowledge how great the fruit was he receiued from his faith, which he exercised in his praiers.

The Prophet mentions his teares, as a signe of his repentance, and also of his zeale and affection: not that they obtaine grace, or that they can appease God of themselves: but to shew that by meanes hereof, praiers which proceede from affection, are distinguished from those which proceede from the lippes onely.

In the last place hee addes, that God prolonged the daies of Hezekias fiftieene yeeres, which at the first might seeme absurd; because we are created vpon condition, not to passe one iot or tittle of that time which God hath set downe: as Iob saith; Thou hast set him his bounds, which he cannot passe: Job. 14. 5. But the solution is easie, that this length of time must bee referred to Hezekias his cogitation: for he was excluded from hope of a longer life, so as he was to account the yeeres following, as the lease thereof renewed againe: no lesse then if he had been taken out of his tonbe, to liue vpon the earth the second time.

Verf. 6. And I will deliuer thee out of the hand of the King of Assur,

and this Citie: for I will defend this Citie.

Those who thinke that Hezekias was sicke during the siege, ground their argument vpon this verse; because otherwise they thinke this promise should be superfluous: but their reason wants weight. For the Assyrian might well gather his forces together againe, and prepare a fresh armie, both to invade Iudeah, and to besiege Ierusalem. Yea, that distomfure which he had before, might so kinde his rage and furie, as to giue a new onset. The Iews then, you see, might iustly tremble when any should signifie some newes to them touching the enemies approching. This promise therefore is not superfluous, for with the hope of life, Isaiah secures him from feare of the Assyrian, whom Hezekias might alwaies haue had in some ielousie, if by this means the same had not been prevented. In which, we see how God still amplifies and addes new mercies to the former, which he had shewed him: as in the Chapter before going, God promised him abundance of the fruite of the earth, with deliuerance from the siege.

Verf. 7. And this signe shalt thou haue of the Lord, that the Lord will doe this thing that he hath spoken:

8. Behold, I will bring againe the shadow of the degrees, (whereby it is gone downe in the diall of Abaz by the Sunne) ten degrees backward: so the Sunne returned by ten degrees, by the which it was gone downe.

The holy historie orderly recites, how Hezekias asked a signe of the Lord, which was granted vnto him: our Prophet wil onely touch it in the end of the Chapter: but it is no new thing with the Hebrewes thus to set those things last, which should be first, &c. Moreover, the Lord offers some signes voluntarily vnasked. Againe, he grants them to others that require them. Now in regard that the generall vse of signes is to sustaine our infirmities, God for the most part staies not till they bee asked, but from the beginning hath alwaies ordeined such as himselfe knew would be the most profitable to his Church. If the faithfull then at any time haue desired that their faith might be confirmed by signes, we must not by and by follow them therein; because it was a thing very rare: as to Gedon, who being taken from the flail to gouerne the people, he gaue two signes which he vnasked, to the end he might be the better confirmed in his calling: Iudg. 6. 17, 36. As touching other signes, hee was wont ordinarily to giue them to helpe mens weaknesse: as to Adam, the tree of life, Gen. 2. 9. to Noah, the raine-bow in the cloudes: Gen. 9. 13. afterwards, the cloud, the pillar of fire, and the brazen Serpent in the wilderness: Exod. 13. 21. Numb. 21. 8. The like is to be said of the Passouer, Exod. 12. 3. and of all other sacraments which haue been ordeined both vnder

Praiers which proceed from affection, distinguished from those that proceed from the lippes onely. Obiect.

Anf.

The generall vse of signes.

Signes asked. Gedcons Accce.

Signes giuen vnasked. To Adam the tree of life. To Noah the raine-bow. To the Israelites the cloud and pillar of fire. The brazen Serpent. The Passouer, &c.

der the Law and vnder the Goſpell, without being asked of God at all.

Obiect.

But it ſeemes *Hezekias* offers iniurie to God, in that he beleeueth him not vpon his bare word, when he asks a ſigne.

Anſ.

I anſwere, he is not therefore to be condemned of infidelitie, becauſe his faith was weak: for where is the man to be found that euer had a faith ſo perfect that was not mingled with vbeliefe, or which was not faultie? Whereas he ſeekes ſome ſtay to vphold his wauering, he is not to be blamed for it: for hauing embraced the promiſe offered him by the Prophet, he ſhewes himſelfe to haue faith in God, in ſeeking remedie againſt his diſtraſt. Were there no infirmities in men, what need ſhould we haue of ſignes? It is no wonder then if *Hezekias* asks one, ſeeing the Lord is pleaſed to offer the ſame voluntarie vnto others. Yet we are to note, that the faithfull haue not asked ſignes of their owne heads, but were led ſo to doe by the ſpeciall inſtinct of the holy Ghoſt, which may alſo be affirmed touching miracles: for if *Heliſas* asked raine and drought, it is not lawfull for others to do the like, 1. King. 17. 1. Wee are therefore to conſider what the Lord permits vs to do, leſt whileſt hauing neglected his word, we preſume to indent with him according to the vnbri- dled deſires of our owne fleſh.

The faithfull haue not asked ſignes of God rafhly, but were moued to do it by the ſpeciall inſtinct of the holy Ghoſt.

The ſignes that God gives, haue affinity with the things ſignified.

The ſigne that is here giuen to *Hezekias*, is the bringing back of the ſhadow in the dyall with the Sunne tenne degrees, whereby it was aſcended, that is to ſay, gone forward vpon the Horizon. This ſigne hath affinity with the thing it ſelfe, as all other ſignes alſo haue: for it is as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Euen as it is in my power to alter the hours of the day, and to cauſe the Sunne to come back againe, ſo am I able to prolong thy life. In that the Sunne went not back to many degrees as there were yeeres added to his life, it could not well be done, becauſe there were but twelue degrees in the Quadrangle: for the dayes were diuided into twelue houres longer or ſhorter, according to the diuerſitie of the ſeaſons. Wee neede not buſie our heads much then as touching the number, it is enough that the proportion and ſimilitude of the ſigne and of the thing it ſelfe ſutes ſo well together.

Fables of the Iewes.

The Iewes doe here inuent fables according to their viſuall maner, affirming, that the day in which *Achaz* died was ſhorter by ten houres, ſo as the chaſtiſement inflicted vpon him for his iniquities, were turned to the good of *Hezekias*, in regard the ſhortnes of one day was the cauſe of the length of another. But what ground haue they for this here? Truly not ſo much as any ſhew at all: for here is nothing ſaid touching the death of *Achaz*, nor of any change which then happened, but of the dyall only which he erected.

Verſ. 9. *The Writing of Hezekias king of Iudah when he had been ſick; and was recovered of his ſicknes.*

Although the holy historie mentions not this writing, yet is it worthie our obſer-

uation, and to be kept in continuall remembrance: for therein we ſee that *Hezekias* would not by his ſilence either lightlie paſſe ouer, or by forgetfulnes blot out the remembrance of ſo excellent a benefit which he had receiued of God. All the faithfull by his example are taught what to doe when God for their ſakes manifeſts his power miraculoſly, or by extraordinary meanes: it ought not to ſuffice them that thoſe of their owne times ſhould be made acquainted withall, but as much as in them is they are ſo to provide that the poſterities to come may be informed of it, as we ſee *Hezekias* here doth by this his ſong. *Dauid* in like maner compoſed many ſongs to this purpoſe after he was deliuered out of great dangers; being carefull to haue that ſung to the worlds end, which was worthie of euertlaſting memorie: ſee *Psal.* 18. 2. & 27. But he eſpecially whom God hath aduanced to high degree either of honor, or power, euen as one being placed by God vpon a ſcaffold, he, I ſay, ought well to know and vnderſtand that he is inioined to imitate this godly King in this behalfe: and yet both great and ſmall are diligentlie to beware of ambition, leſt whileſt they ſeeme to imitate *Dauid* and *Hezekias*, they ſecke to gloriſie their owne names rather then the name of God.

What the faithfull ought to do when God works their deliuerance by vniuocall meanes.

Verſ. 10. *I ſaid in the cutting off of my dayes, I ſhall goe to the gates of the graue: I am deſtroyed of the reſidue of my yeeres.*

Behold here a very mournfull ſong, for it contains in it complaints rather then prayers. Whence it appeares, that this good King was ſo ſtraited with diſtreſſes, that being oppreſſed inwardlie, he ſoreth himſelfe to teares and lamentations, and ſtates not free lie open his mouth to frame a well ordered prayer. In mutterings by himſelfe then he layes forth the greatnes of his ſorrow: but this may ſeeme ſtrange if wee conſider the cauſe. Was it beſeeming ſo holie a perſonage for the deſire he had to prolong this tranſitorie life, ſo greatly to abhorre death? The firſt rudiments of the heauenly doctrine do teach vs, that we are but wayfaring men here, and therefore ought ſwiſtly to runne the race that is ſet before vs towards eternall life. But *Hezekias* ſeemes to be ſo much giuen to the earth, as if he had neuer taſted ſo much as one dramme of true godlines. He ſees and deteſts death, as if he had been vtterlie vnaquainted with y word of God. What meanes he then to ſet downe his boiling paſſions in this maner? It ſeemes he meant rather to draw the faithfull by his example to a kind of intemperance, rather then to keepe them within the liſts of Gods heſts. Are we not all of vs too much inclined to rebellion of our ſelues, but we muſt alſo haue a Scholemaſter to inſtruct vs?

Obiect.

But if we ſhall rightlie and aduicelie conſider of the matter, we ſhall ſee it was moſt profitable for vs, that the image of this man (in a maner ouerwhelmed with ſorrows) ſhould

should be thus liuely painted out before vs in liuely colours. It was not his purpose to purchase praise in the world by preaching his owne praises. Truly his praier was an vndoubted testimonie of his faith and obedience: but being surprisid with feare and astonishment, and cast downe with heauinesse of spirit, he leaues praier, and rather mutters forth passionate whisperings, God therefore in acquainting vs with his infirmities, meant to instruct all his children in humilitie, and therewithall to extol his goodnesse, by which hee was drawne as it wete out of the iawes of death.

Now whereas being ready to die, hee bewailes his condition, as if hee had set vp his rest on earth, or as if by death men are brought to nothing; we are to consider that there was a speciall cause of it. For albeit death bee not desirable in it selfe, yet ought the faithfull to mourne daily, in regard they serue sinne too much, whilst they remaine in this prison of the flesh. They are forbidden also to lament, as vnbeleeuers do: and on the contrary, they are commanded to lift vp their heads, when they are to depart out of this life, in regard they shall change for a better: Luke 21.28. The Church vnder the law was not destitute of this consolation; for albeit the knowledge of the resurrection was then obscure, yet that which they had was sufficient to asswage the dolours of the faithfull of that time. For if that false Prophet *Balaam* was constrained to cry out, O let me die the death of the righteous, Numb. 23. 10. how much more cause had the faithfull so to doe, thinke you, in whose cares and hearts sounded this voice, I am the God of *Abraham*? Exod. 3.6. But howsoeuer they aspired to this heavenly life in sure and certaine hope, yet is it no wonder to see that in *Hezekias*, which *Dauid* cōfesseth of himselfe, Ps. 30.3.9. who yet quietly left the world when his time was expired, & died full of daies: 1. King. 1. 10. It appears then that neither of them both were dismayed simply, in regard of the feare of death; but they therein perceiued euident tokens of Gods wrath; and for that cause they *prayed with teares* to be deliuered from it. For we must remember that the Prophet was sent vnto *Hezekias*, as an Herald of Armes to pronounce sentence of death vpon him, and that in the name of the most high God. Such a message might well drinke vp all his spirits, and cast him as it were into such horrible and fearefull plagues, that in seeing nothing but Gods wrath & curse to seaze vpon him, he wrestled against despair in it selfe.

Thus we see how his faith was tried, when being atraigned as it were before the iudgement seat of God, he enters into the consideration of his sinnes. For first, this cogitation might come into his head; What is the cause that God should correct his seruants so severely, and in the meane while spare those that contemne his Maicstie? And thus *Dauid* himselfe was tried, Psal. 73.3. Secondly, he saw himselfe exposed as a laughing stocke to the prophane, who by this occasion would insult ouer true religion. Hee also perceiued

that his death might cause the hearts of all the faithfull to wauer. But aboue all, the wrath of God pressed him the neereft, and that no lesse then if he had been already condemned to the pit of hell, and to the eternall curse. In a word, seeing our onely felicitie is to be at one with God, *Hezekias* was driuen into no causelesse feare, when he felt himselfe separated as it were from this vnion. For these words, *thou shalt die and not liue*, vers. 1. had almost seized vpon his soule, so that he was as a man laid in graue. Which is yet better expressed by this clause, *I said*; which not onely signifies (in the Hebrewes language) to vtter or pronounce words with the lips, but to bee perswaded and resolu'd of it in the heart. Though God threatens the hypocrites neuer so much, yet they gaze about for starting holes, and thinke themselves safe, if they can espie any corner wherein to shroud themselves, that afterwards they may bee as iocund as euer they were before. But *Hezekias* being the true seruant of God, neuer minded the seeking of euasions, but giuing credit to the Prophets words, he prepares himselfe to die, seeing God was pleased to haue it so.

He speaks in the same sense of the *cutting off of his daies*, feeling that God as his enemy in anger was determined to shortē the course of his life. For he speaks not after the common maner, when hee saith, that a violent death shall cause him to depart this life; but knowes that Gods iudgement is the cause of it. I grant that our life is alwaies *cut off*; be it that wee die young, or in the prime of our youth, or whether we die old: but it is said of those which die in the flower of their youth, that their life is *cut off*; because it seemes they are taken away too soone, as fruit gathered before it be ripe. But *Hezekias* had another drift, to wight he saw the residue of his daies suddenly *cut off* by the sword of the Lord, in regard hee had prouoked him to anger by his offences. He complains then that God suddenly deprives him of that life, which might haue continued a longer time; as if hee had been vtterly vnworthy to inioy it. Thereunto appertaines that which he saith of the *residue of his yeeres*: for albeit we ought to prepare for death euery moment, in regard we are all borne mortall; yet it being denounced heere against him as a punishment, hee complains not without cause, that he is *deprived of the residue of his yeeres*; which hee was likehe to haue inioy'd by Gods assistance.

Verf. 11. *I said, I shall not see the Lord, euen the Lord in the land of the liuing: I shall see man no more among the inhabitants of the world.*

H Ezekias should passe his bounds in desiring so earnestly to continue in the world, were it not that the feeling of Gods wrath augmented his griefe. In regard therefore that hee seemes to be violently drawne to death by his owne desert, euen as one vnworthie

Our onely felicitie stands in our spirituall vnion with God.

The meaning of this phrase, *I said*.

worthie to behold the face of the Sunne, he cries out, and pronounceth himselfe miserable, in that for the time to come he shall neither see God, nor man. Among the faithfull this exception is held, to wit, whilst we live in this world we are absent from God, but having put off the hindrances of our flesh, we shall enjoy the presence of God.

I grant there is a restraint in these words, in the land of the living. But hereby it seemes that *Herzekias* ties the sight of God to this life present, as if death did whollie deprive vs of all light and vnderstanding. We are therefore to call to minde that which I said ere while, to wit, This good King hauing receiued the message as proceeding from the indignation of the Lord, was so terrified therewith, as if he had bin vtterlie deprived for euer of his louing fauor. For if he were unworthie to liue, how durst he hope for greater things? nor that all hope was borted out of his heart, but because he only considers the curse of God, so as he can not so speedilie aspire to heauen to sweeten the sorrow that presseth him, by the sweet taste of a better life. It fallies out sometimes that the vnderstandings of the faithfull are so blinded, that for a time they fare as those that are forelorne: but although their comfort seeme for a while to be smothered, yet is it still hidden within, and anon breaks forth. In the meane while *Herzekias* shewes his pietie, in that (from the lawfull and right vse of this present life) he manifests to all how cumbersome it is vnto him to be deprived of it.

The very beasts are loth to die, yet haue they no other vse of their life but to eate and drinke, to labour, and to fill their bellies. But the end of our life is farre more excellent: for we are created and put into this world that we should dayly exercise our selues in the knowledge of God. And in regard that this is the chiefe end of our life, he shewes the vehemencie of his affections, in repeating the name of God twice, I shall see no more, saith he, the Lord, the Lord.

If any object, that wee see not God in this world, the answer is easie. For first he is to be seene in his works, in regard that by the creation of the world his eternall power and Diuinitie may be seen, as *S. Paul* saith, Rom. 1. 20. And therefore *Hebr. 11. 3.* this world is called the Mirror of inuisible things. But because he manifests himselfe more clearly to the faithfull, therefore *Herzekias* mournes for the want of this spirituall sight; as *Dauid* also saith, that those behold the face of God who haue freedome to come into his house, that they may confirme their faith by the exercises of religion. As touching the word *men*, he is sorrie to be deprived of their societie, because we are borne to aid and comfort one another.

Verf. 12. Mine habitation is departed and removed from me like a shepherds tent: I haue cut off like a weauer my life: he will cut me off from the height: * from

day to night, thou wilt make an end of me. leannes, or sickness.

HE goes on with his complaints, disciphring out his life by a very fit similitude, for he compares it to *shepherds tents*. For such in deed is our present condition here in appearance: but he stands not so much to shew what it is which commonlie fallies out to others, as what befell himselfe in particular. The vse of *tents* was more frequent in those countries then in ours, and oftentimes shepherds change their abode, by reason of flustering their flocks from one place to another. Thus he not only saith, that others dwell for a very little space in an house of clay whilst they passe thorow this world: but that himselfe being quiet in his royall Palace, euen his state was changed, as if a shepheard hauing pitched his tent for two daies in the field, should the third day be forced to remove it to another place.

But we are to note, that sometimes he assigns the cause of his death to himselfe, and then also vnto God: and therewithall giues alwaies distinct reasons of his speech. For in making himselfe the author of his grieife, he therein acquites the Lord; and complains not of him for taking away of his life: but accuseth himselfe, and layes all the fault where it was in deed, for so much his words import, which is expressed in an vsuall prouerb, My selfe hath wouen this web, so as my selfe and none other is the cause of my death. And yet it is not without good reason that in the second place he assigns the cause also vnto God, which before he whollie charged vpon himselfe: for albeit we our selues giue him cause to deale severely with vs, yet is he the Iudge, who inflictis his owne chastisements vpon vs. In all our troubles therefore let vs euer learne to magnifie his iust iudgements, because he doth vs but right in executing his office, when he corrects vs according to our deserts.

Towards the end of the verse, some translate the word *Middallah*, leannes, or sickness. Others, In drawing out: the first deriue this noutne from the verb *Dalah*, which signifies to lessen: the others from *Dalah*, which imports as much as to draw out, in listing vp. But let the readers consider whether the word *so life* vp agrees not best, because it seemes *Herzekias* complains that his life is suddenlie snitten downe whilst he indeuored to lift it vp, and to draw it out longer: as if God should cause the Sunne to set as soone as it begins to rise only.

By and by after he addes, That he shall be brought to nought in a short space, which he further expresth by the circumstance of the weight of Gods wrath, which suddenlie consumes men by his only breath. For to be cut off in a day, signifies as much as to die hastily. See the exposition of the latter clause of this 12. verse in the next.

Verf. 13. I reckoned to the morning, but he brake all my bones like a lion: from day to night wilt thou make an end of me.

Others read, I stayed, or fate downe: the word here signifies that which we vsuall

2. Cor. 5. 6.

The end of our life and that of the beasts farre different.

Obiect. Anf.

Psal. 128. 42.

* Or, he will cut me off by

lie say, I made my account. From this verſe we may gather, that *Hezekias* was ſicke about two daies: for in the former verſe he ſaid the maladic was ſo vehement, that he looked for nothing but death. That day being paſt, he euen waits vnto the dawning of the next day following, and from thence, till night: ſo as he expected death euery minute of an houre. The ſenſe then is; that although hee came to the day *breake*, yet he ranne haſtily to death, by continuall turmoilings: for being ſmitten with the ſtroke of Gods fearefull iudgement, hee makes no account to liue. And as the Greekes when they will ſhew that nothing is ſo vaine a thing as man, do terme him a daies bird: ſo this good King puts the life of a day here for that tranſitorie life of a man, which is but of ſmall continuance.

Man termed
a daies bird
by the
Greekes.

Whereas he compares *God* to a *lion*, it is no new thing, albeit *God* of his owne nature be gentle, mercifull, and louing, and nothing iſtes better to his nature then theſe titles: but we cannot feele this ſweetneſſe when we haue prouoked him by our vices, and made him ſeure by our rebellion. Nay, which is more, there is not the crueltie nor ſternneſſe of any, nor of all the bruit beaſts, that can ſo amaze or aſtoniſh vs, as doth the bare mentioning of the very name of *God* in this caſe: but moſt iuſtly. For his ſtrokes muſt of neceſſitie haue that efficacie in them, as to bring downe all loſtineſſe, and to humble vs to the very gates of hell, that ſo being in a maner ſtripped of all comfort, wee may lie gasping after it, and yet in the meane while apprehending nothing but dread and horror. And of ſuch terrors *Dauid* ſpeaks in *Pſal.* 22. 17. where he ſaith; I may tell all my bones. Againe, *Pſal.* 66. I water my couch with teares. Alſo, My ſoule is fore troubled: *Pſal.* 63. And the graue hath opened her mouth to ſwallow mee vp. Now it is needful that y faithful ſhould ſometimes bee feared in this wiſe by the ſenſe of Gods iudgements, that they may be ſo much the rather prouoked to deſire his fauour.

Pſal. 38.

Verſ. 14. *Like a crane or a ſwallow, ſo did I chatter; I did mourne as a dove: mine eies were liſt vp on high: O Lord, it hath oppreſſed me, comfort me.*

H*ezekias* cannot fit himſelfe with wordes ſufficient to ſet forth the greatneſſe of his miſerie, which brought him to that extreme, that he was not able to ſpeake diſtinctly, but to mutter forth a confuſed ſound of words, euen as thoſe that lie at the point of death. Whence it appears that he was wonderfully perplexed, ſeeing his grieſe was ſo great, that hee wanted wordes to expreſſe it. His wordes ſtucke as it were in his throat: nothing could bee heard but whiſperings: whereunto appertaines theſe ſimilitudes of the crane and ſwallow, which the Prophet here vſeth.

Yet euen theſe confuſed voices doubtleſſe doe pierce the eares of *God*; and albeit our deſee be ſurpriſed with heauineſſe, and that our ſorrowes haue ſhut vp our mouthes, yet

he beholds our hearts ſtill, and heares the ſighes which be breathed from faith. Yea often times ſuch broken ſentences are ſent forth with more force & efficacie, then wordes rightly framed, prouided that they proceede from the ſpirit of *God*, who ſtirs vp in vs ſuch groanings, as cannot be expreſſed: *Rom.* 8. 25. There is no childe of *God* but in this caſe feeles by experience, when extreme ſorrow cauſeth his tongue to cleaue to the rooſe of his mouth, and his heart to be cloſed vp, ſo as his prayers are but ſtutterings and ſtammerings. Some tranſlate that which follows in this ſenſe; Mine eies are ſunke in: but ſo the particle, *on high*, ſhould not agree. And therefore it is beſt to retaine the naturall ſenſe, which is; that his eies were waſted with often and much looking: or, that hee ceaſed not to liſt up his eies on high, albeit he was halfe dead; or was neuer ſo far out of heart, but he knew well that it was his dutie to wait for ſuccour from *God*.

Let vs learne with *Hezekias* to liſt up our eies to the heauens: and let vs alſo know that our *God* requires no great rhetoric of vs in our prayers. He confirms this ſentence in turning his ſpeech by and by vnto *God*, to deſire his helpe: for in regard the violence of the diſeaſe oppreſſed him, he intreats the Lord to comfort him. Some tranſlate, Anſwer for me; which we haue thought beſt to turne, *comfort*, or, *glad mee*: vnleſſe any had rather receive their tranſlation who read it, Make mee to reſt. How euer it be, he demands ſuccour of *God*, to the end the weight of his afflictions might not ouerwhelme him: we alſo ought to aſſure our ſelues in this caſe, that *God* will be ſo much the more ready to comfort vs, by how much the more wee ſhall be preſſed on euerie ſide with many calamities.

Hezekias
his example
ſet before vs.
God requires
no Art of
Rhetoric
in the prayers
of his ſer-
uants.

Verſ. 15. *What ſhall I ſay? For hee hath ſaid it to me, and hee hath done it: I ſhall walke weakelie all my yeeres in the bitterneſſe of my ſoule.*

*Or, ſhall
walke in
trembling.

THe moſt thinke that theſe wordes are vttered by way of an exclamation, ſuch as proceedes from ioy: as if *Hezekias* reioiced in hauing obtained his requeſt: but I am of another opinion. For it ſeemes to me that hee goes on ſtill in his complaints, because hee ſpeakes as thoſe commonly doe, who are oppreſſed with ſorrow; *What ſhall I ſay? He which hath ſaid it to mee, hath done it.* That is to ſay, life and death are in his hands, I plead but in vaine with him: it is but loſt labour to com-
Iob 7. 4. &
13. 24.

plaine ſo much as I doe. Many ſuch wordes and ſentences are to be found in the booke of *Iob*. This therefore, as I take it, is the verie true ſenſe of the place. For before, *Hezekias* looked euery way, to ſee if any comfort would preſent it ſelfe vnto him: but now, ſeeing that *God* had giuen ſentence of death vpon him, hee concludes, there is no reſiſting, I muſt obey.

In the meane while, theſe wordes are to be well weighed; to wit, that *God* accompliſheth that in effect, which hee threatned in words.

For

For thoſe ſay ſomewhat (I grant) but not all, who expound ſimply thus; God hath performed that which the Prophet pronounced of me, becauſe *Hezekias* doth not thus barely affirm, that he felt the effect of the word, but ſetting before his eyes the power of God, hee puts an end to all his complaints and cries. Thus *David* in the 39 *Psalme* ſaith; I held my peace, Lord, becauſe thou diddeſt it. If the feare of Gods power reſtraines vs not, wee will neuer ceaſe murmuring; and therefore *Iob* conſidering that he had to doe with God, ſaith; I will lay my hand vpon my mouth: I will make humble ſupplication to my Iudge: *Iob* 9.15. *Hezekias* then puts himſelfe to ſilence, for hee ſaw it was but vaine for him to ſtand diſputing the caſe with God. And thus hee confeſſeth, that hee was but as a dead man, becauſe the Lord made him feele how forcible his threatenings were. By reaſon whereof, this good King concludes, that hee profites himſelfe nothing at all with replies, becauſe diſcourſes to and fro haue no place in this behalfe. I grant that theſe words proceeded indeed from deſpaire; for in feeling God his enemy, he ſhuts vp the gate againſt the paſſage of his prayers. But it is no new nor ſtrange thing; for ſuch words (which turne vs from prayer) now and then to eſcape vs in extreme griefes; provided that on the contrary, wee cleaue cloſe to the proſſe of prayer; yea, although the ſenſe of the fleſh doe ouerſway vs ſo far for a time, as to perſwade vs that all is but in vaine.

Wee may coniecture that this good King was ſo intangled with perplexed thoughts, that he fainted in his languiſhing diſeaſe, but eſpecially in that he ſaw it was the beſt way for him to be ſilent, as I haue ſaid: for hee did but loſe his labour to plead with God, as it ſhall appeare more fully in the courſe of the text. Whence we gather, that he now ſets before him the fearful power of God, to the end hee may diſpoſe himſelfe to true humilitie.

Moreover, becauſe the verbe *Dadth* ſignifies to moue ones ſelfe, to goe ſoftly; ſome expoſitors tranſlate; I ſhall be remoued, or, toſſed: others, I ſhall walke ſoftly. But I verily thinke hee ſpeakes of a weak and trembling caſe; for he was ſo weakened, that he thought he ſhould neuer recouer his former ſtrength againe. This *trembling* muſt be referred to feare; for he addes by and by after, *in the bitterneſſe*: as if he ſhould ſay; The anguiſh which oppreſſeth mee, is ſo faſt rooted in mine heart, that it can neuer be plucked vp; and thence came this *weakneſſe* whereof hee ſpeakes.

Now becauſe the vulgar tranſlation hath; I will acknowledge; the Papists haue wreſted this place to proue their *auricular* confeſſion; but ſo vnaptly, that old dotards may laugh them to ſcorne. For it plainly appeares, that he ſpeakes not here of confeſſion, but of an aſtoniſhment and trembling, wherewith *Hezekias* ſhall bee ſmitten, euen *all the daies of his life*, as he himſelfe here ſaith.

Verſ. 16. O Lord, * to them that

ouerlue them, and to all that are in them the life of my ſpirit ſhall be knowne, that thou cauſedſt me to ſleepe, and haſt giuen life to me.

after me, ſhall knowe the life of my ſpirit, becauſe thou haſt made me to ſleepe, &c.

The Prophets words are ſo ſhort, that it hath cauſed many interpretations, amongſt which, this that followes is the moſt approved: O Lord, others ſhall lue after thee yeeres: that is to ſay, their life ſhall be prolonged. As if he ſhould ſay; Seeing thou haſt prolonged my daies, thou wilt alſo cauſe others to inioy the like fauour from thee. But this ſenſe agrees not with the text, and I iudge it too far fetched. I ſhould rather deern *Hezekias* his meaning to bee this; O Lord, all thoſe which ſhall lue after theſe yeeres which thou haſt added vnto my life, ſhall knowe the life of my ſpirit. And therefore the *relatiue* (which) muſt be ſupplied; for it is a thing vſuall among the Hebrewes not to expreſſe it: and ſo this will bee no conſtained expoſition. For it is not to be doubted, neither can it be denied, but hee ſpeakes of the yeeres which the Lord had giuen him as an ouerplus. His meaning is then, that the fauour which God hath ſhewed him, ſhall not bee knowne to thoſe of his time onely, but of the poſteritie alſo. Thus he ſets forth the greatneſſe of the benefit, which ſhall bee knowned for the time to come, and ſhall remaine ingrauen in the memories of all, euen after *Hezekias* ſhall be dead: ſo as it ſhall be called a kind of reſurrection. The word *to ſleepe*, ſignifies to die; according to the Hebrew phraſe, Gen. 47.30. Thus hee compares his ſickneſſe to death, which he was ſo neere, that he made none account of life.

1. Cor. 7.39. & 11.30. 2. Pet. 3.14

Verſ. 17. Behold, for felicitie I had bitter grieſe; * but it was thy pleaſure to deliuer my ſoule from the pit of corruption: for thou haſt caſt all my ſinnes behind thy backe.

*O, thou haſt loured my ſoule in the pit of perdition.

Againe he amplifies the greatneſſe of his grieſe by another circumſtance: for ſudden calamities which we thinke not of, doe trouble vs much more then thoſe which wee ſee approaching. His ſickneſſe was the more cumbersome and ſupportable, becauſe it ſurprized him vnawares, whileſt he was quiet and in proſperity, thinking nothing leſſe then to be ſo ſoone bereaued of his life. We alſo know that the faithfull now and then doe pleaſe themſelues too much in their proſperitie, promiſing vnto themſelues a conſtant and ſetled felicitie; which *David* confeſſeth himſelfe was guilty of; I ſaid in my proſperitie, I ſhall neuer be moued; but when thou hiddeſt thy face I was troubled: *Pal.* 30. Nothing therefore could aſtoniſh *Hezekias* more then to heare he muſt die, when hee made account to lue in peace, his enemy being driuen away and cut off: for I thinke hee fell ſicke after *Sennacherib* was repulſed, and his hoſt ſlaine; as we haue ſaid before. See then a ſore diſeaſe which now comes to vex him

L 4 vehemently,

Iob 39-37.

Auricular confeſſion.

*Or, all thoſe that ſhall lue

vehemently, in the middes of this ioy and tranquillitie which presented it selfe before his eyes.

We must not looke to inuicia sealed estate any long time.

The peace which is grounded vpon the assistance of Gods fauor, is to be sought for aboue all things.

Soule taken for life.

It was thy pleasure &c.

1
2

Hezekias esteemes his reconciliation with God aboue an hundred thousand liues.

To accuse God of ouer much feueritie, is but to double our owne woe.

Simile.

This shewes, that we must make no account to reioyce in any settled estate long, nor to lull our selues asleepe in iollitic, seeing there is nothing stable nor stedfast in this life: but we may be bereaued of all our ioyes in a moment. Therefore whilst we are in peace, let vs euen meditate of warre, aduersitie, and persecutions. Aboue all things, let vs carefulle seeke that peace which is grounded vpon Gods fatherlie loue and compassion, wherein our consciences may rest securely.

The second part of the verse may be expounded two waies, because the verb *Chaschak* signifies To loue, and sometimes To will: This sense agrees not amisse, *It was thy pleasure to deliuer my soule*: but if nothing be supplied, the sense will still be perfect, *O Lord, thou hast loved my soule when it was in the Sepulcher*. It is knowne to all, that the Soule is taken for the life: but the Prophet here extols the bountie of God, who vouchsafed to loue Hezekias though he were halfe dead.

In the next place he giues the reason of it, in bringing vs to the fontaine from whence this deliuerance issued: for otherwise, one might imagin that he hath spoken of nothing hitherunto but of bodily health. But we may now see that he looked much higher, to wit, first vnto his guiltines before God, secondly to the free reconciliation. He confesseth in deed that he hath receiued his life anew, but yet he esteemes his reconciliation with God more then a hundred thousand liues. Truly it were better for vs neuer to haue beene borne, then to liue long, heaping sinne vpon sinne, and so to hale downe the more horrible iudgements of God vpon our own heads. Hezekias then reioyced chiefe, in that the light of Gods countenance did shine clearly vpon him: for our only felicitie consists in hauing him good and gracious to vs. Yet herewithall he shewes, that we must impute the euils which God laies vpo vs to our *sinnes*: for such as accuse him of ouer-much feueritie, doe nothing else but double their owne woe. This good King condemnes not himselfe of one sinne only, but confesseth himselfe guiltie of many *sinnes*, and therefore stood in neede of more then one pardon. If we then desire to be truly comforted in afflictions, let vs begin heere: for if God be appeased towards vs, no euill can hurt vs, seeing he delights not to haue his beloued ones lie languishing in their miseries. It fares with vs therefore as with inconsiderate patients, who neuer thinke of their disease, but only of the accidents thereof, and of their griefes which they feele: but it is more wisdome for vs to follow the counsell of the skilfull Physitian, who considers of the cause of the disease first, and aboue all things indouors to remoue that: for they know that outward remedies are not only vaine, but hurtfull, if the inward disease be not discerned. Why so? Because remedies in such wise applied, do drine the disease further in, and so settles & augments it there, that afterwards there is no hope left

for healing of it.

Hezekias therefore like a wife patient, acknowledged the cause of his sicknes; to wit, his *sinnes*: which being forgien, he then knew the punishment was likewise remitted and ceased. Now by this we may see the sottishnes of the Papists touching their distinction between the fault and the punishment: for Hezekias testifies here that the one was pardoned as well as the other.

Wee are also to obserue this phrase of speech which the Prophet vseth, to wit, *Thou hast cast all my sinnes behinde thy backe*: for his meaning therein is, that God had whollie abolished the remembrance of them. As in Miche. 7. 9. Thou hast cast all their sinnes into the bosome of the sea. And in Psal. 103. 12. He separates our sinnes as farre from vs, as the East is from the West. All which sentences may assure vs that God will neuer impute the sinnes vnto vs which he hath once pardoned. If it fall out that we be corrected afterwards, he doth it not as a Iudge, but as a tender and mercifull father, that he might thereby instruct and keepe his children in awe. The Papists therefore deceiue themselves in dreaming that the corrections which follow are satisfactions or recompences, as if he would exact that at our hands, because he is loth freely to remit all. No, Gods only purpose in correcting vs is, that he may thereby provide for our saluation for the time to come.

Verf. 18. For the grave cannot confesse thee: death can not praise thee: they that goe downe into the pit, cannot hope for thy truth.

Where he saith, that he can not set forth the praises of God if his life be taken away, he promiseth to do it, if so great a benefit may be granted vnto him; and therewithall shewes, that the only cause why he desires to liue, is, that he might praise God. Now albeit there is not a better signe of a godlie heart then to desire life, vpon condition to glorifie God continually by the same: yet it teemes Hezekias speaks somewhat too strictly. For the faithfull glorifie God no lesse by their death, then by their life: by death they come to be perfectlie conioined with him, and neuer cease to sing his praises with the elect Angels. But there is yet another difficultie which moued Hezekias so much to flee death, and so earnestlie to desire to liue still on earth. Which second question, albeit we haue discussed heretofore, yet the readers shall againe be put in minde that this terror proceeded not from the only apprehension of death: for when the houre came that he should die, he recoiled not back, but willingly went vnto his God. But at this time being smitten with the sence of Gods wrath, his only sorrow is, that his sinnes had bereaued him of his life, fearing he should neuer taste any of Gods blessings or fauours afterward. Hereupon also depends the solution of the first question: for what maruell is it if this good man seeing he must die, his death also proceeding

Hezekias looked into the cause of his sicknes.

The ridiculous distinction of the Papists betwene the fault, and the punishment.

Afflictions no satisfactions.

The faithfull glorifie God no lesse by death then by life.

The cause why Hezekias was so loth to die.

ceeding from the anger of God kindled againſt him, to take vengeance on his finnes: what maruell is it, I ſay, if he ſorrowed and lamented to be condemned to die, as one vnworthy to bee imploied any longer in the aduancement of Gods true religion and Iudgement?

Whoſoeuer he be that is once ſtrucke with this thunderbolt, can not ſteele magnifie the name of the Lord, neither in life nor in death, but muſt needes be mute, becauſe deſpaire hath ouerwhelmed his ſpirits. In this ſenſe *Dauid* ſaith; In death there is no remembrance of thee: *Pſal. 65.* And the whole Church in *Pſal. 115. 17.* ſaith; The dead praife not thee, O Lord, neither any that go downe into the place of ſilence. Why ſo? Becauſe thoſe who feele the guilt of their finnes, and Gods anger preſſing them, want matter of thankſgiuing. And yet wee muſt note, that when the Saints ſpake thus, they conſidered not what their condition ſhould bee after death; but from the dolour which they felt they onely looked to the end for which God had created & preferred them in this world.

The chiefſt end of mans life we know, is to ſpend the ſame in his ſeruiſe: who for this purpoſe conſerues his Church vpon earth, as hath been ſaid, becauſe hee will haue his name alwaies praifed. Now he that ſeemes to be caſt off, in regard he is vnworthy to be any longer accounted among the number of Gods ſeruants, cannot diſtinctly conſider with a ſtill and quiet mind, what ſhall become of him after death, but being ouerſhadowed with ſorrowes, takes from the dead, the facultie of praifing God, as if all exerciſes of pietie ceaſed after this life, becauſe (as hee thinkes) Gods glorie is buried in the graue with thoſe that ſhould bee the witneſſes of it.

Verſ. 19. But the lining, the lining, he ſhall confeſſe thee, as I doe this day: the father to the children ſhall declare thy truth.

HE comprehends not all men generally within this ſentence, ſeeing many *line*, who notwithstanding as much as in them is, labour to extinguiſh Gods glory by their ingratitude: ſo far are they off from thinking they were borne to ſet forth or magnifie the ſame. But his meaning onely is, that men may be true and lawfull Preachers of the glory of God, as long as it pleaſeth him to retaine them aliuie in the world, becauſe he by his liberalitie daily & hourly ſumons them to the performance of this dutie. This oppoſition ſhews that his former ſpeech, The graue cannot confeſſe thee, death cannot praife thee, &c. ought to be referred to this point, namely, that ſuch as are cut off from the world, where they employ their time in praifing God, are by death deprived of ſo excellent a benefit. Beſides, he proteſteth that himſelfe ſhall now bee one of the witneſſes of Gods glory; thereby ſhewing a ſigne of his thankfullneſſe: for he ſaith hee will neuer forget ſuch a mer-

it, but will magnifie the Lord, and preach to others what fauour hee hath taſted of. And not onely to thoſe of his owne time, but to the poſteritie alſo, that they may euerie one ſet forth theſe praifes, and reuerence the author of ſo great a bleſſing.

Hence wee are to gather a very profitable inſtruction; to wit, that men haue children beſtowed vpon them, on condition to bring them vp in the information of the Lord, euerie one induoring with all his might to leaue behind him for his ſucceſſors, ſome good occaſions to ſet forth Gods praifes. Fathers of families therefore ought carefully to record vnto their children, the mercies which God hath ſhewed them. By the word *truth*, wee are to vnderſtand the fidelitie which God keeps with his ſeruants, and with all thoſe that are witneſſes of his grace, whereby hee maniſeſts vnto them the truth of his promiſes.

Verſ. 20. The Lord was ready to ſaue me: therefore we will ſing my ſong all the daies of our life in the houſe of the Lord.

HEE acknowledgeth that his deliuerance proceeded not from the induſtry of men, but from the onely fauour of God. Whereas ſome tranſlate; It is the Lord which can deliuer mee; they expreſſe not the thing ſufficiently; it alſo ſeemes they miſſe the very letter: for hee not onely magnifies the power of God, but alſo his worke, by which his power was cleerly maniſeſted. In a word, he oppoſeth this his deliuerance to that death vnto which he was iudged of God: for as before he apprehended him as a ſeuere Iudge, ſo now he leaps for ioy in acknowledging him to be his redeemer. For this cauſe he prepares himſelfe againe to ſing a ſong of thankſgiuing; yea, he calles others to him to aid him therein. He mentions the *Temple*, becauſe there the faithfull met together.

Had he been but a priuat man, and one of the common ſort, yet he was bound to haue offered a ſolemne ſacrifice for the incouraging of others, as well as for the diſcharge of his owne dutie. He therefore being a king, was to be much more careful in bringing others with him to giue God thanks, eſpecially ſeeing the ſafetie of the whole Church conſiſted vpon his deliuerance. He will therefore induor, he ſaith, to make it knowie to all, what fauour God ſhewed him; and that it ſhould be remembered not for a day or two, but all the daies of their lives. Truly it had been a moſt vnworthy thing euer to haue ſuffered ſo ſingular a benefit to haue vaniſhed away, or to die at any time: but in regard of our owne forgetfullneſſe and dulneſſe, wee haue need to haue ſpures to prick vs continually forwards to the performance of this dutie. Thus alſo hee ſhewes to what end God hath appointed holy aſſemblies, euen to the end that all with one heart and mouth, may praife one God in Ieſus Chriſt, and ſtirre vp one another to the exerciſes of pietie.

Verſ. 21.

Note.

The principal end of mans life.

Vpon what condition God giues men children.

Verſ. 18.

Why God ordained publicke aſſemblies.

Verf. 21. *Then said Isaiah; Take a lump of dry figges, and lay it upon the boile, and he shall recover.*

Gen. 9. 13.

Isaiah shewes now what remedie hee gave *Hezekias*. Others thinke it was no remedie, because figs are contrarie and hurtfull to vlcers: and therefore they say that the King was aduertised, and by this signe more fullie instructed that this recouerie onlie proceeded from the free grace of God. For example, the bow in the cloudes whereby God meant to testifie that the world should neuer perish againe by the flood, seemed notwithstanding to signifie the cleane contrarie: for it appeeres only when great raines gather together, and are readie to drowne the whole world. They thinke then that the Prophet hath of set purpose applied a remedie nothing fitting for the healing of the disease, because it might appeere to all, that *Hezekias* was healed without the help of any salues. But seeing the Physitians of our times do vse plaisters of figs to ripen the Plague-fore, it may be the Lord added the salue to his promise, as he often doth in other cases: for this medicine lessens not y^e promise, which without the word had bin vaine and vnprofitable. He also had received a supernaturall signe, which no doubt raught him, that it was God, and none but he who restored his life vnto

him, which in his conceit was lost.

Verf. 22. *Also Hezekias had said, What is the signe that I shall goe vp into the house of the Lord?*

Some expound this verse as if this had bin giuen *Hezekias* for a signe; and therefore they referre it to the former sentence: but it is more likely that the order of the thing is here changed, which often fallies out among the Hebrues, so as that which should be said in the beginning, comes in towards the latter end. *Isaiah* mentions not in the beginning of the Chapter that *Hezekias* required this signe, yet it is recorded in the holy historie that he so did, 2. King. 20. 8. He now adds that therefore which was omitted at the first. *That I shall goe vp.* In these words his meaning is that the chiefe care of his whole life was, to bestow it to the glorie of God: for he desires not to liue that he might consume his daies in voluptuousnes, but that he might maintaine the honour and pure worship of God. Let vs be admonished then that our daies are not prolonged to the end we should giue our selues to iollitie and dissolutions, but to honour him that hath so much honoured vs; to further one another in his feare; to meete together in the holy assemblies, to magnifie his mercie and truth.

Why God
prolongs
our dayes
on earth.

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THE XXXIX. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *At the same time Merodach Baladan, the sonne of Baladan King of Babel, sent letters, and a present to Hezekias: for he had heard that he had bin sick and was recovered.*



HE expositors thinke that this *Merodach* was the first King of the Chaldeans, because his father *Baladan* held the superioritie among the Babilonians, without hauing the title of King. After this *Merodach* then had reigned 12. yeceres, he subdued the Assyrians, and made them tributaries vnder the Chaldeans. For those are deceiued who thinke that the warres were begun by *Nebuchadnezar*: It may well be that he made an end of them, and whollie subdued the Assyrians, whose power was then like enough halfe spent, there remained nothing for him then but to confirme y^e kingdome in his owne hands which was conquered by y^e power of his predecessor. Now howsoeuer y^e Prophet in few words telles how the Ambassadors were sent; yet we must obserue that *Merodach* did this guilefullie to guggle *Hezekias* with his flatteries. He threatened the Assyrians already whom he knew the Iewes hated for good cause because their continuall warres: that he might get

him a companion then, and a fellow helper in his intended warres, hee insinuates himselfe cunningly into the amitie of this good King: whose heart, as you see, was forthwith surprised with pride, in that hee was too forward in accepting the fraudulent flatteries of this Tyrant, and suffered himselfe to be poisoned therewith.

And yet the pretence was nothing else forsooth, but that the Ambassadors came to conyugalitate with him, in regard of the late recouerie of his health: howbeit the holy historie seemes to alleadge another reason; to wit, that *Merodach* was moued to send by a miracle: 2. Chron. 32. 31. No doubt but this going backe of the Sunne was renowned far and neere: neither could it be, but many nations were much moued by the report of so vnwonted a thing. But it is hard to say, that so profane a man respected any other thing, then to catch *Hezekias* by this meanes in his nets. And because God had by so excellent a signe, signified how deare the factie of *Hezekias* was vnto him, *Merodach* thought with himselfe (as the wicked and vnbeleueurs are wont to abuse such testimonies of Gods fauour, to the seruing of their own turnes) that his warres which he meant to vndertake, must needes succeed wel, and be blessed from heauen, if he might get such a one as *Hezekias* to take his part. Thence it was that to manifest his good will, he sent his Ambassadors to him with a present: for he meant to winne him, because

cause such an acquaintance should be fir and profitable to aid him against the Assyrians, whom the Jewes (as he well knew) hated most deadly. Thus you see the policies of Kings and Princes, to wit, by close conueiances to serue their owne turnes, neuer caring by what meanes they procure aid, so they may make themselues strong against their enemies.

The practices of idolatrous Kings and Princes.

Verf. 2. *And Hezekias was glad of them, and shewed them the house of his treasures, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the pretious oniment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his kingdome, that Hezekias shewed them not.*

The Prophet plaies the historiographer. For first hee telles plainly what *Hezekias* did: next, he will shew why he did it; to wit, because *ambition* had blinded his eyes: and thus he meant to make himselfe great in the sight of the Ambassadors. Thus he taxeth thus inordinate *ioy*, from whence proceeded so great care at length to feast and welcome them. He that shall reade the historie barely, wil thinke there is no great fault to be found in *Hezekiah* for any thing he did. Was it not humanitic in him to receiue such Ambassadors with *glauesse* and *magnificence*, and to shew them all signes of loue? Who can denie it? Nay, hee had shewed himselfe more then barbarous, if hee had reiected those who in such kind manner came to visit him; or, if he had set light by the friendship of so mightie a King. Notwithstanding all this, *his heart was too farre sickled with vanitie and ostentation*. For he meant to shew his *preiustesse*. to the end the Babylonian might know that this amitie should serue him to good purpose; which he further insinuated by shewing his *riches*, *munitions*, and *furniture for warre*. Hee was also blame-worthy, for desiring to be supported by strange and vnlawfull meanes: for therein he bereaued God of his honour, who had freely deliuered him out of two great dangers: otherwise, the Prophet would neuer haue reproued him so sharply for this fact.

Heere is a faire looking glasse therefore, in which euery one may see that there is nothing so dangerous, as to be blinded with prosperitie: to which purpose it was well said long agoe. It is a harder matter to beare prosperitie then aduersitie. We wax vntuly and insolent when things fall out as wee would haue them; neither can we be kept in awe by any threatnings or adinonitions whatsoever. If this befall *Hezekias*, whom the Prophet before hath so much commended, whose onely treasure was the feare of God: Chap. 33. 6. how ought we to watch ouer our owne hearts, lest we fall into the like dangers?

He suffers himselfe to be ouerwaied with vaine ostentation, and neuer remembers that being halfe dead before, the Lord drew him out of his graue by a miracle from heauen.

If such a mightie Cedar fell, what shall become

In the 20. verse of the former Chapter, hee vowed to sing the praises of God all the daies of his life, in the assemblie of the Saints. Now when he sees some suing for his friendship, and that a mightie Monarch sends from far to salute him, he presently forgets God, with all the benefits which he had receiued at his hands. Do we see this good King so soone ouerthrowne, and ouerwaied with pride and ambition, let vs learne to hold our selues within the lists of modestie, by which we may daily be preferred in the feare of God.

of such low flirals as we be?

Modestie the meanes to hold vs in the feare of God.

Verf. 3. *Then came Isaiab the Prophet vnto King Hezekias, and said vnto him; What said these men? and from whence came they to thee? And Hezekiah said; They are come from a farre Country vnto me, from Babel.*

Hee goes on with the same narration still; but he addes doctrine vnto it. And howsoeuer he utters not a word of Gods sending of him, yet it is most certaine that he did this by the instinct and commandement of the holy Ghost; for which cause he adorne himselfe with the title of *Prophet*: wherein he signifies that he came not as a priuat man, but as hee that was to execute the office which God had inioined him; to the end *Hezekias* the King might know, that he had not to doe with *Isaiab* the *Prophet* now, as with a mortall man. In that he saith *he came*; we may gather that the King called him nor, but let him rest at home in his house, whilst hee shewed and discovered all his riches: for Prophets are not wont to be called, when such matters are in hand. Before, when calamities besieged him, and that *Rabshakeh* had proudly and disdainfully blasphemed the God of Israel, then *Isaiab* the Prophet was sought out and sent for, to intreat him to lift vp his praier for the remnant that was left: Chap. 37. 4. and to giue him some word of consolation and comfort. Thus the Prophets are sought vnto when aduersitie and troubles are neere, or vpon vs: but all things being quiet and well, the Prophets are forgotten; nay, they are reiected because they trouble the feast (as they say) by their wholsome admonitions, and seeme to fill all the company with nothing but melancholic.

The King called not for Isaiab now.

Prophets usually sent for in extremitie, but forgotten in prosperitie.

Isaiab came notwithstanding vnalled for; wherein we are behold his constancy: whose example may teach vs, not to tarrie till wee be sent for by such as stand in neede of our office, whilst they please themselues in most hurtfull vices, and plunge themselues into perill by their lightnesse, ignorance, or mallice. It is our duties to gather the disperseed sheepe together; yea, we stand bound to doe it carefully, though no man should require this dutie of vs.

Isaiab his constancie to be noted.

Now howsoeuer *Hezekias* deserued to bee sharply rebuked, in that he suffered himselfe to be so soone corrupted by the King of Babylon, neuer asking counsell of God; yet the great modestie that was in him is worthy of memorie.

The modestie of Hezekias

memorie, Why so? He repulseth not the Prophet, neither disdaines he his message, as if hee had reproofed him without cause, but giues him a mild answer, and in conclusion receiues his hard censure peaceably. He had done better if he had inquired at the mouth of the Lord at the very first, as it is in Psalm. 119.24. Thy statutes are my counsellors: but hauing failed herein vnawares, it was a singular vertue in him obediently to receiue the reproofe of his fault which he had committed.

The first question,

What said these men?] The Prophet hits him not home at the first, but prickes him gently, that he might bring him by degrees to confesse his fault. For *Herzekias* flattered himselfe, and thought himselfe in as good case as might be. It was needfull therefore he should be awakened out of this his sleepe by little and little. I grant this first blow was a very piercing one: as if he should haue said; I pray thee *vwhat hast thou to doe with these fellows?* Oughtest thou not much rather to haue fled from so contagious a pestilence? He asks also what the *summe* of their message was, to shame *Herzekias*, who was ignorant of the serpent which lay hidden vnder the sweet flowers: for he finds no fault with the gratulation of these Ambassadors, although poison was also mingled therewithall: but he aims at the snares which the Caldeans had set to trap *Herzekias* his feete. Notwithstanding it seemes by his answer, that he was little moued by this light reprehension, because he pleased himselfe too much as yet, in that which he had done; for he vaunts that these men were come to him from a *farre* Countrey, from *Babylon*. No doubt but *Isaiah* knew this Countrey well, so as *Herzekias* needed not so eloquently to haue described the farre distance of the place: but thus he flatters himselfe, because ambition possessed him. It was requisite therefore that his fore should bee gaged to the bottome, and lanced with sharper instruments.

Vers. 4. Then said hee; What haue they seene in thine house? And Herzekiah answered; All that is in mine house haue they seene: there is nothing among my treasures that I haue not shewed them.

The second question.

Againe he said, &c.] Hee continues on his couert admonition, to see if *Herzekias* will at last bee touched and displeas'd with his sinne. But he cannot yet win so much of him, albeit it is almost incredible that the King should be growne so senselesse, as not to feele such prickings. For he knew wel enough that the Prophet came not as curious folkes doe, to inquire of newes, or to passe the time in meriment with the King; but to confere with him about some matter of importance. How cuer it were, yet his calme answer is to be commended; for he falles not out with the Prophet, but modestly confesseth how all things went. But no signe of repentance ap-

peares, neither confesseth he himselfe faulty: for hee considered not his sinne in this his drowinesse.

Ambition is so cunning a witch, that shee not onely bewitcheth men with her sweete poison, but takes away all their senses: so as though they be admonished, yet they repent not at the first onser. When we therefore see this good King smitten with such a benumbednesse, that hee feeles no reprehensions, neither can bee brought to the knowledge of himselfe, wee ought by his example carefully to beware of so dangerous a plague.

Ambition a deceitfull witch.

Vers. 5. And Isaiah said to Herzekiah; Heare the word of the Lord of hostes:

6. Behold, the daies come, that all that is in thine house, and which thy fathers haue laid vp in store vntill this day, shall be carried to Babel: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord.

BY this iudgement heere pronounced by God, we may see that *Herzekias* his sinne was not small, howsoever common reason would iudge it otherwise. For in as much as God keeps alwaies a measure in his chastising of men; from the greatnesse of the correction we may gather, that this was no light offence, but an horrible crime. And hereby we are also admonished, that men can neuer discern aright, neither of their words nor workes, but that God is the onely competent Iudge thereof. *Herzekias* shewes his treasures: were they gathered together to lie alwaies hidden vnder Locke and key? *Hee* receiues the Ambassadors conuentionly; Should hee haue driuen them away? *Hee* heares their message: but since the enimic of the Assyrians seekes amitie with him, should he set light by such a commoditie? In a word, what fault is to bee found in all this, if you looke to the outward act? But God, from whom no secrets are hid, spies first of all ingratitude in *Herzekias*, in this his gladnesse: for he forgets the miserie which pressed him but a little before, and sets the Caldeans (as it were) in the place of God, to whose honour his body and goods were to be consecrated and dedicated. Secondly, he notes his *pride*; because hee induoured beyond measure to be renowned, in regard of his magnificence and riches. He was faultie also touching his disordered affection, in making such a league as was the destruction of the whole state. But the greatest fault of all was his *pride*, which after a fort strippes mens hearts of all feare of God: for which cause *Augustine* rightly breaks out into this exclamation; O what and how great is the poison of ambition, which cannot be cured but by a counterpoison! For he had respect vnto that place in the Corinthians, where the Apostle saith; the angell of Satan was sent to buffet him, lest he should be exalted aboue measure: 2. Cor. 12.7.

Herzekias had not faulted lightly. God keeps a measure in his chastisements: Ier. 30.11.

God the only competent Iudge both of our words and workes.

1

2

3

1

2

3

Augustine. The poison of pride not to be cured but by a counterpoison.

Herzekias was inuincible whilst all things stood

ſtood in a deſperat caſe: and now he is ouercome by theſe alluements, and is not able to conquer nor reſiſt his owne vaine ambition. Let vs conſider how dangerous a malladie this is, and let vs keepe ſo much the more diligent watch ouer our falſe and treacherous hearts. Now in regard the Prophet was to pronounce ſo heauie a ſentence, he ſaith firſt, that God enioined him to ſpeake: *Hear the word of the Lord*, ſaith he: in the next verſe he repeats it againe; not that he laies the matter whollie vpon God, becauſe he feared ill handling; but to the end he might touch the heart of the King to the quick. Wherein we may againe note his great boldnes and conſtancie. He dreads not the preſence of the King, he feares not to diſcouer his diſeaſe, nor to threaten Gods iudgemēt againſt him. For although Kings eares were then ſome-what nice and delicate, yet being aſſured that God had ſet him a worke, he executes his charge couragiouſlie, how vnpleaſant ſoever his meſſage was. The Prophets were indeed the Kings ſubiect, and therefore vnder ſubiectiō: neither attributed they any thing vnto themſelues, vnleſſe they were to goe on Gods errant. But then, what high imagination is there which ought not to be brought downe vnder his Maieſtie? Had he minded to haue retained the fauour of his Prince he would haue bin mute as flatterers are: but he had an eie to his calling, and indeuors to diſcharge the ſame faithfullie.

Nothing ſhall be left. The manner of this chaſtiſement wherewith the Lord threatens *Hezekias* is to be obſerued: for he takes away from his ſucceſſors thoſe things wherein he gloried ſo much, to the end they might not haue occaſion to doe the like. See how God puniſheth the ambition and pride of men: for their name, or kingdome, which they imagined ſhould laſt for euer, is raced out: they are deſpitefullie intreated, and their memorie is curſed: In a word, he ouerturnes their fond conceits, ſo as they find the cleane contrary to that which they conceiued in their fooliſh braine.

If it be objected, that it is no reaſon a whole citie & kingdome ſhuld be deſtroyed or caried away captiue for one māns fault; ſeeing ſo holy Ghoſt in many places pronounceth, that the open and vniuerſall obſtinacie of the Iewes was the cauſe why God gaue both Citie and Countrie for a pray to the Caldeans: I anſwere, that no abſurditie can enſue, if God be ſaid to puniſh the ſinne of a particular perſon, and that of a whole nation together. For ſince his wrath laid the whole Countrie waſt, all were to acknowledge their offence; and euery one in particular was to conſider what he had deſerued: that ſo none might lay the fault vpon another, but euery man might rather condemne himſelfe.

Furthermore, ſeeing the Iewes were culpable alreadie before the iudgement ſeate of God, *Hezekias* was iuſtly permitted to fall, that the way might be opened for Gods wrath to breake forth, and to haſten the execution of his vengeance. And the like we know fell out in *Dauid*. For it was not by chance that

he was moued to number the people, but it came to paſſe by the fault of Iſrael, whom the Lord meant by that meanes iuſtly to chaſten. The wrath of the Lord, ſaith the text, was kindled againſt Iſrael, and he moued *Dauid* againſt them to number the people, 2. Sam. 24. 1. So alſo in this place *Hezekias* is threatened with a iudgement: but the ſinne whereby he prouoked the wrath of the Lord to burne, was a iuſt vengeance vpon the whole people for the ſinnes committed by them before.

Verſ. 7. And of thy ſonnes, that ſhall proceed out of thee and which thou ſhalt beget ſhall they take away, and they ſhall be Eunuches in the Palace of the king of Babel.

This might ſeeme worſe then the former threatening to *Hezekias*, and therefore it is referred to the laſt place, to amplify the iudgement. If any calamitie do befall a countrie, Kings, and theirs, thinke to be exempted from it, becauſe they are none of the common ſort. When the Prophet telles him then that his ſonnes ſhall be caried away captiues, we may well ſay, that this ſeemed a very hard ſentence to him indeed.

Moreouer we may from hence gather how much God deteſted this confidence which *Hezekias* reposed in his riches and outward eſtate (whereof alſo he vanted in the preſence of theſe inſidels) ſeeing he takes vengeance of this crime as of a ſinne irremiſſible by ſo horrible an example, becauſe the King had ſhewed his treasures to theſe heathens and inſidels.

*Verſ. 8. Then ſaid Hezekiah to Iſaiah, The word of the Lord is good, which thou haſt ſpoken: and he ſaid, * Yet there ſhall be peace and * truth in my daies.*

* Or, at leaſt, let there be.
* Or, ſtabilitie.

From this anſwere of *Hezekias* we gather, that he was not rebellious nor preſumptuous, ſeeing he quietlie heard the Prophets reprehention, though he was not much moued with it at the firſt: for hearing that the Lord was angry, he condemnes himſelfe without any replies, and confeſſeth, that he is iuſtly puniſhed. In whom we haue a paterne of true teachableneſſe and obedience: for when he heard the iudgements of God denounced againſt him, he ſtood not vpon teames with the Prophet, but ſhewed himſelfe modeſt and meeke. From the example then of this good King, let vs learne to hearken to the Lords voice quietlie, not only when he exhorts or admoniſheth; but alſo when he condemnes and terrifies vs, in giuing iuſt ſentence vpon vs.

In ſaying, that the word of the Lord is good: he firſt of all commends his iuſtice, and with patience accepts of that which for the tartenes of it might haue driuen him to ſwelling and impatience: for the very reprobates haue ſometimes confeſſed the fault, and yet their ſtubborne hearts haue neuer bin ſo ea-

Wee muſt hearken to the Lords voice not only when he admoniſheth vs, but when he promouneeth ſentence of condemnation againſt vs.

Iſaiah his boldnes and conſtancie.

Obiect.

Anſ.

God can puniſh the ſinne of a particular perſon, and that of a whole kingdome together.

med, but they haue grudged against the reuenging hand of their Iudge. To the end that Gods threatnings may haue a sweet relish therefore, it is necessarily required that wee conceiue some hope of pardon in the midst of Gods displeasure: otherwise, our hearts will bee alwaies so stuffed with bitterness, that nothing but gall and wormewood will proceed out of the same. But he which in his heart is perswaded that though God corrects, yet he ceaseth not still to retain the louing affection of a father; such a one will not onely acknowledge God to be iust, but will also meekely and patiently beate his temporarie scourge. To be short, where the feeling of Gods loue takes place, so as this principle be once fixed in our hearts, that he is our father, it shall not much dismay nor trouble vs to be heated vp, or cast downe, according as it pleaseeth him: for faith will teach vs that there is nothing more profitable then his fatherly chastisement.

In this sort *Dauid* in all humilitie answers the Prophet *Nathan*, who sharply rebuked him: *I haue sinned against the Lord: 2.Sam.12.13.* (which imports as much as that speech of old *Heb;* *It is the Lord, les him doe that which is good in his eyes: 1.Sam.3.18.*) For he is silent, not because it could aduantage him nothing at all to murmur; but because hee willingly submits himselfe to Gods iustice. It seemes that *Sams* silence tends to the same end, when *Sannuel* told him that the kingdome was rent from him: *1.Sam.15.24.* But because the punishment onely terrified him, he was touched with no compunction of heart at all for his fault. It is no wonder then though he be full of garboilings inwardly still, albeit hee set a faire countenance of it outwardly; because he could not resist accordingly as he would: for malefactors that haue fetters on their heeles, and manacles on their hands, are wont to intreat those Iudges, whom they could find in their hearts to tumble froe their seates, and to stampe them vnder their seete. But because *Dauid* and *Hezekias* are in such wise hūbled vnder the mightie hand of God, that they lost not the assurance of pardon, they chose rather willingly to beate the blowes wherewith they were smitten, then to pull their necks out of the yoke.

It is also very remarkable, that *Hezekias* not onely confesseth that this sentence of God is good, but that also, *which Isaiab had spoken:* for this word *shon*, hath great weight in it, in that hee is contented with all reuerence to receiue the word, though spoken by a mortall man; for hee looked to the chiefe author of it.

The libertie which *Isaiab* tooke might haue seemed somewhat too harsh and combersome in the eyes of a King: but taking him (as he was indecde) for the seruant of God, he suffers himselfe to be censured of him. Which being so, their nicenesse is insupportable, who can beare no admonitions nor reprehensions at all, but in disdain, obiect against the Pastors and Ministers of the word: Are you not men as well as wee? As if forsooth God were not to be obeyed, vnlesse he

should send an Angell to admonish them: or, vnlesse himselfe should speake vnto them from heauen. Hence also we may learne, what to thinke of such fantastical spirits, who seeming to reuerence God, doe notwithstanding fully reiect the doctrine of the holy Prophets.

But if they were so readie to obey God, then would they giue as much audience to him in the person of his seruants, as to himselfe if hee should thunder from heauen. I confesse wee must distinguish the true Prophets from the false, and the voice of the Pastor from the stranger: but we must not reiect all, hand ouer head, vnlesse we meane therewithall to reiect God himselfe. Yea, they must be heard of vs, not onely when they exhort and reprove, but also when they condemne and threaten vs (in the name of God) to be punished for our finnes.

The particule *ci*, is taken heere for an exception: and therefore I haue translated; *Yet* there shall be peace. For *Hezekias* addes somewhat more therein to the former; to wit, hee thanks God in that hee hath mitigated the punishment which he had deserued. As if he should say; The Lord might haue raised vp enemies against mee forthwith, that might haue driuen mee out of my Kingdome: but now he spares me, & in deferring the iudgement, moderates the punishment which I should of right sustaine.

This sentence may also be expounded by way of a praier, *yet les there be peace:* so as *Hezekias* should request that the correction might be deferred to another time. Notwithstanding, it is more probable that he applies that to the comfort of his sorrowfull heart, which the Prophet had said of the daies to come; that thereby hee might arme himselfe with patience, because a sudden iudgement would haue astonished him much more. This exception then agrees well for the tranquillitie of his minde; *yet God will spare the terme of my life.* Notwithstanding, if any had rather expound it, *For there shall be peace;* I hinder him not. Some take the word *truth*, for the seruice of God and true religion; as if in dying, hee should render thanks to God that the pure doctrine should remaine vncorrupted: but I had rather take it for stabilitie, or a quiet state of the Kingdome: vnlesse any had rather take it to signifie an assured prosperitie, and of long continuance.

Now *Hezekias* might seeme cruell, in that he vtterly neglected his posterity, as one that cared not much what became of things after his death. For these are horrible blasphemies which swinish Epicures and others of that rout haue in their mouths at this day: When I am dead, let the earth bee on a flaming fire. Againe, When I die, let all die with me. But *Hezekias* had a far other meaning: for albeit hee desired the prosperitie of such as should suruiue him, as much as his owne; yet hee could not see light by the signe of Gods mercie, who deferred the execution of this iudgement till after his death. For he might conceiue hope from thence, that his successors

Faith will teach vs that nothing is more profitable for vs then Gods fatherly chastisement.

Those that are indeed willing to obey God, will giue him as much reuerence whē he speaks by the mouth of one of his seruants, as if himselfe should speake vnto them out of a thunder from heauen.

Simile.

Horrible blasphemies of swinish Epicures.

sors

ſors ſhould in the end bee partakers of this fauour and mercie. Some thinke he reioiced for this delay, becauſe wee ought not to care for to morrow, conſidering that the day hath enough with his owne griefe: *Mat. 6. 24.* But thus ſuces not well in this place: for *Herodias* contemnes not the poſteritie, but perceiuing that God did fauourably mitigate the chaſtiſement which hee had deſerued, hee thanks him for it, (as we haue ſaid) in regard it was his dutie to accept of the preſent mercie offered, howſoeuer the iudgement was deferred till after his death. Truly wee for our parts are to performe all ſeruices to the age in which we liue, and to haue ſpeciall regard vnto it: we muſt not caſt off all care for the time to come; but it is our duties to imploy our vttermoſt endeours for that which is pre-

ſent, and now moſt preſſeth vpon vs. Wee which liue in theſe times together, are more neerly conioined in affection by the Lord, that by our mutuall communication, wee might helpe one another as much as in vs lies.

We ought to performe our ſeruices to the vmoſt in that age in which we liue.

It is alſo to be noted, that in reſpect of *Herodias* his ſinne, hee had iuſt cauſe to feare, leſt the Lord might againe ſhorten and cut off the courſe of his lite, which had been prolonged before, euen when hee lay at deaths doore. Hearing therefore the promiſe to be ratified and confirmed, hee giues thanks to God, and is the more patient, in regard of the calamitie to come; although it could not but bee irkeſome and grieuous to him to thinke of it.

THE XL. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Comfort yee; Comfort yee my people, will your God ſay.*



OW the Prophet enters vpon a new argument; for he lets the people alone, which made no vſe neither of admonitions nor threatnings whatſoeuer, in regard they were become malici-

ouſly deſperate: and turnes him towards the poſteritie to come, to ſignifie to thoſe which ſhould bee humbled vnder the croſſe, that they ſhould not be leſt comfortleſſe in the end; no, not in their deepeſt diſtreſſes. It is very likely that this prophecie was written by him, when the time of the captiuitie drew neere, that after his death he might not leaue the Church behind him ouerwhelmed with grieuous calamities, without hope of reſtauration. Now albeit that to the ſame end hee hath before mingled threatnings and terrors

with his prophecies, yet it ſeemes hee had a principall regard to thoſe that then liued: but all that which follows hereafter, toucheth the eſtate of the Church to come, which was reſtored long after the Prophets death. For he will now ſet downe a perpetual doctrine, which is not to bee reſtrained to any particular time, ſeing hee diſcourſeth both of the beginning and progreſſe of Chriſts Kingdome. Of ſo much the greater importance therefore ought this prophecie to bee vnto vs, by how much the more it belongs particularly vnto vs for our vſe. For albeit wee may evidently diſcerne in the former prophecies, that the doctrine therein contained, is proper vnto vs as well as to the Iewes; yet in regard he now leaues the Iewes that then liued, and ſpeakes to their ſucceſſors, and indeede to all the faithfull to the worlds end, it ſeemes indeede that the doctrines following are more peculiar vnto vs. The Lord meant therefore to awaken the

hearts of the faithfull by this exhortation, leſt they ſhould faint vnder ſo many calamities. Firſt then he ſpeakes to the Iewes, which ſoone after were to be led away captiues into miſerable ſeruitude, where they ſhould be deprived both of the ſacrifices and Prophets, and leſt deſtitute of all conſolation, had not the Lord bin pleaſed to haue releued them by the comfortable doctrines of theſe prophecies enſuing. In the ſecond place he directs his ſpeech to the whole Kingdome of Chriſt, which ſhould ſucceed them ſoone after, to the end they might then take heart vnto them, when in all likelihood they might ſeeme in the eyes of the world to be vtterlie forlorne. But to the end his words might haue the more efficacie, and might indeede come neere the heart, he brings in *God raiſing vp new Prophets*: whom hee commands to ſweeten and aſſuage the dolours of his people, by an amiable conſolation. The ſumme is, that after theſe poore baniſhed exiles ſhall haue ſeemed to haue beene forſaken for a time, that Gods fauour and louing kindneſſe ſhall breake forth, as out of the darkneſſe; and the prophecies which were ceaſed; ſhould then be brought to light againe.

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The ſumme of this prophecie.

Now to amplify this their ioy, he vſeth the plural number; *Comfort yee*: thereby ſhewing, that he will not ſend one or two; but many by troopes; which alſo came to paſſe indeed: wherein alſo we may more clearly behold the infinite loue and mercy of God. Moreouer, it is diligently to be obſerued, that the verbe is put in the future tence; *will your God ſay*. Which ſome expoſitors tranſlate in the preſent tence, or in the preterperfect tence; but therein they both change and corrupt the ſenſe: for the Prophet cloſly notes out the time wherein the people ſhould be grieuouſly afflicted, as if God had not ſeene them at all. For howſoeuer the Lord at that time left them not deſtitute of hope touching their deliuerance, by ſending ſome Prophets vnto them; yet in regard hee deferred them long, and that whileſt they were miſerably perſe-

The occaſion of this prophecie.

The time when this prophecie was written.

The prophecies that were before, reſpected thoſe that then preſently liued: theſe that follow, the eſtate of the Church to come.

Why the prophecies following, ought to be more highly eſteemed of vs then the former.

cuted, and in a maner halfe dead: this consolation had no great efficacy, till they saw some euident signes of their returne.

Comfort ye,
comfort ye.

The verb *Comforts* therefore is to be applied to the present time, which being twice repeated, not only confirms the truth of the propheticke, but also sets forth the power and efficacy of it: as if he should say, in this message there shall be a full, perfect, and perpetuall occasion of gladnes.

But especially they were to retaine the futtertence, *will your God say?* for in these words there lies hid a close opposition betwene that dolefull silence whereof I haue spoken, and that comfortable doctrine which came in place of it.

This prophesie is like to the complaint of the Church, Psal. 74. Wee see not our signes, our Prophets are nor, and there is none left that can tell vs how long: in which we know the laments, as one left destitute of true consolation, because she could heare no promise of comfort in her distresses. The Prophets meaning in this place then is, The Lord will not suffer you to be left destitute of Prophets which shall comfort you in your extreme aduersitie: for then he will raise vp men to whom he wil giue that commission which you haue so long desired, and then will he shew he hath care of you.

Now I referte this verb *will say*, not only to the captiuitie of Babylon, but to the whole time of our delucrance, which comprehends in it the kingdome of Christ vntill his last coming. We must adde, that he *will say* to *ſ* Prophets, whom he will ordeine for this purpose: for in vaine shall they vtter their voice, vnlesse the Lord speake nor to them first, and put that into their mouths which they shall publish vnto others. Thus then there is a mutuall relation betwene God and his Prophets. But as I haue said, these things are not to be wholly restrained to the captiuitie of Babylon; no, they haue a further extent, and comprehend vnder them the doctrine of the Gospell, in which this power to *comforts* is chieftie contained: for it is the proper office thereof to refresh the afflicted, & those that are brought low, to quicken the dead, and to reioyce such as are in heauenes: in a word, to bring with it tidings of all ioy and gladnes; for which cause it is called the Gospell, that is to say, good newes: which began nor then to be published when Christ first appeared to the world, but long before, to wit, from the time that God first manifested his fauour.

The proper
office of the
Gospell.

Gospell, that
is, glad
tidings.

Daniell.

Haggai,
Zacharie,
Malachi,
Nehemiah,
Ezra.

Daniell, he first raised vp the standard, to the end the faithfull might prepare themselves to returne home: after him, *Haggai*, *Zachari*, *Malachi*, *Nehemiah*, *Ezra*, and others after them, vntill Christes coming, alwaies exhorted the faithfull *to be of good comforts*, and to hope against hope. The last of them that wrote was *Malachi*, who knowing there should be no more Prophets after him, sends the people to the law of *Mose*, that they might learne what the will of God was both touching his threatnings and promises, Mal. 4. 4.

Now from this place we gather that which is chieftie to be sought in the Prophets, to

wir, they set before vs the sweetnes of Gods fauour, that the faithfull might conceiue hope for the time to come: that they should not quaille vnder afflictions, but might perseuere in prayer. But the matter being alwaies incredible, he calles to minde the couenant; as if he meant to say, That it was vnpossible for God to forget that which he once promised to *Abraham*. Howsoever the Iewes then had fallen from the grace of God by their sinnes, yet he auoucheth notwithstanding that he is *their God* still, and that they were *his peculiar people* which depended vpon his election: and therefore in regard there were many reprobes among them, he only direcths his speech *to the faithfull*, for he lets the wicked languish and consume away in their incredulitie. But the godly haue here an inestimable consolation, to wit, that albeit they be pressed with griefe and anguish for a time, yet because they put their trust in him who is the father of mercies and God of all consolation, they shall in the end feele that the promises of grace were conserued and kept for them as an hid treasure, to glad their hearts in due season. See heere an excellent commendation of the propheticall office, which serues to susteine the faithfull in aduersitie, lest they should faint or sinke vnder the burthen: contrariwise, this place shewes, that God is exceeding angrie whē he deprives vs of such faithfull teachers as may bring glad tidings to the Church whereby to refresh the wearie foule, and to strengthen the weake.

My people.

Verf. 2. * *Speake comfortable to Ierusalem and criue vnto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquitie is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lords hand double for all her sinnes.*

* Or, speake
to the heart
of Ierusalem.

Here God giues his seruants the Prophets a Commission, and puts that in their mouths which they were to vtter, when fit time serued, for to *comforts* the faithfull that were sorrowfull. And yet he stands not so much to exhort or imbolden the Prophets to discharge this their dutie manfullie and faithfullie, as he is earnest in giuing of hope to the godly, wishing them to possesse their soules in patience, vntill the Prophets were sent vnto them with this ioyfull and comfortable message. *To speake according to the hearts*, signifies nothing else but to speake that which is acceptable to vs: for our heart abhorres all vnpleasant tidings, but it effectually imbraceth, and runnes (as it were) to meeete with that which is well pleasing vnto it. Now because the people were in a maner reiected and forsaken, what newes could be better welcome then reconciliation with GOD, whereby *all their sinnes were pardoned?*

Vnder the word *Ierusalem* by a Synecdoche, we are to vnderstand the Church, which is so euident, that it needs no prooffe.

Ierusalem
signifies the
Church.

The word *crie*, signifies, that this promise of grace shall be cleare and euident: it shall sound so in their eares, that all shall vnderstand: for if the Prophets should mutter or
whisper

whisper onely, the assurance of this consolation might seeme doubtfull or weake: but all doubting is taken away, seeing it is to be delivered freely and with a loud voice.

That her warfare is ended. This is that acceptable tidings to wit, that God hath put an end to the afflictions of his people. Some take the word *Tsebaab*, which we have translated Warfare, simply for the time: as if hee should say, Her time is accomplished. Others thinke that the time of visitation is here noted, but vnsitly; because this word properly signifies among the Hebrewes, a set and appointed time to finish and end some businesse or worke in. But this similitude is doubtlesse taken from souldiers that have libertie to returne home from war; for he saith, *the end and issue of their afflictions are at hand*; as if hee should say, God will not alwaies suffer the rod of the wicked to rest vpon the lot of the godlie, but keep a measure in humbling of them. He therefore compares the time of their captiuitie in Babylon, to a long warfare, which being ended, the souldiers that vnto employment, are sent home to their houses, to liue there in peace and quiet.

He saith in like manner, that her iniquitie is pardoned; because God will be so fauourable vnto them, that hee will no longer in rigor pursue them: this therefore is the exposition of the former words. For as the Physicians in healing bodily diseases, doe first remove the causes from whence they spring, euen so the Lord deals with vs. The rods wherewith he beates vs proceeds from our finnes: he must of necessitie pardon them then, before his strokes can cease: and therefore the Prophet saith, that her warfare is accomplished, because her iniquitie is no longer imputed. Some take the word *Aonah*, for miserie, and say that it shall haue an end: which sense also futes well, for so the Prophet affirms one and the same thing two waies: for to say that her warfare is ended, and that her miseries are finished, are things that haue one meaning. But yet wee must hold this principle; that God ceaseth to correct when he is reconciled: so as the remission of finnes ought alwaies to goe before as the cause, although, as I thinke, wee may say that God was so pacified, that hauing pardoned the finnes of his people, hee is now readie to receive them againe into his fauour.

Double.] This place is expounded two waies: for some affirme, that he people which had deserued double punishment, were adorned with double grace: others, that God would chastise them no more, because they had had enough already. Now howsoeuer the first exposition contains a fruitfull and profitable doctrine, yet wee will let that passe now, because it agrees not with the text: for it appears the Prophet meant onely to say, that God satisfied himselfe sufficiently with the miseries which his Church had suffered. I wish therefore that those had bin more inoedest which blamed Saint *Ierom* and other authors for this second exposition, which is much more fitting; and not the other subtiltie, that the Lord will render double grace

for double affliction. The summe is, that the Lord will punish his people no more so long, nor so sharply, because his louing kindeaffe hath overcome his displeasure, and will not suffer him to exercise so rigorous a course any longer: thus the word *double*, ought to be taken for largely, or abundantly. For we must not imagin that the chastisement was equal, or greater then their finnes; for their blasphemie is to be abhorred who accuse God of crueltie, as if he corrected men too seuerely. What punishment is sufficient for the least of our offences, committed against his infinite Maiestie? This ought therefore to be referred to the mercies of God, that hee alwaies fining in measure, as it is in Chapter 27. 8. will giue them no more blowes, neither yet continue them any longer. Why so? Because the former strokes haue sufficed him, albeit the people deserued to be beaten againe and againe with much more seueritie. The Lord shewes himselfe like a father, who hauing compassion on his children, neuer chides but vnwillingly, and therefore is willing to pardon them their faults.

Double, is taken for largely, or abundantly.

God is as willing to pardon our faults, as we would haue them pardoned.

Verf. 3. *A voice crieth in the wilderness; Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a path for our God.*

Hee goes on with the argument begunne, and shewes more plainly, that hee will send messengers to the people (in appearance forlorne) which shall comfort & cheere them. And thus hee preuents an obiection which some might make; Thou tellest vs indeed of comfort, but where are the Prophets that should bring the same vnto vs? For we shall be in a desert. Whence then, I pray thee, shall this consolation come? Thus he telles them then that the desert shall be no meanes to debaite them of this consolation. The desert heere is taken figuratiuely, for that desolation which should come vpon them: though I denie not but the Prophet also alludes to the way betwene Babylon and Iudeah; for the tedious passage thorow the desert, might seeme to take away all hope of returning home againe. Notwithstanding he proniseth, that albeit all the passages were stopped, and that there were no way set open for them, yet that the Lord would easilie make the roughest waies smooth and plaine for himselfe, and for his seruants. Some ioine the particle, In the desert, with the member following, and expound it thus, Prepare the Lord a way in the desert. But it seemes rather that the Prophet brings in a voice, which should gather these banished ones together, which were driuen out of the habitable lande. As if hee should say; Indeed you see nothing but an hideous desert before you, but yet you shall heare this comfortable voice, by the mouthes of my Prophets. Now these things must be referred to that miserable bondage wherewith they should be oppressed in Babylon.

But to whom is this voice directed? Is

Her warfare is ended.

Her iniquitie is pardoned.

Simile.

Our finnes must be forgiven, ere our afflictions can cease: See Chap. 38. 47.

Saint Ierom.

To whom
this voice
is directed.
Cyrus.
The Medes,
and Persians.

it to the faithfull? No such matter. To whom then? To *Cyrus*, to the Medes and Persians which held this people captiue, who becaufe they were no voluntarie seruants of God, they were constrained to deliuer them whether they would or no. This is the cause why they are commanded to *prepare* and make readie *the way*, that the people might passe home into Iudca, as if he should say, Make passage for them in those wayes where none was before. And this sets forth the efficacie and force of this prophesie, for when God giues power to his seruants to commaund cruell tyrants giuen to robbery (and were then conquerors ouer the Babylonians) to prepare the way for his people: he thereby shewes, that nothing shall be able to foreflow the accomplishment of his promise, because he will serue his turne of the Medes and Persians, as of his hired seruants.

A singular
consolation.

What an excellent consolation is this, to heare that God vseth the seruice of Infidels, yea and when his Church hath need, to make all creatures put to their hands for the helping forward of our saluation?

Where he saith, the way shall be prepared, not to the Iewes, but *to the Lord* himselfe: in this also we haue a singular testimonie of the loue he beares vs, in attributing that *to himselfe* which in deed belongeth to his people. What need had he of any way to be made for him, or to haue a *path* prepared? None at all. But thus it pleaseth him to make knowne that we are so neerely ioined vnto him, that he counts it as done to his owne Maiestie which is done to vs. This maner of speech is found often in other places, as when it is said, *that God went forth* for the saluation of his people, *euē* for the saluation with his anointed, Abac. 3. 13. Also that *he went through Egypt*, and led them in the wilderness like a flock, Exo. 1. 4. Psal. 78. 52.

John Baptist, the first
and most
renowned
herauld of
our redemption.

Now this place is alledged by Matth. 3. 3. Mark. 1. 3. Luk. 3. 4. John 1. 23. and applied to *John Baptist*, as if these things were foretold of him, and very rightlie: for he was the first and most excellent messenger and herault of our saluation and redemption, of which, the deliuerance from Babel was only a type and figure. And in very truth when the poore and afflicted Church recovered health in *John Baptist* his time, the deformitie which it had, did rather resemble a *desart*, then the captiuitie of Babylon. But Gods will was that in the desart where the Baptist preached, the figure and image of this horrible scattering might be perceived, which had almost consumed and wasted all the beawtie of the Church. So then that which the Prophet saith here vnder a similitude, was then fulfilled indeed: for *John Baptist* held forth the banner of gladnes, when things were very desperate and confused.

I grant this voice sounded before by the mouth of *Daniell*, *Zacharie*, and others; but the redemption being then neerer, *John Baptist* spake with more efficacie: for he pointed out Christ with his finger.

John 1. 29.

But because the besotted Iewes were nothing touched (for the most part) with the

true feeling of their scattering, therefore *John* the Baptist sought out a *solitarie* and *desart* place, that by the beholding of him he might awaken the drouzieft of them to the hope of the promised deliuerance. In that he said he was no Prophet, it was in regard of the end of his calling, and of the summe of his doctrine: for he was not sent to exercise any particular function for any set time, but to *prepare mens hearts* to receiue his Lord and Master. He also referres that properlie to all men which is said here, touching the removing of the impediments out of the way: namely, because the peruerfite of our nature, the ouerthwart turnings of our vnderstandings, and the rebellion of our hearts, doe shut out the Lords passage, and causeth vs that we can not so denie our selues as to yeeld him the obedience which we owe him.

John 1. 21.

Verf. 4. *Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountaine and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be streight, and the rough places plaine.*

HE both confirms and expounds the former sentence: for he shewes, that the Lord will suffer no impediments stand in his way to hinder him from redeeming and restoring of his Church, whē it seemes good vnto him. These words may well be translated in the imparatiue, so as the Lord should make the whole verſe a charge giuen to the Prophets to prepare and make plaine the way, but the difference is not very materiall: let it suffice vs to haue his meaning, which is, *that Gods hand shall preuaile, though many difficulties and less do come in the way to hinder this deliuerance*. Thus we may see that many hindrances present themselves as often as God once begins to worke for the saluation and succour of the afflicted: wherein notwithstanding his glorie shines so much the more; neither is it any way hurtfull for vs. For his admirable power is manifested before our eyes, seeing all the forces, enterprises, and imaginations of mans braine can neuer so hinder, but that his decree must of necessitie come to passe: for he will bring his seruants as easily ouer *mountaines*, and through *rough waies*, as if they passed through euen and smooth waies. It is certaine that by *mountaines* and *hills*, the Prophet vnder a figure meanes all sorts of obstacles: for Satan neuer ceaseth plotting how to hinder our saluation. For whē the matter concerns our spiritual deliuerance, no doubt but these words comprehend in them all inward and outward impediments, as carnall lusts, and crooked affections, ambition, vaine confidence, impatiencie, &c. all which do wonderfullie withstand our passage, but the Lord will remove them all: for whē he stretcheth forth his hand, nothing shall be able to turne or hold vs back.

The former
sentence
confirmed
and expounded.

God no sooner
begins
to worke for
the saluation
of the afflicted,
but many impediments
comes in
the way.

Impediments
hindring vs
in our spiritual
course.

A singular
consolation.

Verf. 5. *And the glorie of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together:*

together: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.

His meaning is, that this worke of redemption ſhall be ſo glorious, that the Lord will make it knowne to all, that himſelfe is the author of it, and will cauſe his power and maiestic to ſhine therein. It is true that they may bee perceiued in all places, and in all things; but he promiſeth eſpecially to *reueale his glory* in the *protection and deliuerance* of his Church; and not without cauſe: for the redemption thereof euen from the beginning vntil Chriſts coming, was as an incredible reuening, or ſecond creation of the world. This promiſe therefore came in due ſeaſon, when Gods power which he was wont to manifeſt, was now almoſt ſo extint, that there ſcarſly ſhined any ſparkles thereof: as it is ſaid, Pſal. 74. We ſee not our ſignes, &c. I ſay, it was to good purpoſe that the Prophet promiſed the *a ſigne* ſo vnwonted and memorable, by which they might evidently perceiue, that God had infinite meanes in his hands to helpe his Church, although hee ſeemed to defer it for a time.

Hee amplifies this miracle afterwards by another circumſtance; that is, it ſhall not onlie be glorious among the Iewes, but alſo in ſtrange Countries far remote from them: for by theſe words, *all fleſh ſhall ſee*, hee means that all nations vnder the Sun ſhould know, that the returne of the Iewes out of captiuitie, was a worke wrought from heauen, and that God ſpoke not to them by his Prophet in vaine.

Wherein hee taxeth the incredulitie of men, who reſt not vpon Gods promiſes, but hold all that the Prophets ſpeake in his name for fables, till they ſee the performance thereof with their eies. By this place we are alſo taught, what is the true means to correct our vnbelleefe; euen to exerciſe our ſelues daily in the meditation of Gods promiſes, that fo our faith may be confirmed by all the teſtimonies of his loue which hee ſets before vs. For thus we muſt ioine praſtiſe to the promiſes. The bare view of Gods works doe profite vs little, and therefore he ſends his word to open our vnderſtandings: and in the ſecond place, he ſeales vp the truth thereof by the effect it ſelfe.

Verſ. 6. *A voice ſaid, Crie. And he ſaid; What ſhall I crie? All fleſh is graſſe, and all the grace thereof is as the flower of the field.*

HE ſpeakes heere of another voice, then that which he mentioned verſ. 3. For hitherunto he hath ſpoken of the *voice of the Prophets*: now comes in the *voice of God*; who commands the Prophet to *cry*. I denie not but the voice of the Prophets is alſo the voice of God, whoſe instruments they are, (for they ſpeake not of themſelues:) yet this diſtinction is neceſſarie, to the end wee may know when the Lord commands, and when

it is that the Prophets and Miniſters doe execute his commandments. There is a fit compariſon betweene the *two voices* then, that we might learne to receiue the meſſage which the Prophets bring in the name of the Lord, with as much reuence as if himſelfe ſpoke vnto vs from heauen: for they ſpeake as from his mouth, and as his Ambaſſadors veter nothing but that which his Spirit ſuggeſts vnto them.

Moreouer, by this preface we are admoniſhed, that the Prophet meanes to ſpeake of ſome great matter: for howſoever he alwaies proteſts faithfully to deliuer that to others, which himſelfe receiued from the Lord; yet here to ſtir vp the more attention, hee telles vs that the words which hee pronouced, were put into his mouth by the *expreſſe voice of God*.

Henceunto appertaines the verbe *To cry*: as if he ſhould ſay, Thou muſt publiſh this meſſage with a loud voice, that it may indeed go to the quicke. But the *interrogation* which is added, imports much: for the Prophets meaning therein is, that hee ranne not of his own head, nor bragged of things he vnderſtood not; but that they were taught him at leaſure, and diſtinctly; he being well aduised, and very attentiu.

From the matter it ſelfe we may gather, that here is nothing ſuperfluous, in regard that two principall points of the heavenly doctrine are here to be handled ſummarilie. Firſt, that howſoever *man bee nothing in himſelfe but ſmoke and vanitie*, and that all his excellencie vades and periſheth as the ſhadow; or like the *flower*; yet the faithfull haue good cauſe notwithstanding to reioice, becauſe they ſeek their ſaluation out of themſelues. Secondly, albeit they be ſtrangers vpo earth, yet they are enriched with heavenly glories; becauſe the Lord vnites himſelfe vnto them by his word; for our abatement ought to inflame vs with a deſire to partake of Gods grace.

The Prophet knew well enough what he was to teach, but he meant to rouze vp their ſpirits by this interrogation; thereby to ſhew, that himſelfe and all his fellow ſeruants were conſtrained by this neceſſitie to vtter this ſentence, and that they could not otherwiſe diſcharge their duties well, though they ſhould intreat and admoniſh neuer ſo much: for the truth is, nothing ſhall bee gained by ſpeaking, if they hold any other tenure then this.

The word *cry*, may ſignifie a libertie and euidence in the words: for the Prophets were not to whiſper betweene the teeth, but in the hearing of all to pronouced that which they had to ſay roundly, and to their vnderſtandings; yea freely and plainly to open the meaning of whatſoever meſſage they had receiued. Is any man called to the office of teaching then? Let him alwaies thinke and remember that he muſt vſe an inuincible freedom of ſpeech againſt all difficulties that are oppoſed to his miniſtery, as the Prophets and Apoſtles haue done, without ſhrinking their neckes out of the collar. Woe bee

Why the Prophet vſeth this preface.

The interrogation hath an emphaſis here.

What is to be gathered from the matter it ſelfe.

What ſhall I cry?

What ſuch are to doe as are called to the office of teaching.

The right way to correct our vnbelleefe.

The voice of the Prophets is the voice of God, yet it is neceſſarie to diſtinguiſh them.

to mee, saith the Apostle, if I preach not, for necessity is laid vpon mee: 1. Corinth. 9. 16.

All flesh is grasse. First it is to be noted, that he speaks not here of the fragilitie of mans life onely, for the words haue a larger sense; that is, to bring to nothing all the excellencie which men may seeme to haue in them, *David* indeede compares this life to grasse, Psal. 103. 15. because it is corruptible and transitorie: but the scope of the text shewes, that *Isaiab* speaks not of the outward man onely, but also comprehends the gifts of the minde, wherewith men are usually puffed vp; as *wisdomes, valour, industrie, iudgement, dexteritie*, in dispatching businesse, by meanes wherof they thinke themselves more excellent then all the rest of the creatures.

This is better expressed by the word *Chasdo*, which is by and by added; which some translate *Glory*: others, *Well doing*: but I had rather expound it *grace*: by which word I vnderstand, *whatsocuer gift is is whereby men purchase praise, and honour vnto them from others*. Notwithstanding, the passiuē signification may haue place: as if the Prophet should say; *Whatsocuer is excellent and worthy commendation among men, proceeds from the mere liberalitie of God*. And in this sense, *David* calles the Lord, the God of his fauour: Psal. 59. 10. by whose grace hee had receiued so many benefits as he ioioid. It is also very certaine that all that which is praise worthe in men, is heere called by this word *grace*: and is by the Prophet condemned euery whit of vanitie: for there is a close opposition between the common gifts of nature, and the grace of regeneration.

Many expound this of the Assyrians, and refer it to them, as if *Isaiab* meant to discharge the hearts of the Iewes from all feare, by lessening, or indeed by taking cleane away the power, riches, wit, and subtile plots of their aduersaries. Thus they expound it then; If the force of your enemies feare you, remember they are but *flesh*, which by its own debilitie consumes it selfe away. But these mens errors shall be sufficiently couinced anon by the very scope of the text, where the Prophet applies his speech directly to the Iewes. Wee are diligently to obserue then, that whole man with all his faculties wherein he pleaseth himselfe, is heere compared to a flower.

All men are easilie perswaded of their mortalitie touching this life; and the prophane writers haue disputed that question at large: but there is much more difficultie to plucke vp that confidence which men conceiue through a false opinion of their owne wisdom: for they thinke they haue more sharpnesse of wit & industrie in them then others, and therefore also thinke they haue good occasio to glory in themselves aboue others.

But our Prophet shewes, that the rarest gift in man, fades and perisheth forthwith. Notwithstanding, he seemes to adde a kinde of correction by way of mockage, in speaking of the flower of the field: for there is more beautie in a flower, then in grasse. It is therefore a yeel-

ding or granting: as if he should say; Though men haue some outward appearance of beautie, such as is in the flowers of the field, yet, all is but a flower: for the beautie and grace thereof wholly vanisheth away; so as their glorying and flattering of themselves in this vaine and deceitfull glittering shew, is to no purpose at all.

Vers. 7. *The grasse withereth, the flower fadeth; because the spirit of the Lord bloweth vpon it: surely the people is grasse.*

This may well be vnderstood of the beautie of the fields, which the violence of one gale of wind spoiles; as it is said in the hundred and third Psalme: for we know that the wind is called the spirit of God in other places. But I rather thinke the similitude is applied to the present purpose, because otherwise the application would be obscure. The Prophet then expounds his owne meaning when hee said, that men with all their glory were nothing but grasse, because the spirit of God will consume them in the top of their pride *vnto one blast*. Therefore this speech must be thus resolved; *How soeuer it be true that men being indued with excellent parts of nature, may flourish; yet they shall know that all is but vanitie, vwhen the Spirit of God shall but blow vpon them*. For in that they grow so befotend in their own ouerweenings, it is because they neuer set themselves in Gods presence, but digge themselves hiding places, that they may flatter themselves without checke or controle. To the end then that they might no more deceiue themselves with the sweete deccits of lying vanities, the Prophet summons them before Gods iudgement seat, and grants indeed that they flourish in appearance, as long as they keep themselves a great way off from the presence of Gods Maiestie; but let the Lord beginne once to blow vpon them, then all their beautie and strength shall forthwith vanish into smoke. He seemes to attribute an office to the Spirit of God, which is not very fitting vnto it: for it is his propertie to renew the face of the earth: as on the other side, if he withdraw himselfe neuer so little, all things fall to nothing: Psal. 104. And *Isaiab* affirms here the cleane contrarie. Some may thinke then, that one Prophet contradicts another. But there is no absurditie in it to say; that all things are renewed by the vertue of the holy Ghost. And againe, that the same Spirit should consume those things which seemed very glorious before. For we haue no being but in God; and to beginne to be something in him, we must first of all be conuincd of our vanitie, that we may the better acknowledge it. The Lord therefore blowes vpon vs, to teach vs that in our selues wee are nothing.

Now to the end all might know that the Prophet spake not of strangers, but of that people which gloried much in the name of God, he addes, that the people is grasse: for the Iewes thought themselves more worthy and excellent

How farre this phrase, All flesh is grasse, extendis it selfe.

The meaning of this word, Grace.

Men are easilie brought to confesse they are mortall, but the difficultie is to make the disclaime their owne carnall reason: 1. Cor. 2. 34

excellen: then any other nation, and therefore that they of all others ought to be separated from the common sort of men. Hee ſpeakes to them then properly and expreſſie, to the end they might attribute nothing vnto themſelues about others: as if he ſhould ſay, You ſhall ſhew your ſelues very diſcreet and wiſe, if in conſidering your owne povertie and baſenes, you ſhall reliee all vaine confidence. In a word, the Prophet hauing ſpoken of comfort in the firſt verſe, hee now ſhewes how men ought to be prepared to receiue it: but they are no way fit to receiue it, vnleſſe they be firſt brought to nothing. Our hardnes of heart then muſt be ſoftned, our high and proud conceits muſt be brought low, our *glorie* turned into ſhame of face, and our hearts tamed and humbled, if with fruit we will receiue the *conſolations* which the Prophets ſhall bring vs by the commandement of the Lord.

Verſ. 8. The graſſe withereth, the ſloue fadeth, but the word of our God ſhall ſtand for euer.

THis repetition is added once againe to bring all the glorie of proud fleſh vnto nothing: it alſo therewithall conteineth an excellent conſolation; to wit, that the Lord hauing humbled his ſeruants, forthwith giues them matter of ioy and gladnes. This is the order of the text then, *The graſſe withers, but the word of the Lord endureth for euer.* This only conſolation is ſufficient, namely, that the word of God is made the ground of our comfort: as if God himſelfe ſhould reach out his hand to liſt vs vp, after he hath manifested to vs how empty and deſtitute wee are of all good things, and how periſhable and tranſitorie our fleſh is. We then are fraile, and fading as the flower, but the word of the Lord is firme and eternall. To be ſhort, that liſe which is wanting in vs is offered vs elſewhere.

The whole ſumme of the Goſpell is heere comprehended in few words, for it conſiſts in the knowledge of our miſerie, pouertie, and vanitie, that being humbled in good earneſt, we might haue our reſcourſe vnto God, by whoſe only grace we ſhall be whollie reſtored. Let not ſuch then as are acquainted with their woſull condition by nature be therefore out of heart, for the word of the Lord is ſet before them, which is able to build them vp, and to giue them ſtrong conſolation.

Moreouer, wee are here taught to ſecke conſolation no where elſe but in *eternitie*, which is only to be found in God, and in none other: for there is no ſtabilitie in earth or earthlie things. What madnes is it then to place our happines in preſent things, which wee ſee conſume like ſmoke? He therefore much deceiues himſelfe which thinks he can meete with true felicitie, till he be come vnto God, who is therefore called the *eternall*, in holy Scriptures, becauſe we might know that liſe flows from him into vs: yea, he hath adopted vs for his children on this condition, that we may partake with him in his immortalitie.

But all this ſhall profit vs very little, vnleſſe

we be ſhewed the way how to attaine it: the word therefore comes betwene, from which we muſt not turne an haire breadth. For if we wander and ſtray from it, we ſhall be intangled in ſuch wonderfull laborynthis, that we ſhall neuer know how to get out.

Now he ſaith, the word *endures for euer*, not only in it ſelfe, but in vs alſo: which we ought diligentlie to obſerue, becauſe without this addition we ſhould neuer be able to attaine any ſound conſolation. And *S. Peter*, a faithful expoſitor of this place applies it vnto vs, in ſaying, that we are regenerated by this *incorruptible ſeed*: yea, by this word, which, ſaith he, is preached among you, *1. Pet. 1. 23.* whence we gather, as I touched a little before, that liſe is prepared for the dead, which ſhall earneſtly draw neere to this fountaine ſet open vnto them: for that power which is hidden in God, is manifested vnto vs by this word.

Verſ. 9. O Zion that bringeſt good tidings, get thee vp into the high mountaine: O Ieruſalem, that bringeſt good tidings, liſt vp thy voice with ſtrength: liſt it vp, be not afraid: ſay vnto the Cities of Iudah, Behold your God.

HE goes on ſtill with the ſame argument. The Lord promiſed before that he would ſend Prophets which ſhould publiſh the promiſes to comfort this deſolate and forrowfull people: now he commands that this conſolation be ſpread further, becauſe he means that his grace ſhall be ſhed forth vpon the whole land of Iudeah. He gaue hope of theſe ioyfull tidings to Ieruſalem and Zion before: now his purpoſe is, *that this voice ſhould ſound forth, and ring throughout all the reſt of the Cities,* for which purpoſe he commands them to *liſt up the voice,* and to publiſh it in the *high mountaine.*

Now howſoeuer it be true that by the names of *Zion* and *Ieruſalem*, one and the ſame is to be vnderſtood, yet the repetition is diligentlie to be marked. For the meaning is, that this Citie was no way more excellent then the reſt, but in regard that God had choſen it about the reſt to be the ſeate of his Sanctuary. In the next place he ſaith that they publiſh *good tidings*, becauſe the Priests and Leuites were there ordeined and inſtructed according to the rules contained in the Law, that they might be fitted to be leaders of the people, and to publiſh the doctrine of ſaluation. In the meane while this title wherewith God adorneſ his Church is well to be obſerued, to the end ſhe may be knowne by ſome ſure and infallible marke. For that aſſembly is not to be held for the Church where the heauenlie doctrine of *glad tidings* is not founded forth and preached: and in this ſenſe the Apoſtle ſaith, that ſhe is the pillar and ground of truth, *1. Tim. 3. 15.* For albeit God might gouerne vs well enough without the miniſtrie of man, yet he hath impoſed this charge vpon his Church, into whoſe hands he hath committed the inſeſtimable treaſure of his word, & for this cauſe ſhe is cal-

The way how to attaine true felicitie.

That aſſembly is not to be reputed the Church, where the doctrine of ſaluation ſounds.

In the firſt verſe the Prophet mentioned ſome conſolation: now he ſhewes them the means how to be prepared to receiue it.

With matter of humiliati- on, the Prophet mi- g- leth matter of conſolation.

Gods word, the ground of our comfort.

The ſumme of the Goſ- pel.

Our baſe eſtate muſt not put vs vnto ſeruitude of heart.

No ſtabilitie in earth, or earthlie things.

The true Church the mother of the faithfull. Dun. be idols in the papacie, boast in vaine of the title of the Church.

led hereafter, The mother of all the faithfull, Chap. 66. 10. 11. 12. Hence it followes, that nothing is more absurd and vniust, then to see dumb Idols to boast of the name of the Church, as they doe in the Papacie. We are also aduertised, that the Church is not taught of God, that she should keepe her knowledge to her selfe, but that she should *proclaime* that to others which she hath learned. Moreouer, she is inioined to *publish* this grace freely without any feare, that the Prophets might know they were not to speake timorouslie, as of a thing doubtfull, but as those that were well assured of that truth which they set forth, being fullie perswaded that God which was the author of it could not lie; but his will was, that the witnesses of his grace should come out of *Zion*, to replenish the whole land of Iudeah with gladnes.

When he addes, *Behold your God*; In this sentence he comprehends the summe of our happiines, which consists in enioying *the only presence of our God*, which brings with it the fulnes of all good things; but if we be deprived of it, no greater miserie can befall vs. For if we be estranged from God, all things must of necessitie turne to our ruine, though wee should inioy all the pleasures in the world. From this circumstance it is also to be noted, that nothing is more contrarie vnto faith, then to tie the doctrine which the Prophets publish, to the sight of our eies; for themselves must needs haue been mute, if they had not lifted their myndes farre aboue the world; neither durst they otherwise haue bin so bold and constant to draw on others with them, to hope for better things in the midst of despaire. Surely when the wicked haue their swindge, and that iniquitie hath gotten the ypper hand; when the poore Church trembles, and seemes of all other the most miserable, then is the time to lift vp our heads, and so much the more to fasten our eies vpon the promises, and to preach and publish his comfortable presence to such as will *behold* it by faith.

Verf. 10. *Behold, the Lord God will come with power, and his arme shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his worke is before him.*

HEE enricheth this short and latter sentence with many words, because it needed some exposition: and he vseth the word *behold* againe, for the greater certentie, that hee might so much the more encourage the faithfull. He shewes more fully then, of how great vse the presence of God is vnto vs: and first he saith, *he will come with power*, which shall not be idle, but such as we shall feele to be effectuell. Some translate the word *Lo*, Of himselfe, which also word for word may be turned, He is mightie, or, reigning of himselfe. Now his meaning is, that God is strong enough, and needs no man to helpe him. The same is repeated vnder the words *reward* and *worke*: for it is vsuall among the Hebrewes to reapeate one and the same thing

two waies. By *reward*, we must not vnderstand a recompence due by merit; but the righteousness of God, by which he protests he will recompence those which call vpon him in truth, and with vpright hearts: for those that are but meanly read in the Prophets language, know that the word *Secar* imports so much.

The summe is, that God will not come to make shewes onely, but will manifest his power, and make vs to feele it indeed.

And thus it would not bee amisse, if the word Effect, were put in stead of *worke*. Many expound this more wittily, and descent like children vpon *vorke* and *reward*, as if *vorke* were the *merit* to which *reward* must bee giuen: but the Prophet had no such meaning. In both words he repeats the same thing, as I haue said, and sets forth the fruit of the Lords *coming*, which the faithfull shall receiue to their exceeding benefit.

Verf. 11. *Hee shall feede his flocke like a Shepheard: hee shall gather the lambs with his arme, and carrie them in his bosome; and shall guide them with young.*

BY this verse he shewes what this *vorke* of the Lord is: for in as much as he workes diuersly, and infinite waies, the hearer might haue doubted with himselfe what God meant to doe. And thus the generall doctrine could not of it selfe haue been sufficient to haue raised vp their hope. Now howsoever hee stands not to reckon vp all the parts of Gods office, yet in these few words he signifies, that his determination was to vphold and keepe his Church. And therefore he compares him to a *shepheard*: by which word hee sets forth Gods infinite *loue* towards vs, in that hee vouchsafeth to stoop so low as to be our shepheard. The Prophet hath in other places, yea and in the former verse also, armed him with a terrible and inuincible power for the defence of his Church; which he will also repeat againe afterwards: but here he attributes to him a more gracious title, to the end the faithfull might sweetly repose themselves vnder his protection.

Moreouer, although by the word *flocke*, he meanes the elect people whom he had taken into his custodie, we are notwithstanding admonished, that hee will be no shepheard, but to such as with the modestie and weaknesse of *sheepe* and *lambs*, are content to follow him. The condition of a *flocke* therefore must be considered: for he will not feede wild beasts, but *lambs*. Let vs therefore cast off all stubbornnesse, and let vs suffer our selues to be meekened, if wee meane to be *gathered into this fold*, whereof God promiseth to be the *shepheard*.

He *will beare* them.] These words expresse the singular goodnesse of God, who ouer and besides the vehement loue which he beares to his flocke, hath respect to the *weake* and feeble sheepe; for then he shewes the *care* he hath in dealing gently with them, his *humanity*

Gods loue in this verse. Gods power in verf. 10. to be ioined together.

God will be no sheepe heard to wolues. but to such as shew the traſtable and meeke nature of lambs,

When it is the fittest time to proclaime comfort to the Church.

nitie in approaching neere vnto them, and his patience in bearing them in his *arrows*. Wherein we ſee, he omits no office that appertaines to a good ſheepheard, whoſe dutie is to haue his eye vpon all his ſheepe, that he may gouerne them according to their condition: and to comfort them; but eſpeciallie thoſe that are ſick and infirme. The ſumme is, That God will be gentle, louing, milde, & mercifull in gouerning his ſeruants; ſo as he will not require more of the weake then they are able to beare.

Verſ. 12. *Who hath meſured the Waters in his fiſt? and counted the heauen with a ſpanne, and compr. hended the duſt of the earth in a meſure? and weighed the mountaines in a weight, and the hills in a ballance?*

Having ſet forth Gods fatherly loue towards his little flock, now he ſets forth his power the ſecond time.

HAving finiſhed his ſpeech touching the fatherlie care that God hath for the defence of his people: now he comes to ſet forth his power; and magnifies it as farre forth as poſſible he can, which yet ſhal moue vs very little, vnleſſe we looke narrowlie into the Prophets meaning. An ignorant perſon at the fiſt bluſh would ſay that the Prophet hath heaped vp a many of broken ſentences without grace or arte: but if we haue regard to his ſcope and end, by an elegant ſpeech he adorneſ the power of God ſeaſonably, becauſe his power is the true and beſt ſtay for our faith to leane vpon, that thereby we may be aſſured he will performe his promiſe. It is not for nought the Apoſtle ſaith that *Abraham* doubted not, knowing that he which had promiſed, *was alſo able to doo it*, Rom. 4. 20. And in the ſame ſenſe he ſaith, 2. Tim. 1. 12. I know whom I haue believed; *God is able to keepe that which I haue committed vnto him*. To this belongs the ſaying of Chriſt, My father which gaue them me is *greater then all*, Ioh. 10. 29. Seeing then that we haue continually to wreſtle againſt diſtruſt, and that Satan is ready to circumuent vs by many fetches, wee muſt attribute to the power of God the praife that it deſerueth, to the end his promiſes may be receiued of vs with that aſſurance which is requiſite.

Now becauſe the reſtauration of the people was a thing incredible to fleſh and blood, it was needfull that the minds of the faithfull ſhould be raiſed vp farre aboute the world, leſt they ſhould tie the grace of God to humane helps. Wee ſee the Prophet not only teacheth that God is the Creator of heauen and earth: but whatſoeuer he recites touching his infinite power, it is applied to the matter in hand; which we alſo are to doe at this day. When any aduerſitie preſſeth vs, our ſaluation ſeemes to be hidden, Gods power is ouerſhadowed, as if a cloude were come betwene vs and it: we ſtand amazed, euen as if we were viterlic reiected and contemned of the Lord. Let vs not thinke then that this deſcription is ſome light matter: for if the perſuaſion of Gods power were well ſetled in our hearts, we ſhould neuer be ſo toſſed vp

Gods power, the true ſtay and propof our faith.

The Prophet playes not the orator only in ſetting forth Gods power, but applies it to the preſent occaſion.

The firme perſuaſion of Gods power well ſet.

and downe; neither ſhould any calamitie be able to trouble vs.

Abraham reſted vpon this power, as we haue ſaid, that he might with aſſurance embrace that which otherwiſe was incredible: and therefore *S. Paul* aſſirmes that he hoped, *above hope*, being reſolued that *God was able to performe* that which he had ſpoken, ſo as he neither ſtaggered, neither was he weak in the faith, Rom. 4. 18. 19. This teacheth vs to liſt vp our eyes aboute the hills, Pſal. 221. 1. and that wee iudge not of things according to the outward appearance; but that we may indeed aſſure our ſelues, that that which God hath ſaid ſhall ſurely come to paſſe, becauſe he hath all things in his owne power.

All of vs are reſt in this; but (as I told you) the Iewes had exceeding neede to be ſullie reſolued of it, for they were oppreſſed vnder very mightie tyrants: all hope of libertie was taken from them: in a word, they ſaw themſelues euery way compaſſed about, as in a great and hidious wildernes. This conſolation therefore had bin ſet before them in vaine, if by the Prophets admonition their minds had not bin raiſed vp to heauen, that ſo they might whollie reſt their hearts vpon the abſolute power of God, without looking to inferior things.

When he ſpeakes of *meſures* which men vſe in ſmall things, it is to applie himſelfe to our weaknes: for the Lord liſps with vs thus ordinarily, taking ſimilitudes from things vſuall amongſt vs, when he is to ſpeake of his owne Maieſtic, that ſo thoſe of ſhallow and feeble capacities might the better comprehend his greatnes and excellencie. Wee are therefore to reiect all carnall imaginations of God, becauſe his greatnes ſurpaſſeth all creatures: for the heauen, the earth, the ſea, and all that in them is with their vnmeaſurablenes, are yet all of them nothing in compariſon of him.

God is ſaine to liſp as it were vnto vs, otherwiſe we were not able to comprehend his incomprehenſible greatnes.

Verſ. 13. *Who hath inſtricted the Spirit of the Lord? or was his Counſellor, or taught him?*

14. *Of whom tooke he counſell, and who inſtricted him, and taught him in the way of iudgement? or taught him knowledge, and ſhewed vnto him the way of vnderſtanding?*

THE Prophet now deſcends to ſpeake that of Gods wiſedome, which in the former verſes he taught concerning his power and goodnes. This golden chaine is to be noted: for as carnall reaſon doth peruerſlie reſtraine the power of God to outward helps, ſo doth it without reaſon ſubiect the incomprehenſible counſell of God to humane imaginations: and thus many things will preſent themſelues to hinder the courſe of Gods works, till he himſelfe be exalted farre aboute all creatures. If our reaſon may be iudge, then there will be no end of doubtings. For as oft as it conceiues not how the Lord works this

The Prophet having deſcribed Gods power and goodnes, now he mentions his wildome.

Where reaſon is iudge, there will be no end of doubtinge.

er that, wee will call into question the truth of his promises; because whatsoever surmounts our reason, will forthwith seeme an impossible thing vnto vs. Thus then, as we are to oppose Gods power to our vvakenessse, so are wee to preferre his incomparable vvisdome, before our presumption and boldnessse.

Wee must oppose Gods power to our weaknesse, and his wisdom to our presumption.

In asking whether any hath instructed or directed the Spirit of God, it is to shew that he needes no teacher to goe before him, or to counsell him in vnkowne things. The Spirit is heere taken for reason, iudgement, or vnderstanding: for he borrowes the similitude from the nature of men, the better to apply himselfe to our capacities. For, as I thinke, he speaks not heere of the essentiall spirit of God. Now the Prophet sets forth one and the same thing diuers waies, to teach vs that man is more beastly then the very brute beasts, when hee dares aspire to heauen, to search and vveigh the workes of God in the vnequall ballance of his reason: *Isaiah* meant then more and more to beat downe the headinesse and ouerweening of men. S. Paul alleadgeth this place to the same end, that he might stop our mouthes in asking curious questions touching the incomprehensible counsels of God, who wil not haue them searched into, further then with such sobrietie as is meete for so high mysteries. Onely there is this difference betweene Paul & *Isaiah* the Apostle saith, that the mysterie of the Gospell cannot bee comprehended by mans naturall vnderstanding: and the Prophet in generall magnifies the prouidence of God. And yet wee must inquire and search into both these points with humilitie, and captiuate our whole reason vnder a right obedience: for all our wit and vnderstanding is nothing but darknes, till Christ hath inlightened vs by his Spirit.

One thing set forth diuers waies.

Rom. II. 34.

That which *Isaiah* speaks in generall, the Apostle applies to a particular,

Verf. 15. *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the dust of the ballance: behold, hee taketh away the Isles as a little dust.*

If wee meane to vnderstand our Prophets meaning aright, and to reade with profit that which hee hath here written, wee must learne to finde out his drift, as I haue touched before. For he extols not Gods greatness thus at random, but sets it forth with all his skill, according as the circumstance of the matter which hee now is in hand with requires: to let the Israelites know, that this buckler is sufficient to couer them, and that they were not to feare the indeuors, rage, nor violence of the world, prouided that God shew them his fauour: and that thus they were to learne to yeeld themselues vnder his sauegard. For if they had not bin well grounded in this point, they should haue met with infinit occasions which would haue driuen them out of heart every minute of an houre. The Prophet therefore goes on with the same argument still, and telles the Iewes, that if the nations and peoples be compared vwith God, they are as nothing: for with his onely

blast he will scatter all the inhabitants of the earth, as if they were but a little picke of dust. For in regard we are too much inclined, and foolishly wittie in seeking pretences to strengthen our owne infidelitie, wee imagin that whatsoever Satan conspires to hinder our saluatio, shuts vp all passage against God. The Prophet minding to correct this vice shewes, that all creatures are nothing before him, and that all nations when they stand on an heape, are but as the small droppet of a bucket in his presence. Whence we learne, that it is a grosse sortishnesse in vs so to prefer the creature, that wee abase the power of the Creatour, who ought to bee held as supreme ouer and aboue all things; as indeede hee is.

Verf. 16. *And Lebanon is not sufficient for fire, nor the beasts thereof for a burnt offering.*

Lebanon: that is to say; if we should offer a burnt offering vnto God, according as hee deserues; neither Lebanon nor all the beasts that feed in it, would suffice for the sacrifice. He repeats & imprints in their minds this power of God still after diuers maners, that the people who were to trust in it, should not respect creatures, nor any thing they were able to doe with all their forces. Notwithstanding it seemes the Prophet speaks expressly of Gods worship, that he might bring the readers to haue it in the greater reuerence: as if hee should say; Darest thou measure the power of God vwith in the narrow scanning of thy reason? Why shou canst not serue him as thou oughtest, though thou shouldst lay all the vwood and beasts of Lebanon as once vpon his altar. Some gather hence that none can procure Gods fauour by offering sacrifices: which is very true; but we must haue an eye to the Prophets meaning, as I haue already said; who to hearten on the Iewes, to the greater confidence, shewes that all things are nothing, being compared vwith God.

Verf. 17. *All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him lesse then nothing.*

This is a repetition of that which he hath said before; to wit, that God can destroy all nations as soone as it pleaseth him: and that they are counted as nothing before him euen in their best estate. But it may seeme strange that he saith, *All nations are nothing*. Were they not all created of God, that they might be esteemed something? I answer, that is spoken Anf. by comparison. For such is the puerilitie of our vnderstanding, that it darkens Gods glorie and Maiestie, and sets those things about it which should be set farre beneath. When we are to enter into this combat then, whether God or the creature should haue the preeminence, let vs boldly pronounce, *Thas that vwhich is compared vwith God, is nothing*. The Prophet speaks not simply of the nature

How to read this prophesy with fruit.

Obiect.

ture of man as it is created of God: but his purpose is to beate downe and to bring to nothing all their presumption and pride, when they dare set themselves above him. Wee know it is vnpossible to subsist, or be without God, for in him only we lue, moue, and haue our being, as it is said, *Act. 17. 28.* notwithstanding that which *Dauid* saith is also as true, to wit, *that nothing is so vaine a thing as man*: who if he be weighed in a balance, will be found lighter then *vaine* it self, *Psal. 62.* And in this sort our Prophet ſewes that *all nations* are as *nothing*, yea, *lesse then nothing*: that he might the better noce out both their *vanitie*, and *indecillitic*.

Verſ. 18. *To whom then will ye liken God? Or what ſimilitude will ye ſet vp vnto him?*

The Iewes were in great danger of falling from God in regard of another temptation: for it is certaine that the *Aſſyrians* and *Caldeans* obtained not so many victories without the assistance of other nations: thence the Iewes might conclude; What auails it vs to haue a seruice of God apart from other nations, seeing our enemies in fighting haue victorie from heauen; and our God in the meane while succors not vs at all? Neither is it to be doubted but the infidels also mocked these poore captiues, as it appears by other places.

That this calamitie then might not cause the Iewes to forget the true religion; God riseth vp and saith, that a greater wrong can not be done vnto him, then if the faithfull being wrong by afflictions, should therefore conforme themselves to the idolatries and superstitions of the Gentiles. Thus then he confirms them in the truth of his promises, lest they should faint vnder the burthens which they were to susteine.

But the Prophet speaks not to the men of his time only, as we haue said, but to all their successors who were to vndergoe sharp assaults against the Idols of prophane nations, vnder whom they were held captiues. And in the second place they had enough to doe to shunne the euill examples and customes of those nations: for it was exceeding difficult for them to continue constant being mingled among Idolaters, and dayly beholding their coriupt manners. To the end therefore that they might not be tainted with any vain conceit, to wit, that the affaires of the Idolaters prospered well, in regard of the honour which they did to their Idols and false gods; the Prophet, I say, preuents such an offence, and saith, *that they were in no wise to compare the gods of the Gentiles vwith the God vvhom they and their fathers vsorſhipped*: for those gods were made with mens hands; the matter of them being but gold, silver, wood, stone, or such like: but their God was the Creator of heauen and earth. Great must the outrage be therefore against his Maieſtie, when the same shall be compared with things of nothing; yea, it is a dishonor in the highest degree if he be not exalted farre above the Angels, or whatsoever is called God.

When *S. Paul* vseth this testimonie against Idolaters, he peruerſts not the true ſenſe of the Prophets words; but from thence hee rightlly gathereth, that it is a wicked thing to represent God by any ſimilitude at all. And our Prophet not only diſſwades the Iewes here from diſtruſt, but alſo therewithall condemnes the ſuperſtitious of the Gentiles; ſhewing it to be a thing quite repugnant to the nature of God to be represented by any grauen Image. And thus we ſee the Apoſtles doctrine ſutes well with this place: for the Prophet hauing proued that Gods power is infinite, ſeeing he is able to comprehend all things in his ſiſt, *verſ. 12.* at laſt he concludes, *To vvhom vvhil ye liken me? Make what Image you will, it ſhall be nothing like me.* This is a very profitable doctrine, and well worthie our obſeruation: for were there but this one text, it were enough to reſute all the inuentions wherewith the Papists are miſſed, who permit it as lawfull to represent God by outward ſhapes and figures. The Prophet holds it as a reſolued truth, that it is vnpossible to make an Image of corruptible matter, that should any way be able to match with the glorie of God: he vtterlie reiects the Idols themselves: so farre is he off then from speaking of adoring them, that he counts it euen an execrable and horrible ſacrilege so much as to frame or caue them, and to set them vp before God.

But the holy Scripture is full of such sentences. *Moses* aduertiseth the people who were inclined to this vice, *You ſaw no ſimilitude nor ſhape* (saith he) *in the mountaine*, only you heard a voice, take heed therefore lest being corrupted, you should make you any grauen Image, *Deut. 4. 12. 15.* *Will we haue a right knowledge of God then? Let vs not frame him after our fantaſies, but ſeeke him out in his word, where we ſhall find his Image represented vnto vs in moſt liuely colours.* Let vs content our ſelues with this knowledge, and neuer enterpriſe any thing of our owne heads, for other meanes, as Idols, and Images, will neuer teach vs the truth, but vannie & lies, as *Jeremiah* very well ſaith, *Chap. 10. 8.* *The ſtock is but a doctrine of vannie*: And *Abacuc*, *Chap. 2. 18.* *The grauen Image is a thing teaching lies.* Now whereas the Lord ſometimes compares himſelfe to a Lyon, to a Beare, a man, or the like, this is nothing to prouoe the lawfull vſe of Images as the Papists dreame: but ſuch ſimilitudes ſerue to ſet forth the goodnes, lenitie, anger, or ſeueritie of God, with other aſſections attributed vnto him; which can not be maniſeſted vnto vs but vnder ſimilitudes of things familiarly knowne. To conclude, if it were lawfull to represent God by an Image, we should then put no difference between him and the dung-hill gods of the Gentiles, and so the Prophets doctrine could not stand firme.

Verſ. 19. *The workeman melteth an image, or the goldsmith beateh it out in gold, or the goldsmith maketh silver plates.*

Gods image is most liuely represented vnto vs in his wor.

Images and Idols, teachers of lies.

A dreame of the Papists reſuted.

20. Doth not the poore chuse out a tree that will not rot for an oblation? Hee seeketh also unto him a cunning workman, to prepare an image that shall not be moued.

Because publike consent in things is of great force, and that it is by and by received for a law, if a thing once please the multitude, the Prophet heere fortifies the faithfull against such an error. Here is therefore an occupation or preuention, as they call it; to wit, the Iewes were to take heed how they stood amazed, in seeing idolaters so carefull in their strife, who should haue the gaudiest gods; for if they did so, they were in danger to bee seduced by them. But therewithall he riseth vp in an holy indignation against the desperate follie of men, who fo boile in their superstitious imaginations, that euery one will haue an idoll fit to please his owne humor. He also shewes that no state or condition of men are free from this impietie, but that the poore are as well guiltie thereof as the rich: for the rich, they make them gods of gold and silver: the poore, of such a tree as likes him best. And thus he shewes that all sorts are carried away with an intollerable furie in desiring and seeking out some excellent thing for the seruice of their gods, though the meanes to doe it withall faile them. Men will haue gods forsooth that they may looke vpon, and handle. Loe here the originall and fountain from whence idolatrie hath sprung. For God is not neere vs in a puppet, but by his word, and by the power of his holy Spirit. And howfoeuer in his Sacraments, he represents vnto vs liuely images of his grace and spirituall benefits, yet his onely drift therein is, to lift vp our mindes by them to himselfe. But our Prophet in the meane while derides the follie of these blinde idolaters, who care not what cost or paines they bestow or take, so they may furnish out trim and goodly idols.

All are gone out of the way, all are corrupt: Psal. 14. 3.

The beginning of idolatry.

Verf. 21. Know yee nothing? Haue yee not heard it? Hath it not bene told you from the beginning? Haue yee not understood it by the foundations of the earth?

Having scorned the beastly sottishnesse of the Gentiles, hee now turns againe to the Iewes: for being all of vs by nature inclined too much to superstitious vanities; so we also easilie fall, if any example be set before vs. The Iewes being captues and mingled amongst the Babylonians, were constrained to looke vpon horrible & damnable idolatries, which might soone draw them to a wicked imitation: *Isaiah* therefore as a good Prophet of God, speedilie prevents them, and warnes them that they bee no whit moued with such spectacles. He askes if they haue not bin taught and instructed concerning the true God. Manie expositors thinke that this is but one repetition; to wit, it appears by the creation

of the world, that there is not so much as anie appearance of seeking God in wood, stone, gold, or silver: but wee may gather from the scope of the text, that these are two distinct members. For if he continued still to reprove the Gentiles, hee would then bring no other testimonies but heauen and earth against them: but speaking to the Iewes, who were familiarly acquainted with the law of God; for their reproofe hee vseth testimonies taken both from the order of nature, and from the word.

The Iewes had a double meanes of reproofe.

First, he askes in general, if they knew nothing. Secondly, he propounds the meanes by which they ought to discern the true God from the false. The first is from hearing the word; and therefore he saith expressly, Haue ye not heard? *Hath it not been told you from the beginning?* The last is from this faire theater of the world, where Gods glory shines round about and beneath vs. He would haue contented himselfe with this second demonstration, if he had had to deale with the profane Gentiles; as *Saint Paul* also doth *Act. 14. 17.* For speaking to them of *Iconia*, who had neuer heard word of the heauenly doctrine, he vseth arguments taken from the order of nature. How? *That God left not himselfe without witness, by giuing raine and fruitful seasons.* But our Prophet, who speaks of that true religion which was among the Iewes, could not omit the mentioning of the law, which was to make them double inexcusable, if they should forsake or despise it, to prophane themselves among infidels. For they were conuined not onely by the sights of their eyes, but also by the hearing of their eares: which were continually beaten vpon by God, in the preaching of his law amongst them. Seeing then that from their mothers breasts they had (with their mothers milke) been nurced vp with the milke of the true knowledge of God, and were instructed by their fathers, by continual succession, the Prophet telles them that they shall shew themselves too peruerse and vnthankfull, if such an helpe shall nothing profit them.

1
2

For that which he saith of the beginning, or long agoe, is to the same purpose; namely, that from their cradles they had been nurced vp in Gods true worship: and besides, in ages succeeding they had such continual teaching, as would not suffer the to erre; only if they did but remember what they had heard. As if he should haue said; You haue no new God, but the very same who manifested himselfe from the beginning to *Abraham, Moses,* and the rest of the Patriarks.

And here we haue an excellent confirmation touching the antiquitie of that doctrine which hath continued so many ages among the faithfull: not that antiquitie is sufficient of it selfe to giue faith & assurance (for so the Gentiles might reply that their superstitions were no lesse ancient) but in respect that fro the beginning, the authoritie of the law hath been abundantly confirmed, and that God hath testified that himselfe is the author of it: for this cause, I say, it gets great confirmation vnto it by long vse, in that the successors

Antiquitie of true doctrine

Antiquitie not sufficient in it selfe.

Antiquitie a good confirmation of the truth. knew

knew that their ancestors gaue them ſuch a forme of religion, which they could not reiect without a manifeſt brand of apoſtaſie. By ſuch an order and progreſſe then, all diſcultie is taken away. Now we at this day haue the ſame faith with theſe good teachers, becauſe with vs they acknowledged one God, the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt : for the faithfull haue all one word and promiſe, tending all to one and the ſame end.

to be obſerued of vs; for otherwiſe it were but a bare ſpeculation to know that God did once create the world, velleſſe wee alſo knew that his hand were alwaies ſtretched out to maintaine and gouerne the ſame in the fiſt eſtate. Which the Prophet expreſſeth in this word *ſiteth*: as if he ſhould ſay, *The earth* continues not ſtable and firme in her place, but as it is ſtayed & upheld by the power of God : for *ſiſing*, by a figure, ſignifies as much as rule or government.

Our faith one and the ſame with that that theſe good fathers profeſſed.

I

Where he addes, *from the foundations of the earth*; it is ſpoken by a figure, where a part is taken for the whole: for a part of the world is here taken for the whole. God hath ſet this world before men as a looking-glaſſe, that by viewing of it, they might come to the knowledge of his Maieſtie, and that it might be an image of things inuiſible, as Saint Paul ſaith more fully, Rom. 1. 20. Their ignorance then is inexcusable; for they neede not complaine touching the want of meanes, whereby they may come to the knowledge of God, ſeeing he is ready ſo many waies to manifeſt himſelfe vnto them. And to ſay the truth, men ſinne more of obſtinacie and pride, then of ignorance: for they willingly deſpiſe God, ſpeaking thus diſtinctly, that they might ſlay themſelues in creatures, and in vaine things. Can ſuch a contempt deſerue to be excuſed? No, for thoſe who worſhip their owne inuention in ſtead of God, (of which all almoſt are guilty) are they not welworthy to be blinded? Truly ſuch, and ſo juſt a puniſhment is worthily to be inflicted, where there is ſo great headſtrongneſſe. But if the doctrine of Gods word be joined to this knowledge which we haue by the creatures, we ſhall be much leſſe excuſable. Thus then *Iſaiah* mentions both knowledges, to ſhew that the Iewes ſhall be worthy of double condemnation, if they ſtand not faſt in the faith, being thus informed and aſſured of the power and goodneſſe of God.

In that he compares the inhabitants of the earth to *graffſhoopers*; it is to ſhew that God is not incloſed within theſe narrow roomes, ſeeing neither heauen, nor the heauen of heauens are able to containe him; that ſo we might learne (whē God is ſpoken of in the Scriptures) not to imagin any earthly or carnall thing of him touching his incomprehenſible glory. Moreouer, by this ſimilitude we are taught how blind & iottiſh thoſe are, which attribute any thing to themſelues; for they ſhall get as much by their brags, as if ſome little vermin, ſuch as the *graffſhoopers* be, would riſe vp againſt the cloudes in fetching their friſks: but you know they are forced to fall downe by and by to the earth.

Men ſinne more of pride and obſtinacie, then of ignorance.

2

Thoſe that haue a double meanes of knowledge, are doubly inexcusable if they linne againſt it.

He ſpreads out the heauen as a curtaine.] *Danid* vſeth the ſame kind of ſpeech, *Pſal. 124. Iſaiah* and *Danid* ſpeake both touching the aſpect and ſpreading out of the heauens, in regard of our ſight: for it is not their meaning that God ſpreads them out for himſelfe to inhabit there, but rather that we might haue roome enough to dwell vnderneath. For as the earth beares vs vp, ſo the heauens do couer vs; and thus wee haue a manſion or dwelling houſe made vs in this world cloſe and covered. But theſe ſimilitudes may ſeeme much to leſſen the dignitie of the matter whereof the Prophet intreateth, albeit his meaning is cleerly to ſet it forth in the liuelieſt colours hee can deuife: for what is a *curtaine*? What is a *tent*? What great matters are theſe? I anſwere; Anſ.

God hath ordained the earth to beare vs, and the heauens to couer vs. Obiect.

Verſ. 22. *Hee ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſſhoopers: hee ſtretcheth out the heauens as a curtaine, and ſpreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.*

theſe ſimilitudes are exceeding fit to amplify the matter: for it is as much as if he had ſaid, God ſpreads out the heauens with as much eaſe as a man draws a curtaine. He alſo leaues it to euery mans conſideration, how much difference there is betweene the heauens and a curtaine, and what their greatneſſe is; which all may perceiue. Laſtly, there is an oppoſition betweene the houſes that men build with much toyle and continuall coſt, (and yet it is much if they can raiſe a frame of an hundred foote high;) and this infinite height of the heauens, ſo ſpread by the onely word of God. Which ſhewes cleerly, how excellent and ſkillfull a workman he is.

Which he began in verſ. 10, 11, 21.

The reaſon why the Prophet vſeth ſo many repetitions to one purpoſe. From the doctrine of the creation of the world, the Prophet deſcends

He continues on his former argument, but after another manner; and ſets out the magnificence and power of God. Wee haue told you heretofore why hee ſpeakes thus; to wit, becauſe we are too much inclined to diſtruſt: ſo as the leaſt occaſion in the world will make vs ſtumble and be offended. For which reſpect, the Prophet is conſtrained to repeat one thing often, that he might keepe in firme and weak hearts in the confidence of Gods promiſes. Before, he handled the doctrine of the creation of the world, but now he comes to the perpetuall government of it: for God contented not himſelfe to manifeſt his power once onely in the creation of the world, but continues ſtill to ſhew it with as great efficacy in the vpholding and conſeruation of his worke. Thus is well

Verſ. 23. *Hee bringeth the Princes to nothing, and maketh the Iudges of the earth as vanitie.*

Still hee continues to extoll Gods prouidence, by which hee gouernes the whole world, but eſpecially *mankind*. In the ſomner verſe hee began to touch this doctrine; to wit, that God hath not created the world to

Now hee comes to ſpeake of Gods prouidence in particular.

leauē it at sixe and seuen, as we say, but hold his soueraignie and dominion ouer it; meaning still to retaine the *keeping* and *surreiuing* of it in his owne hands. But because it pleased him to shew himselfe more familiarly to men, the Prophet hath chosen this particular, that he might therein set forth and praise his prouidence. The summe is, that Gods dominion extends it selfe farre and wide, so as he gouernes all things in heauen and earth according to his good pleasure: but therewithall he teacheth (which was a point worthe of note) that in his gouernment of *man-kind* one may manifestlie perceiue notable marks of his power and prouidence. Now he contents not himselfe to note it in generall termes, but picks out one particular instance which might the better awaken our drouzie minds. All things that befall the *common multitude* are soone forgotten, and is quickly out of minde as matters vnworthe the talking of: but whē *Kingdomes* and *Monarchies* wherein men are aduanced to great dignities come once to fall, then it seemes the very earth is shaken with it. The Prophet therefore stirres vp our attention very sily by such documētis. Surely a man would thinke that *Princes* and *Magistrates* are separated from the common condition of men, and exempt from the ordinarie calamities which befall others, because by their glorie they seeme to dazell the eyes and minds of euery one that beholds them: but they themselues for the most part are vterlic blind, and therefore our Prophet especially aimes at them, saying, That the Lord brings *them to nothing*. Hath the Lord so great force against the mightie Princes of the earth? What shall become of the baser sort? Can he not, trow ye, deale well enough with them, and handle them as he list? Can he not giue, and take away strength, and the greatness of mens spirits when he will?

Vers. 24. As though they were not planted, as though they were not sowne, as though their stock tooke no roote in the earth: for he did euen blow vpon them and they withered, and the whirlewinde will take them away as stubble.

Though the particle *Al* signifies Also, yet I haue translated, *As though*, because it agrees best to this present verse, and so the plaine meaning will be, They shall confesse themselues to be in as poore a condition, as if they had neuer bin *planted nor sowne*. This is an amplification of the former doctrine: for in this verse he shewes, that euen *Princes* shall be so whollie plucked vp and rooted out, that not one glimpse of their glorie shall euer be discerned; euen as if it had neuer bin at all. Whilest they are in honor, Psal. 49. a man would thinke them to be so fast rooted that the blasts of aduersitie were neuer able to remoue them: but sudden changes fall out in a moment which blot out their name and renoume, so as men shall say, Were there euer any such? And this comes to passe not in

mens persons only, but also to flourishing and stately kingdomes.

Seeing then such great alterations are signes of Gods terrible power, let vs beware how wee chuse our selues such tickling leaning stocks, which haue only a vaine appearance of help in them, but let vs solely and only rest vpon the power of the Almighty, what strength, honor, or riches soeuer wee enjoy. For the Lord plays not at tennis with the world, in banding of such great ones, as one taking delight therein, as some prophane dogs blasphemē: but the higher any man is aduanced, commonlie the bigger he swels in pride, and neuer leaues swelling till he burst himselfe in pieces, that so the iust iudgements of God may be alwaies manifest to all. By this we are also admonished, that it is ill done to attribute the euent of things to fortune, or to second causes: for God became not the Creator of the world, forthwith to leaue his worke, as a carpenter doth his ship, but his hand continallie labours, so as not an haire of our heads can fall to the ground without his good pleasure. When so many changes fall out therefore in the world, and that we see things which in our iudgements would stand for euer, to fall & consume as the smoke; let vs turne our eyes towards this soueraigne prouidence and power of God.

As soone as he blew vpon it.] In these words the Prophet shewes of what short and momentanie continuance those things be which are wont to dazle our eyes, and make vs at a stand. For wee no sooner thinke of a great King, but our hearts quake within vs, and we are moued at it: but he shewes, that Princes and kings are but as *stubble* before God, whose only blast will carrie them away like a *whirlewinde*, whither soeuer it pleaseth him. What is our lesson then? We must not stand gazing vpon the creature, be he what he will, that the same should hinder vs from giuing that glorie and honour vnto God which to him appertaines. This the Iewes were diligentlie to note: for it is like enough they would haue thought this great Monarchie of the Caldeans, vnder whom they were held captiues, should neuer haue bin dissolved, nor that themselues should euer haue been deliuered, vnlesse this doctrine had come between: to wit, That there is nothing so firme and stable in the world, which God can not scatter and bring to nothing with his only blast: that they might hold fast the hope of their deliuerance therefore, the Prophet aduertiseth them that as soone as God shall but thunder from heauen, he will breake and crush in pieces all the terrible forces and power of their enemies.

Vers. 25. To whom now will you liken me, that I should be like him, saith the holy one?

This is a repetition of the former sentence, where it was said, that God would not indure to be matcht with Idols, vers. 18, 19, 20. lest the Iewes should diminish any thing of his

his power; notwithstanding they were ſo long retained captiues in the hands of Infidels. For they were to beware how they attributed any power to Idols, becauſe the idolaters (who kept them in bondage) profpered: for by ſuch diſputings, comparing the power of the true God with idols, they were in danger to haue mingled them together. This is the cauſe why in indignation he repeats the ſame thing againe; *To whom will ye liken me?* As if hee ſhould ſay; Dare you venture to take my glory from mee by your comparifons? For howſoeuer men frame diuers imaginations to themſelues, thinking to transforme God into what ſhape they liſt: yet remains he one and the ſame ſtill, and his nature is changed neuer the more by their inuentions.

He brings in the claufe *holy one*, to verie good purpoſe, putting it in ſtead of Gods name. For therein he prouide taxeth the lewes of ſhamefull ingratitude, if they *ſanctiſie him not* in their hearts: Chap. 8. 13. ſeeing he hath ſeparated them from others. For there is no *hulneſſe* to be found in the idols of the Gentiles, being but the workes of mens hands. God then is too much wronged and abaſed, when idols are oppoſed to him, and that men beginne to call it into queſtion, whether of them hath the greater power.

Verſ. 26. *Lift vp your eyes on high, and behold who hath created theſe things, and bringeth out their armies by number, and calleth them all by their names: by the greatnes of his power and mighty ſtrength nothing ſaileth.*

For, none
ſhall fail.

IT ſeemes the Prophet ſtands too long vpon this point, ſeeing there is none will denie it. For he repeats one thing often, (which none doubts of) but muſt needs be conſtrained to confeſſe the admirable power and wiſdome of God in the comely order of nature. But wee muſt obſerue what hath been ſaid heretofore. Wee in our ſelues are ſo vntoward, and doe value Gods power at ſo low a rate, that we ſometimes afford him not the honour which we will giue to a mortall man: yea, the appearance of a ſillie worme of the earth, puts vs ſometimes into ſo great murthering and feare, that all the promiſes of the Almighty in the holy Bible, can ſcarſely comfort vs. For this cauſe the Prophet hath iuſt cauſe to repeat it ſo often, that God is deſtroyed of his honour, if his power rauith vs not ſo as to admire it. Thus he makes no idle repetitions you ſee, becauſe wee are ſo dull and ſlow of hearing, that we haue need to be awakened and pricked at euery turning with the ſpur. Men daily behold the heauens and the ſtarrs, but where is hee that thinks ſeriously of the author of theſe things?

Wee ſee the ſhape of man ſo artiſtically formed by God, that he was put into this world to behold the heauens, that hee might acknowledge the Lord of them: for God hath bowed downe the faces of beaſts towards the

earth, and hath made man to goe vpright; to ſtirie him vp to view the place of his abode. And this was well deſcribed by a prophane Poet, who ſaith:

Although euery creeping thing bends his face chiefly towards the earth, yet to man God hath giuen a face to looke vponwards, and hath created him to behold the excellencie of the heauens, and to liſt vp his eyes to the ſtarrs.

Thus then the Prophet ſets forth mans malignitie, who will acknowledge nothing of God, though it be painted out before his eyes, but had rather haue their ſnowt grubbing in the earth like Moles: for the maieſtie of God muſt needs touch vs neere, if wee looke wiſhly vpon the heauens. In naming of the ſtarrs, he expreſſeth more plainly, that the wonderfull order which ſhines in the heauens, doth as it were preach with a lowd voice, that there is but one God and Creator of the world; which all ſuch muſt be conſtrained to acknowledge, as amidſt ſo great numbers and diuerſities of ſtarrs, ſhall obſerue their diſtinct order and comely marchings. For the ſtarrs were not thus ſet euery one in his place at haphazard; neither is it at random that they march ſo ſwiftly in ſuch proportion, ſetching ſo great compaſſes, and yet walking as by a direct line; ſo as they turne not an haire breadth from that path which God hath limited out vnto them. Thus their wonderfull diſpoſition ſhewes, that God is the author and framer of them. Can a man then open his eyes, but he ſhall be forced to behold the maieſtie of God, in the works which his hands haue wrought?

He bringeth out their armies by number.] Vnder the word *armie*, he comprehends two things. Firſt, a number in a maner infinite: ſecondly, the excellent diſpoſing of them. For a ſmall number of men will not make an *armie*, unleſſe there be many bands. Moreouer, we call not a troope of men gathered diſorderly together, an *armie*; but that where there are Lieutenants, Sergants of the band, Captaines, Colonels, and other leaders, who are to bring their ſouldiers in a right aray. Thus then the infinite numbers, order, and certaine courſes and marchings of the ſtarrs, doe very well deſerue this name of an *armie*.

By the word *number*, hee ſignifies that God hath this *armie* alwaies at a beck. Souldiers you know loue to be wandring this way and that way, and the Captaine cannot eaſily get them by and by together, though hee cauſe the trumpet to be ſounded; neither can hee forthwith put them in aray being aſſembled. But it is far otherwiſe with God, hee hath alwaies his ſouldiers at a beck, yea by *number*: that is to ſay, he knows the tale of them, ſo as none abſents himſelfe.

He calles them all by their names.] This ſentence is in ſo many wordes contained in Pſal. 147. Some expound it as if God knewes the number of the ſtarrs, which to vs is vnkowne: but *Dauid* and *Iſaiah* both meant another thing; to wit, that God makes the ſtarrs to ſerue his turne at his pleaſure, as if one

For the moſt
part we afford
not
God the honour
which
we will giue
to a mortall
man.

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should call his seruant by his name to set him about some businesse: and in the same sense it will be said hereafter, Chap. 45. 1. that the Lord called Cyrus by name. because he vsed him as his seruant to set his people at libertie. In a word, by this hee notes a great readinesse and obedience, when he which is called by his name, answers to it by and by.

Those who expound the member before going; to wit, that God knows the number of the stars, saile also in this, that they thinke by the word *greatnesse*, hee hath giuen them names signifying their power & office. Others expound it; that there is no starre which hath not his proprietie and efficacy; because the Lord hath giuen it them for ener. Others iointe these words with the verbe *shall call*: as if the Prophet should say; The Lord is so mighty, that all the starres vnderstand what he commands them. But as I take it, this sense agrees best; to wit, that God is so powerfull and mighty, that hee no sooner commands anie thing, but all the armies of heauen are pressed to obey him: wherein we haue a singular testimonie of his *greatnesse*, when so excellent creatures doe without difficultie subiect themselves vnto him; and in receiuing his commandments, witness that they acknowledge him for their Lord and Creator.

The word *none*, is by the Hebrewes applied not onely to men and women, but to other creatures; yea to those that are without reason: as heretofore in Chap. 34. 16. speaking of the birds which should inhabit stately houses, he saith, that *none* of these shall faile: and the word *Isch*, which is there, the Prophet puts heere. This place sets before vs the power of God, and teacheth vs that there is no creature in heauen nor in earth, but it depends vpon his will and good pleasure. What is more absurd or vnreasonable therefore, then to compare him with idols, which are vainer then vanitie it selfe?

Verf. 27. *Why saiest thou, O Iacob, and speakest thou O Israel. My way is hid from the Lord, and my iudgement is passed ouer of my God.*

Now *Isaiah* complaines of the Iewes, who being in a manner brought to the last cast, turned their cies away from Gods promises, which were the meanes of their comfort. Or if you will haue it so, he takes order for the time to come, lest they should quaike vnder so many and so tedious afflictions as should befall them. The words are in the future tence, which may be resolued into the subiunctiue; Wherefore shouldst thou say? From the former sentence he well inferres, that whatsoever should happen, the faithfull and elect people were to wait patiently vpon the Lord, till he in due season should relieue them. Now he reasons from the lesse to the greater; that seeing God alwaies holds his soveraigntie ouer all the parts of the world, it is vnpossible that he should euer for sake his Church. Notwithstanding, it is very likely that the people in that time made *many com-*

plaints, and murmured against God, as if hee had been carelesse of their saluation; or as if he came not soone enough to succour them; or else that hee shut his cies, as one that refused to behold them in their aduersities. This vice he now goes about to correct; for they thought the Lord had cast them off: and so in afflictions we are also ready to thinke; for we imagin that he hath reiected and giuen vs vp for a pray, because he lets things in the world goe at six and seuen.

Iacob and Israel. By these names the Prophet puts them in mind of the Lords covenant, confirmed vnto them by so many promises. As if he should say; Thinkest thou, thou art not that people whom God hath chosen to himselfe? Wherefore shouldst thou imagin that hee which cannot deceiue, should contemne thy arguments or reasons? For the word *vray*, is taken for their estate or reasons; and *hid*, is taken for contemned or vnknowne: because if God withhold his help but a little, wee straight way thinke that his prouidence reacheth not vnto vs. Some expound it otherwise; to wit, that the people are heere reproofed, because they thought to sinne without punishment: and so they will haue this sentence, like to that in Psal. 14. 1. The foole hath said in his heart there is no God. But questionlesse this was the Prophets meaning; *Thinkest thou O Israel that God thinks not of thine affaires?* For hee contests against the peoples infidelitie, and rebukes them sharply, that hee might afterward raise them vp to hope and comfort; shewing that it is vnpossible for the Lord not to regard and helpe those whom hee hath once taken into his tuition and sauegard.

The word *iudgement*, which is by and by added, confirms this interpretation: for we cry out for iudgement in the time of affliction, when we be oppressed and wronged. And it is said, that God then takes our cause in hand, when in taking knowledge of it, hee defends and keepe vs: as on the contrarie, that he regards vs not, when he suffers vs to be giuen vp for a pray to our enemies. It is as much then as if he should say; O ye Iewes, what meane ye to complain, as if God had forgotten or despised your conditions! Now by this reprehension, *Isaiah* prepares them to receiue consolation: for all impediments were to be remoued, to the end the way to come thereunto might bee the more easie.

Verf. 28. *Knowest thou not? or hast thou not heard, that the euerlasting God, the Lord hath created the ends of the earth? Hee neither fainteth, nor is wearie: there is no searching of his vnderstanding.*

HE repeats the same thing that he said before; to wit, that the people who had been instructed in the schoole of God, were no way excusable, in regard of their dulnesse. Hee rebukes them thus sharply then for not hauing

By the greatnesse.

*Or, Why wilt thou say: or, shouldst thou say.

The coherence of his verbe with the former.

The Prophet takes his argument from the lesse to the greater.

When God is said to take our cause in hand.

having profited better in the Law, and other good meanes which God had giuen them, ouer and beſides the common vnderſtanding wherewith all of them might haue been indued. In the firſt place he puts the verbe *To know*, which is more generall; becauſe God had cauſed his glory to appeare vnto them, by many miracles and teſtimones of his power: in the ſecond place he comes to the *hearing*; as if hee ſhould ſay, If theſe things haue wrought nothing vpon thee, namely, that thou haſt been ſo long taught and inſtructed, both by the word and workes of God, that hee vſeth not to ſit idle in heauen; it muſt needs be concluded, that thou art verie vnteachable.

He calles him the *eueraſting God*; thereby diſtinguiſhing him from al corruptible idols, the worke of mens hands. Now if this article were well imprinted in our hearts, diſtruſt would vaniſh away like ſmoke. For if God be *eternaſl*, then it is impoſſible for him either to be changeable, or weak; for *eternitie* hath this propertie vnto it, that it is no way ſubiect to change, but continues alwaies alike, which the Iewes comprehended not, though they had often heard it before. This is the cauſe why the Prophet is ſo round with them in rouzing them vp by this reprehention. For thus he ſhewes how double guiltie they ſhall be before God, if hauing bin taught by his word, and by ſo many of his benefites, they ſhal ſtill reſuſe to yeeld him that honour and glorie which to him belongs.

He is not wearie, &c.) Heere the Prophet ſhewes two things; the firſt, that God is not wearie of well doing: the ſecond, that there is no ſearching of his vnderſtanding. In the firſt member he proves, that nothing can let God to continue his well doing towards them, becauſe he is not like thoſe y waſte their goods by often giuing out: or to ſuch as are euer and anon wearie in doing good turnes: or to ſuch as repent their liberaltie: for his bountie can neuer be drawne drie. If he haue done good to the fathers, he will do no leſſe to the children. And whereas he often works quite contrarie to that which we thinke meete, the Prophet preuents the conceit, by telling vs that his Counſels are *inferuabile*. Thus he admoniſheth vs not to murmure though he do not by and by applie himſelfe to our deſires: for there is nothing better to nourish hope in vs, then this ſobrietie: to wit, that we conſidering how wonderfullie God works for the defence of his choſen, might be brought willinglie to ſubmit our reaſon vnder his ſecret counſels.

Verſ. 29. *But he giueth ſtrength vnto him that fainteth, and vnto him that hath no ſtrength he increaſeth power.*

The Prophet now applies the former general ſentences to the matter in hand: for his purpoſe is, as we haue ſaid, to hearten on the people, and to giue them better hope. But becauſe the Iewes were low brought, and void of ſtrength, therefore he ſhewes, that it

is the proper office of God to ſuccor thoſe which are thus faint and wearie. By this circumſtance then he ſets forth Gods power, to the end they might conclude and be ſurely reſolued of their ſaluation, whilſt God ſhall be fauorable vnto them. I grant, that the Prophet had reſpect to the people who were detained priſoners in Babylon: but we ought notwithstanding to make our profit of this doctrine, that although our *ſtrength* ſhould faile vs, ſo as we ſhould be brought to deaths dore, yet to remember that it is Gods propertie to ſtretch forth his hand to ſuch as faint and are ſpent, being leſt ſuccorleſſe. But it is requiſite we ſhould ſiſt of all feele our pouertie and *wearines*, that that ſentence of S. Paul might be fulfilled in vs, The power of God is perfected in our weaknes, 2. Cor. 12. 9. For if our hearts be not thoroughlie touched, ſo as we be indeede conuincid of our imbecillitie, we can not find help of God in due time.

It is neceſſarie we ſhould feele our ſelves weak, before God giue vs of his power.

Verſ. 30. *Even the yong men ſhall faint, and be wearie, and the yong men ſhall ſtumble and fall.*

BY this compariſon y Prophet further enrichth y which he ſaid before; to wit, y the power which God giues to his elect is inuincible, and euer durable: for *man ſtrength eaſily vaniſheth*; but Gods, neuer. It is moſt certaine, that all the naturall ſtrength we laue is from God; but for as much as men proudly attribute that as proper to themſelues which he giues, to all, therefore the Prophet diſtinguiſheth betweene the ſtrength which ſeemes to flow from nature, and that, by which God eſpeciallie ſuſtaines his children. For in as much as the other is an vniuerſall benefit beſtowed vpon all the world, therefore men take no knowledge of that. Thus then hee calles that the *ſtrength of men*, which is a gift common to all: and that the *ſtrength of God*, by which he aſſiſts vs when all our ſtrength faileth. For he here ſpeakes of that grace of God which is called *ſupernaturall*; and ſaith, that it is perpetuall, whereas men can haue nothing of themſelues but that which is *transitorie* & perſhable, that ſo by this make he may ſeparate the Church of God from the reſt of the world, and *ſpirituall ſtrength* from that which is *earthly proſperitie*.

The Prophet diſtinguiſheth betweene that ſtrength which men ſeeme to haue by nature, and that by which God ſuſtaines his children.

Supernaturall graces

Whereas in the firſt member he hath put the word *Nearim*, which is as much to ſay as young men; and in the ſecond he addes *Bakurim*, which ſignifies not that only, but men of choiſe: yet becauſe he repeats but one and the ſame thing, it agrees beſt if we reſerre it vnto the time of age; and yet hee meanes all ſuch as are ſtout, and in their beſt ſtrength. Now by this we may ſee how hee magnifies the excellent prerogative wherewith Gods childre are endued aboue others, to the end they might ſatiſfie their hearts with their owne condition, and might nothing enuie the children of this world, who reioyce in their owne ſtrength. In a word, he ſhewes how much men erre, in hauing an overweening of their own abilities. Why ſo?

N n 4 Because

Eternitie hath this proper vnto it, that it is no way ſubiect to change.

Sobrietie a notable meanes to nourish hope.

The application of the former doctrine.

Because it often ouerthrowes them, and makes them *fall* quickly.

It seemes he alludes to that which falles out daily, to wit, that the stronger any man is, the bolder will he be to vndertake difficult masteries, and that is the cause that the strongest natures do soonest decay; for they thinke that nothing is too hard for them. They headily and rashly plunge themselves into all aduentures; but in conclusion, they *faint* and *fall* in the mid way, and receiue the hier of their headinesse. The like befallens them who haue receiued any grace of God, and wax proud of it, thinking too well of themselves: for whatsoeuer they haue receiued, comes all to nothing; nay, it turnes to their ruine and perdition: and such fellows worthily beare the punishment of their pride.

Those that are strongest by nature, commonly soonest decay in strength.

What hast thou which thou hast not receiued?

Verf. 31. *But they that wait vpon the Lord, shall renue their strength: they shall lift vp the Wings as the Eagles: they shall runne and not bee wearie, and they shall walke and not faint.*

THe Hebrewes say; To change their forces, for renuing or gathering newe strength; and to bee thereby restored. The Prophet shewes that strength shall neuer be wanting to the faithfull, which shall hope in the Lord: and so he confirms that which he said, Chap. 30. 7. Your strength is to sit still. For wee ought not to play the bedlems, or wild colts, but with patience to wait for our God. This hee notes out by this word *vultis*. Men that swell and fret, doe often breake, through their owne vnrulines; but the strength of the faithfull, which hath no such flourishing shewes, (yea it is commonly so hidden that it cannot be seene) whilst they wait for Gods helpe, this strength receiues by the blessing of God *new increases*. Let vs therefore returne to that sentence of *Paul*; That Gods power is perfected in our *weaknesse*: 1. Cor. 12. 9. which by consequence we ought thrugly to feele, that we may indeede giue place to the *power of God*. The Iewes stood in great need of this doctrine during the time of their tedious seruitude: but it is no lesse necessarie for vs now in the dissipations and scatterings which we see in the Churches.

They shall lift vp their wings.] Some thinke the Prophet vtters the same thing which is

contained in Psal. 103. Thy youth shall be renewed like the Eagles. I grant that the Eagle among other birds liues long: for both *Aristotle* and *Plinie* doe witness that shee neuer dies of age, but of hunger; because shee cannot get the meate into her beke, by reason of the crookednesse of it; in which respect she liues by drinking a very long time. A certaine Iew called *Zadius*, (being all of them too audacious in deuising of fables) would make vs belene that the Eagle flies vp into the next region to the Sunne, vnto which shee approacheth so neere, that her olde fetters burne off, and in stead of them others come forth: but this is wholly ridiculous and fabulous. The Prophets meaning is, that those who trust in the Lord, shall be strong as the Eagles cuen to their old age. But because the Eagle flies higher then other birds, in which shee also shewes great agilitie of body; whence the prouerbe came, The Eagle in the cloudes: therefore by this place wee may vnderstand, not onely length of life, but also strength and *nimblenes*. So as the Prophet hauing first set forth the *increasing* of strength, which the faithfull receiue from God, addes in the second place, that they shall grow nimble and apt to fore aloft.

Thereunto appertaines that which is added; *they shall runne and not bee wearie*: as if hee should say; The Lord will so assist his chosen, that they shall finish their course without any incumbrances. It is a figuratiue kinde of speech, by which hee signifies that the faithfull being fortified with Gods strength, shall be alwaies prompt, and able to execute their charges. But will some say, we are euer in affliction; how is it then that he saith, we shall not bee wearie? I answer, that the faithfull are so afflicted and wearie, that yet at last they shal overcome, and feele that they haue been sustained by the power of God: for it befalls them according to the Apostles experiment, 1. Cor. 4. 8. 9. We are pressed, saith he, on euery side, but not in distresse; poore, yet not ouercome of poueritie; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast downe, but we perish not. Let vs learne then to looke vnto the Lord, who at last will conduct vs to the quiet haue, after we haue passed many streights: for hee which sets vs in the way, and commands vs to goe on, hauing entred vs therinto, he will not guide vs for a day or two onely, leauing vs to sinke or swimme in the midde race, but will lead and direct vs to the verie goale.

Eagles liue long, as witnesseth Aristotle and Plinie.

Zadius a Iew. The Iewes audacious in inuenting ridiculous fables.

The Eagle in the cloudes.

I
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Obiect.

Ans. The faithfull alwaies wearie, and yet they shall overcome at length.

Strength shall neuer be wanting to them that relie vpon the Lord.

THE XLI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Keepe ſilence before mee, O Ilands, and let the people renue their ſtrength: let them come nere, and let them ſpeake: let vs come together into iudgement.*



Albeit it may ſeeme that the Prophet enters into a new argument, yet it is certaine that the doctrine of this Chapter hath affinitye with the former. For to ſhame the Iewes, he telles them that hee would make good his cauſe, though he ſhould plead it before the blind infidels. Thus then hee reproues the ignorance, nay the ſortitineſſe of this people, to whom God had ſo familiarly reuealed himſelfe by his law. And yet we are not to wonder that they did thus tremble being wrapped in ſo many troubles, being in a manner vterly vnſit to apprehend any ſound comfort: for woſull experience teacheth vs how much aduerſities doe amaze vs; becauſe in this peruerſe and corrupt nature, euery of vs is ſubiect to theſe two diſeaſes. In proſperitie there is no ho with vs, we ſhake off all the bands of ſobritie and modeſtie: in affliction, either we ſtorme, or elſe ſtand amazed, being vnable with anie cheerfulneſſe of Spirit to receiue the leaſt word of conſolation that may bee. It is no maruell then if the Prophet inſiſts long vpon this argument, and purſues it with ſo much varietie of words.

Hee calles the Countries beyond the ſeaſ *Iles*; for in as much as the Iewes had no traffique with them, they termed them all *Iles* that were on the other ſide of the ſea. Thus then hee directſ his ſpeech not onely to the neighbour Countries, but to them alſo that were far remote, and willes them *to keepe ſilence before him*. But what is this ſilence? *Iſaiah* deſcribes one kind of *iudgement*, which the Lord is content to receiue againſt all nations; onely this, that they would but *giue him audience* till hee had pleaded his cauſe, and that nothing ſhould bee done herein confuſedly or tumultuouſly; for that is a thing the moſt contrary to *iudgement* that can be. Hee deſires therefore that proclamation may bee made for *ſilence* among the Gentiles, which being granted, hee will lay forth his plea in plaine termes. The order of *iudgement* requires, that euery one may take his turne: for if they ſhould al ſpeake at once, there muſt needs follow wonderfull confuſion. Hence we are admoniſhed, that the cauſe why we neither eſteeme nor honour the power, goodneſſe, wiſdome, and other attributes of God, is, becauſe wee will not giue him *audience* when he ſpeakes. Men vſually fret and mur-

mure againſt God: one ſwelles with pride in contemning his word; another is ſenſeleſſe, and cares not which end goes forward, who being drowned in worldly delights, takes no pleaſure at all to aſpire to the heavenly kingdom. Who ſees not at this day with what boldneſſe and rebellion many ſlander the waies of the moſt high? Whence is it that the Papiſts are ſo violent and obſtinate in their errors? Is it not becauſe *they will not giue the Lord the hearing*? Surely if wee could but indure to heare him quietly, truth would by and by beare away the victorie.

To be ſhort, the Lord ſhewes here that he will make his partie good, if men giue him but indifferent hearing. He would not haue men to bend their cares in a careleſſe manner; for that euen wicked and corrupt Iudges cannot indure, hauing a fore hand prepared a ſpeech; but hee requires that his reaſons may be ſcanned and weighed, for nothing but truth and equitie ſhall be found in them. Some may demand whether the Prophee here exhorts the nations to hearken? I anſwere, this concernes the Iewes eſpecially; for nations farre off might happily receiue this prophetic ouer late: but this ſpeech hath ſo much the more efficacy to mollifie the hardneſſe of the Iewes hearts, when it is ſaid, that the *prophane nations* would eaſilie acknowledge his power, if they would but vouchſafe him the hearing. Now there is greater weight and vehemencie in it, that he ſpeakes directly to the *Iles*, then if hee had ſpoken thereof in the third perſon.

Let the people renue their ſtrength. The Lord prouokes all nations to come to this challenge, and that by way of contempt: as they that haue the better end of the ſtaffe are wont to doe, who being aſſured of the right, doubt nothing at all of the iſſue. Let them come, ſaith the Lord, and conſpire together; they ſhall preuaile nothing, the victorie will be mine in the end: in a word, I deſie them all (as we vſe to ſpeake) for they ſhall haue the worſt, albeit they diſcouer all the abilitie they haue either of body or minde: onely I deſie *audience*. Thus he ſignifies that truth is ſo powerfull, that it eaſilie reſiſts falſhood, if men will not wittingly ſtop their eares. Let the whole world then conſpire to abolifh her, yet ſhall ſhe continue miſtris ſtill. And therefore if we turne our backs vpon God, it will not bee lawfull for vs to caſt the fault vpon others, but rather accuſe our ſelues of want of attention whileſt he ſpake vnto vs: for if we were prepared to heare him in good earneſt, lies could not preuaile againſt vs, neither ſhould wee bee ſeduced by Satans ſophiſtric, nor by any temptation whatſoeuer.

Whereas he takes vpon him the perſon of *one accuſed*, to appeare before the ſea of *juſtice* to *pleade*; it may be asked, who it is among the ſonnes

Truth would ſoone beare away the victorie, if men would giue God but a peaceable audience.

Obiect. Anſ.

Truth eaſilie reſiſts falſhood, if it may haue but equall hearing.

Queſt. ſonnes

All of vs ſubiect to two diſeaſes: in proſperity to ſhake off all bonds of ſobritie, in aduerſitie either to ſtorme, or ſtand amazed.

Let vs come together into iudgement.

The cauſe why we honour not Gods wiſdome, power, &c.

Anc

sonnes of men, that is able to bee a competent Iudge in so high & difficult a plea? I answer, here is nothing said touching the choice of Iudges: the Lord onely meant to say, that hee will get the day, if his cause should bee heard before any competent Iudges. There is no reason why hee should submit himselfe either to men or Angels, to giue an account before them of his doings: but to take away all excuses, he testifies that the victorie is already in his hands, if hee should be constrained to plead for himselfe. It follows then, that it is a thing most vnreasonable, to stand debating of the matter among our selues: why doe wee not rather forthwith submit vs wholly vnto him? We shew our selues exceeding vnthankfull and peruerse, if we will not afford him the *hearing*, and thinke vs how equall the conditions are which he requires. Truly, though nothing could be more absurd then to see *mortall man stand to iudge the eternall God*: yet behold a thing more vile and hateful, to wit, that we dare condemne him, before we haue heard his iust defences.

*Or, Who hath raised vp iustice from the East? Hath he not called him to come after him.

Verf. 2. *Who hath raised vp iustice from the East, and called him to his foote, and gaue the nations before him, and subdued Kings? Hee gaue them as dust to his sword, and as scattered stubble to his bow.*

Hence it appeares what is the Prophets drift; for his meaning is to assure the Iewes that they shall be out of danger of erring, if they will but keepe the way which he chalks out before them. This is the cause why he mentions *Abraham*: for he might haue instanced other works of God, but he rather chose an example fitting his purpose: for the Iewes being descended from the stock of *Abraham*, whom God had (not without many dangers) drawne out of Caldea, they for their parts were to hope that God would no lesse assist and help them, seeing his force was nothing abated, nor his loue cooled. It being a difficult thing for them therefore to hope for any returne, in regard they were held captiues in their enemies countrie far froe home, the Prophet sets the like example before them, to quicken vp their hope and confidence. They were scattered in Caldea, and in the regions adjoining: they imagined that the way was hedged vp against them, in regard of the many stumbling blockes that lay betwene them and home; but *Abraham* their father passed from Vr of the Caldeans, into Iudea. He that had brought a poore man with his father, his nephew, and wife, safe and sound through so many straits, could not he also conduct and leade his people? Since God then had deliuered *Abraham* out of all incumbrances, in drawing him out of his Countrie; this example which so neerely concerned them, ought to touch his children and of-spring to the quicke: so as the safe conduit which their father had from, or of the Caldeans into the land of promise, was to

serue them as a pledge or mirror of their deliuerance to come.

When he calles *Abraham iustice*, it is not to magnifie him; but to shew that God put vpon him that person which appertained to the whole Church: for his calling was not to be esteemed as that of a priuate person, but therein God shewed a testimonie of his eternall *iustice*, which is common to all the faithful. As if he should say; In the person of this good Patriarke, the Church was once deliuered, that by meanes thereof, she might hold this for a principle; to wit, that her saluation and Gods iustice should neuer bee turned backe to the worlds end. For in this one man, we may behold the vocation of all the faithful, the forme of a Church, and the beginning and end of our saluation. In a word, *Abraham* is as a mirror of Gods *iustice*, as long as it shall shine in this world. This word *iustice* therefore serues to amplify the matter; for it was a wonderfull worke of God to raise vp *iustice* to the east, where all things were corrupt and defiled with abominable superstitions. Hath God then shewed so rare an example of his power and goodnesse? why should we not wait for the same still?

As touching that which followes, to come after him: some expound it, as if *Abraham* had called vpon the name of the Lord whither-soeuer he came: for he no sooner set his foote in any region, but he set vp an Alter to offer sacrifice to God: Gen. 12.7. & 13.18. All this is true that they say; but yet I expound it otherwise, to wit, that God led his seruant *Abraham* in the way, who followed that his leading foote by foote: for hauing receiued a commandment to goe forth, hee knew not the Country whither he should goe; so as he walked, but knew not which way to turne him, and God held him still in suspense, till hee entred the land of Canaan. Now because *Abraham* immediately obeyed the voic of God, and albeit his way was vnertaine, yet hee depended still vpon his mouth, contenting himselfe with his conduction: our Prophet fitly saith, that he came after him; because hee followed God, as readie and obedient seruants are wont to follow their master at the heeles, though they know not whither he goes.

And subdued. His meaning is, that howsoeuer this good man might haue beene distracted & put out of heart through many temptations, yet God made him safely passe the pikes, which might any way hurt him. *Moses* recites not all the incumbrances which *Abraham* met withall in the way: but euery one may consider, that first of all his departing out of his natie Country, could not be void of many discontentments. For it was vnpossible that forsaking his Country so rashly, but hee should be hated of his countrimen, who would condemne him for a mad man to leaue the place of his natiuitie, his friends, and kinsfolks, to goe he knew not whither. Then, being come into the land of Canaan, he had to deale with barbarous and froward men, with whom he could no way make his peace, because hee inclined himselfe nothing at all to their superstitions.

That

That which *Moses* recites teſtifies plainly, that *Abraham* had neuer any ſetled peace; and yet the wicked durſt enterpriſe nothing againſt him, but the *Hittites* offered him a place of burial freely without money, though he offered to pay for it: and they confeſſed that he was a *Prince* and man of God amongſt them, *Gen. 23. 6.*

The Prophet further amplifies the grace of God, in that he ſpared not *Kings*; to ſhew, that he was the faithfull protector of his ſervant *Abraham*. Now the hiſtorie of the four *Kings* which he put to flight and diſcomfited is notorious. We may alſo extend it to *Pharaoh* and *Abimelec*, *Gen. 12. 17.* and *20. 3.* where of the Prophet expreſſie ſpeaketh in the 105. *Psalme*: for the Lord rebuked and chaſtiſed them, in that they durſt adventure to touch his anointed. But he ſpeakes properlie of the victorie which he got ouer the four *Kings* which led his kiſnman *Lot* captiue with all his familie: for it ſufficientlie appears by the ſcope of the text, that he ſpeakes not of *kings* or *nations* that were peaceable, but of armed enemies, who by force were ſubdued.

He afterwards amplifies the eaſines of this victorie, and expreſſeth therein a great contempt, when he compares *Kings* to *dull* and *ſtubble*: for *Abraham* overcame them without hazarding his perſon. And therewithall we are taught to attribute this victorie to God, and not to the power of man: for men can not atchieue a victorie with ſo little adoe.

Verſ. 3. *He purſued them, and paſſed ſafely by the way that he had not gone with his feet.*

Again he magnifies the ſingular goodnes of God in amplifying this victorie by other circumſtances: and this is aduiſedlie to be conſidered of vs, that he ſhould obtaine ſo great a conqueſt in a countrie vnknowne vnto him. It was a difficult and dangerous matter for him to purſue his enemies into regions *unfrequented*: for *Hiſtories* record ſufficientlie whar advantage is gotten by knowledge of places both by ſea and land, which thoſe that frequent the warres haue cuer and anon experience of. But this hindered not *Abraham*: whence it appears yet better, that he was conducted and ſuccored by Gods hand, who leades thoſe that are his forward with boldnes.

Verſ. 4. *Who hath wrought and done it? He that calleth the generations from the beginning. I the Lord am the firſt, and with the laſt, I am the ſame.*

Though *Iſaiab* propounds nothing here but the example of *Abraham*: yet no doubt his meaning is to put the people in mind of all thoſe benefits which the fathers in former times had receiued. As if he ſhould ſay, Remember your *beginning*. From whence raiſed I vp *Abraham* your father? Through what waies led I him? And my benefits haue

not ended there; for ſince that time, I haue neuer ceaſed to fill you with all manner of bleſſings. When he asks, *Who it is?* He ſpeakes not of one fact, but ads other mercies powred out vpon them many waies, which the people were now to call to minde.

Where he ſaith, that God called the *generations from the beginning*, it ought to be referred to the continuall ſucceſſions of the times: and the word *Dor* among the *Hebrues* ſignifies not only the time or age of mans life, but thoſe alſo which lue in the ſame age. And thus one age is diſtinguiſhed from another, as the fathers from the children; and the grandfathers from their little ones: for our ſucceſſors will call vs which now lue, the former, or next age: and that of our predeceſſors, the old time. Now becauſe one age would conſume the race of mankind if it were not ſupplied by the children which are borne; the Prophet ſhewes, that God multiplies men by continuall ſucceſſion, that ſo one may ſupplie anothers room when it is empty. Whence it follows that his prouidence gouernes all ages, leſt we ſhould thinke the world were ordered by fortune: for wee may euidentlie perceiue that his hand and power is in the ſucceſſion of one age after another.

But becauſe diuers changes make vs thinke that the world goes vpon wheelcs, as they ſay; therefore the Prophet contrariwiſe ſhewes, that theſe ſo many alterations were *foreſcene from the beginning*. The ſumme of all is, That God rules in theſe varieties and changes which time brings forth, and with a ſteadie hand brings that to paſſe which himſelfe from the beginning hath ordered.

I the Lord. He affirms in more euident termes that God is the author of theſe benefits, namely, that *Abraham* overcame his enemies, liued ſo long among the wicked without harme done vnto him: that he diſcomfited four *kings*; and that the Lord reuenged the wrongs he receiued, when *Pharaoh* and *Abimelec* tooke his wife from him, *Gen. 12. 9.* and *14. 15.* and *20. 18.* To be ſhort, he teacheth, that it is to him we ought to referre all the benefits beſtowed vpon the ages following, after ſo diuers and ſundrie waies: for he extended not his liberalitie towards *Abraham* and his ſeed alone, but likewise to the whole world.

Where he names himſelfe *the firſt*, and ſaith he is *with the laſt*, this appertaines not only to the eternitie of his eſſence, but to his rule and dominion which he exerciſeth ouer the whole world. As if he ſhould ſay, Continuance of time makes me not wax old, for I neuer meane to giue vp my right. He is not idle in the heauens, but from his high throne beholds and orders the leaſt things. Morcouer, although the world forgeth vnto it ſelſe a world of dunghill gods, yet he will loſe nothing by it, becauſe he alwaies continues one and the ſame.

Verſ. 5. *The yles ſaw it, and did feare, and the ends of the earth were abaſhed, drew neere, and came.*

6. *Euery*

Gods prouidence gouernes all ages.

God rules in all the changes which time brings forth.

1
2
3
4

6. Every man helped his neighbour,
and staid to his brother; Be strong.

HE shewes now that the world was too vnthankfull, who hauing seene the workes of God, did still perseure in that blindness wherewith it was possessed before. In the beginning of the Chapter, hee shewed that the victorie was his, if they would but lend their eares to heare his plea: now he addes, *that the Gentiles knew his power well enough, and yet for all that, continued obstinate and rebellious.* In which respect, they were left without excuse. Why lo? Because the Lord manifested himselfe so apparently, that they could not chuse but see him, vnlesse they would wittingly shut their eyes, lest they should behold him.

That he might therefore take from the nations surthest off, all pretext of ignorance, he saith, they were *abashed* at the sight of his workes; and yet they fell to their old bias againe, and forthwith wrapped themselves in many superstitious vanities and errors. The surme is, that they not onely *beheld*, but were also *conuincid*, in that this knowledge *abashed* them. But some may object, that the benefits which God did to *Abraham*, could not bee made knowne to all, in such wise that forraigne nations should be fully acquainted with it. I answer, that howsoever he mentions none but *Abraham* here, yet vnder him hee meant to call to mind other examples of his goodness, which their forefathers had tasted of since, that from both, they might conceiue hope of deliuerance. *Abraham* was not onely deliuered out of *Caldea*, but God drew also all his posteritie out from the bondage of *Egypt*: *Exod.* 13. 16. and put them into possession of the land of *Canaan*. He saith then that the *Iles* felt his power, when hee deliuered and preserued his people, that they might know the true God: for his power plainly appeared in so many miracles.

Lastly, he signifies, that the *Iles* should be astonished at Gods inuincible power, when he should afterwards deliuer his people. And whilest the wicked shall heare tell of it, they will not cease still to bee perplexed, because they therein feele that God is their enemy.

Drew neere.] By this, some vnderstand, that the vnbeleeuers tooke a narrow view of Gods workes. For we vse to draw neere when we would be more certainly informed of any new thing: others referre it to the King of *Sodome*, who met *Abraham*: *Gen.* 14. 17. but these things, as I thinke, fauor not, neither come they neere the matke. The words of the text will be easie vnderstood, if we ioin this latter member to the verse following, thus; *They drew neere and came: every man helped his neighbour:* and so the sense will be; Although the *Iles* saw and knew my workes, so as they stood *abashed*, yet they assembled by heapes to make conspiracies. But to what end? Euen to *harden* on one another to make new gods, and to confirme themselves more and more in their blindness.

Hee amplifies the crime then, when hee saith, that *every one helped his neighbour.* Now

truly, hee that shall looke neere home, and shall diligently obserue mens dealings, hee shall perceiue that the spring from whence all superstitions flow, is, that with one consent they agree to quench the light which shines vpon them from heauen.

Now albeit the Lord heere complains of idolaters, yet he doth it to the end the *Iewes* might bee farre from corrupting themselves with so foule a sinne, but might rather keepe themselves close vnto God, and to a sincere confidence in his promises. He sets the ingratitude of the Gentiles then before them, that they might learne to shun their steps, and to continue rooted in the reuerence of Gods Maiestie. We here see now as in a glasse, how great the peruersitie of men is, who profit nothing at all by beholding the workes of God, but become the more dull and senseless thereby; for they had rather winke with their eyes, and to shut them at high noone, then to behold God, who represents himselfe before them. Besides this blindness, there is a raging furie which prouokes them to rise vp against God himselfe, and to be so mad, as to offer him the combat, rather then not to maintain their superstitions: so that this vice stands not so much in the worshipping of idols, as in going a madding after them. The Prophet sets forth this phrensie when he saith, *play the men;* be valiant, or *strong*: for he expresseth their mischieuous conspiracie, in that they *provoked*, nay, set one another on fire to commit idolatry, and to reiect the feare of the true God, which they might conceiue in their mindes, by the sundry testimonies of his power.

Verf. 7. So the workeman comforted the founder; and hee that smote with the hammer, him that smote by course, saying; It is readie for the soddering; and hee fastened it with nailes, that it should not be removed.

THIS verse is diuersly expounded, for it is somewhat obscure: neither doe the *Iewes* themselves agree in the exposition of the words. I know not the reason why the word *Charash* should here be taken for a Carpenter or Ioiner; for it signifies any workeman working vpon stonie matter. Some translate the word *Atabalik*, (which signifies him that smites) in the accusatiue: but I had rather put it in the nominatiue. They also turne the word *Patam*, an anuell; others, a little hammer: but because it signifies sometimes to smite by course, I haue thought this exposition most fitting to the text. For the Prophets meaning is, that the founders smiting one after another, encouraged each other; because they then are earnest in their busines, and sweat at the worke, so as one drawes on his fellow, and hastens him thereunto, to the end that which they haue begunne, may soone be finished. In a word, he sets forth the obstinacie & headstrongnes of idolaters, who combine themselves together in one to resist God.

The fountain from whence all superstitions flow.

God complains of the Gentiles to admonish the Iewes.

Idolaters not onely blind, but furious and franticke.

Obiect.

Ans.

Verf. 6.

It appears as well by this place, as by all histories, that this vice hath not rigned in one age only; yea, would to God we had not too wooll experience of it among our selves. Wee see how men prouoke one another by mutuall perswasions to vphold Idolatrye and superstitions: the more the truth shines forth clearly, the more obstinately recolle they backe, as if they had plotted with an high hand to make warre vpon God. For since pure religion was restored, Idols, Pilgrimages, Masse, vnlawfull vows, haue multiplied, and haue bin set vp in despite of it: and more Masse-priests, then euer before. There was some measure kept vnder the first ignorance: but the Idolaters raigne now like hellish furies carried away with the fire thereof, and leaue no corner of their wits vnsearched, in deuising how to erect superstitions and Idols, which are now like to breake their necks. To be short, they band and fortifie themselves to withstand the Lord of hosts. If any would lay the fault vpon his companion, he shall gaine nothing by it: for the euill is spread so farre into euery one in particular, that they can no way be excused. All are giuen to lies, and writinge seeke to be deceived: and then trusting in their multitude, they extoll themselves and their side about God himselfe: one whets on another to serue and worship Idols, which they loue with such heate, that all the world is now almost set on fire with it.

Veis. 8. *But thou, Israel, art my seruant, and thou Iacob whom I haue chosen; the seed of Abraham my friend.*

Now the Prophet shewes how vnreasonable a thing it were that *Israel* should mingle himselfe with prophane Nations, though all of them iouined hand in hand, marching in aray vnder the banner of Idolatrye, and giuing themselves to lewde practises. Why to? God had called them, and icely separated them to be his peculiar people, and therefore it became not such to throw themselves headlong into so beastly a furie. This place is notable therefore, and teacheth vs to stick fast to the calling of God, that we desire not our selves with the filth of the world: if corruptions breake forth, and that Idolaters let loose the bridle to all villanie; yet must we be held short by another bridle; to wit, we are the *chosen of God*, and therefore it is not lawfull for vs to stie out, as the wicked and vnbelieuers do. Such were some of you, saith the Apostle, but you are washed, but you are sanctified in the name of the Lord Iesus, and by the Spirit of our God, 1. Cor. 6. 11. For what is more absurd then to wander in the darke, after the sunne of righteousness hath shined vpon vs.

Let vs in any wise therefore bethinke vs of our vocation, that we may follow it effectually and diligentlie: and walking in it as children of the light, let vs abhorre all the darknes of our life past. This is the cause why he calles *Israel* his seruants: not that the Israelites had merited ought by their seruises, but because it had pleased the Lord to choose them

for his owne. And therefore to the same purpose he addes, *Thou Iacob whom I haue chosen*: wherein he lets before them a speciall commendation of his free bountie. As if he should say, *You are my seruants, not by merit, but by my free mercie, seeing I haue prepared you thereto by mine election, and by putting you apart to be my peculiar people.* To be short, he admonisheth them, that they obtained not this title of being the seruants of God by their owne industrie; for there was nothing to be found in them that should make them more holy then others, but only because the good pleasure of their master was such, who chooseth this or that man according to the counsell of his owne will. Therewithall also he shewes what is the end of our election, to wit, that we should be the seruants of God. For he hath chosen vs, as the Apostle saith, that we should be holy and without blame before him in loue, Ephes. 1. 4. The end also of our election is, that such as were the bondslaves of Satan before, should now submit and giue themselves to God in absolute obedience.

In the third place he addes, *the seed of Abraham*, to reach vs, that election depends vpon the free promise of God: nor that the promise goes before election (which is from euellasting) but because y^e Lord makes knowne his fauor in respect of his promise: for to *Abraham* he said, I am thy God, and the God of thy seed, Gen. 17. 7. This fauor then was continued to his successors, and in respect of the promise, God had a speciall care ouer the welfare of this people, as also *S. Paul* saith Rom. 9. 4. That to them were giuen the covenants, the promises, and the law. For which cause this seed was called an holy nation, a royall Priesthood, &c. Exod. 19. 6. 1. Pet. 2. 9.

But the Lord shewes the singular loue he beare to *Abraham* in calling him his friend. It is no small fauor to be called Gods seruant: for if it be worthily esteemed an high dignitie to be brought into the seruice of a King or Prince, how much more highly ought we to thinke our selves aduanced when we are accounted the honesta seruants of the Almighty? And yet he contents not himselfe herewith, but as if that were too little, he honours him yet further, and adorne him with the title of *Friend*. Now that which is here said of *Abraham* belongs to all the faithfull, whi. h Christ declares at large, Ioh. 15. 15. I call you not seruants, saith he, but friends: for the seruant knowes not what his Master doth, but I haue acquainted you with all my heauenly mysteries and secrets: by reason whereof, you may easily discern how great the loue and affection is which I beare towards you. Seeing then that God hath done vs so great honour, ought we not to bethinke vs of our duties? Hath he shewed so vnutterable a fauour to vs, and shall it not stire vs vp to serue and honour him with the greater care and reuerence? But let it (I pray you) be alwaies remembered, that *Abraham* is not called the friend of God, but in regard of adoption: as *Moses* also saith of the Iewes, Deut. 4. 37. He loved thy fathers, and therefore he chose their seed after them.

Idolaters can prouoke one another to the vpholding of their superstitions, Pilgrimages, Masse, vnlawfull vows, prayers for the dead.

God chooseth and re- fecth whom it pleaseth him. The end of our election is, to be Gods seruants.

Election depends vpon the free promise.

Abraham Gods friend. Simile.

Note, that Abraham is not called Gods friend, but by the right of adoption.

*Or, haue called thee before the excellencies,

Verf. 9. *For I haue taken thee from the ends of the earth, *and called thee before the chiefe thereof, and said vnto thee; Thou art my seruant, I haue chosen thee, and not cast thee away.*

Isaiah goes on with the same matter still; for who is it that feesles not by common experience, what need he hath euer and anon to be quickened vp, by the often repetition of this and such like consolations, when aduersities doe presse vs? It is no wonder then that the Prophet insists so long vpon this argument. Now from the onely person of *Abraham*, he ascends to *all his posteritie*, and mentions the benefits which he had done for them. I take the relative *Isb*, for the particle *For*; because hee yeeldes a reason wherefore the people were to be of good comfort in their aduersities; to wit, they had felt and tasted before how good and gracious God was vnto them: what cause had they then that they should not trust in him still for the time to come?

The ends of the earth may be taken two waies; either that the people had bin brought from a far Countrie, cuen from the place of *Abrahams* natiuitie. or in respect that God, who hath the utmost bounds of the earth at his becke, yet vouchsafed to reach forth his hand but to one onely people. He adds the *farre exceedings*, or, *excellencies*; for I haue so translated the word *Asiflum*, which others expound in the masculin, *Princes*, or, *excellent*: but there is no great difference betweene the one or the other: for the Prophet magnifies Gods grace, who passed by other mightie nations, and tooke vnto himselfe a nation abieft and obscure. Some refer this taking to Egypt, whence the people were brought. For it is not vnknowne how glorious this kingdom was, and what good opinion the Egyptians had of their learning, antiquitie, noblenesse of blood, and other prerogatiues. But I expound it otherwise, and refer it to the election of the people, who were taken from the midst of other nations, much more *excellents* then they: so as there is a comparison here betweene the Iewes and other nations. Which *Moses* also shewes when he saith; *That they were not chosen because they were more in number then any other people; for they were the fewest*, Deut. 7.7. *but because the Lord loved them, and because he would keepe the oth which he had sworne vnto their fathers*: Deut. 7.8. *Againc, Thou enrest not into thine enemies land for thine uprightnesse of heart, nor for thy righteousnesse; for thou art a stiffnecked people*: Deut. 9.5.6. *Albeit then they were much lesse in quantitie then all other nations, yet they were chosen, wherein they had a testimonie of Gods singular loue: had they any cause then to mistrust so bountifull and liberrall a father for the time to come, hauing already receiued so many benefits from his hands?*

Hee further adds, that the people had a pledge of this grace in the law, standing as it were vpon record: as if he should say; it is not

hid from thee, but it is written faire in plaine tables: for hauing chosen thee, I afterwards gaue thee my law, that thou shouldest not wander higher and thither, but mightest keepe thy selfe loiall vnto mee, that so I might performe my promise concerning thy saluation.

As touching that which followes, *and not cast thee away*: it seemes both superfluous, and that it comes in out of place, were it not that it is an vsuall thing so to doe with the Hebrewes, which also hath great weight in it. For thereby hee expresseth the stedfastnesse of their election: as if he should say; *I haue not left or forsaken thee*, though thou hast giuen me many occasions: for the ingratitude of the Iewes was so great, that hee had iust cause to *haue cast them off*, but that hee meant to shew himselfe to bee that God who changeth not. Now that which is said of them, belongs also to vs: for this sentence of the Apostle is perpetuall, Rom. 11.29. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Howsoeuer then hee casts off the greater part of the world, in regard of their incredulitie, yet he alwaies referres to himselfe some seede of adoption, that so the calling may remaine in some sprigs: neither indeed can Gods election be altered by the peruersitie of men. And therefore let vs remember that God hath chosen vs on this condition, that we should still remaine in his house and familie, albeit by good right we deserue to bee driuen out of it.

God hath chosen vs, but vpon condition that we continue in his familie.

Verf. 10. *Feare thou not, for I am with thee: bee not afraid, for I am thy God: *I will strengthen thee, and helpe thee, and I will sustaine thee with the right hand of my iustice.*

*Or, yet, or, certainly I will, &c.

Because the former doctrine was to quiet the peoples hearts touching their quiet resting vpon Gods prouidence, the Prophet thence concludes, that they ought not to *feare*, hauing so many benefits set before their eyes; in which they might evidently discern the loue which God bare vnto them. The reason which he addes, *for I am with thee*, is diligently to be obserued. For this is the sure foundation of our confidence; to wit, which being once fixed in our hearts, we shall stand fast and inuincible against all manner of temptations: as on the contrarie, when we thinke God is *absent*, or doubt whether he will assist vs or not, *feare* surprizeth vs, and carries vs floting vp and down through many waues of distrust. But if we rest vnmoueable vpon this foundation, there is no calamities nor tempests whatsoeuer that can ouerwhelme vs.

And yet the Prophets meaning is not that the faithfull can be so confident, that *feare* should no more assaile the; but notwithstanding they haue wauerings in their hearts, and be often solicited to distrust vpon diuers occasions; yet they resist the same with such constancie, that faith at the last gets the victory. For it is incident to vs by nature so

Faith is neuer so firme, that it should not be assailed with wauerings, yet at last it gets the victory.

feare

Egypt well conceiued of her learning, antiquite, nobilitie, &c.

ſcare, and to be full of doubtings: but ſuch a vice is to be corrected by this meditation; *God is with me to helpe,* and takes care for my ſalutation.

Some reade it in the preterperfect tence; I have helpe thee: but I reade it in the future; *I will helpe thee.* I alſo expound the Hebrew particule *Al,* *Yet;* it being often uſed in this ſenſe in other places. It may alſo be taken for Certainly: but I leave the choice to the readers diſcretion: If wee take it in the preterperfect; this particule will be as much as *Yes,* or, *Likewiſe.*

Under the word *iniſtice,* the Scripture not onely comprehends equitie, but alſo the Lords fidelitie in preſecting his Church. For he ſhewes his *iniſtice,* when hee defends his children againſt the conſpiracies and ſundry plots of their aduerſaries. He calles *the right hand of his iniſtice* then, that wherby he *manifeſts* his fidelitie and iuſtice. Whence we are to gather a ſingular conſolation, to wit, that we ought not to *fear,* ſeeing the Lord is determined to protect and defend his ſervants, for it is not poſſible he ſhould either put off, or renounce his iuſtice.

Verſ. 11. *Behold all that prouoke thee, ſhall bee aſhamed and confounded: they ſhall bee as nothing, and they that ſtrive with thee ſhall periſh.*

The Prophet promiſeth the Jewes aſſured helpe againſt their aduerſaries; for if hee had giuen them hope of their deliuerance, and had made no mention of their *enemies,* their minds might haue beene foreſtalled with many ſuch perplexed thoughts as theſe: It is true indeed that God promiſeth much touching our deliuerance out of all perils, but yet we ſee our aduerſaries the ſtronger; who deale cruelly and vnciuilly with vs. Where is then that ſalutation ſo oft and ſo largely promiſed? See heere therefore a circumſtance added to the generall promiſe. As if he ſhould reply, *I grant your enemies ſtriſt,* and yet as the laſt they ſhall be aſhamed and confounded. Deliuerance is promiſed, but it is vpon condition that you abide the brunt of your enemies, and buckle hand to hand diuers waies with them. For we muſt not promiſe to our ſelues any worldly reſt or tranquillitie heere, becauſe wee muſt alwaies bee ready armed to fight.

Verſ. 12. *Thou ſhalt ſeek them, and ſhalt not finde them: to wit, the men of thy ſtriſe; for they ſhall be as nothing, and the men that war againſt thee as a thing of nought.*

[*Thou ſhalt ſeek.*] That is to ſay; if thou ſeekeſt them. For we uſe not to ſeek our enemies after they are put to flight. Therefore I thinke it ſhould be conſtrued thus; *if thou ſeekeſt them, thou ſhalt not find them;* becauſe they ſhall be cut off, and brought to nothing. Wee muſt note here y there are two ſortes of ene-

mies: the firſt ſort aſſailes vs by open violence: the ſecond by words: that is to ſay, they tene vs with ſlanders, cuffings, and reuillings: Not onely ſo, but they ſummon vs to their courts, as if their cauſe were iuſt and good: nay, they bring vs before the iudgement ſeates, and often accuſe vs of thoſe crimes wherof themſelues are the authors. But ſuch are the crafts of Satan, whoſe ſervants ſeeing theſe are, what maruell is it if they tread in the ſteps of their lord and maſter? Firſt then the Prophet ſpeakes of *pleaders;* and next, of the *armed enemies* which dealt roughly with the Church. What wonder is it then, if we be exerciſed with falſe accuſations? Nay, wee muſt not thinke it ſtrange, if many companions ſell themſelues to Antichriſt as his vaſſals to rebile and ſlander vs, ſeeing the ſame hath befallen the Prophets and other ſervants of God.

Sir policies.

Antichriſt hirelings.

Verſ. 13. *For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, ſaying vnto thee, Feare not, I will helpe thee.*

The Prophet ſhewed vs erewhile whereupon we ſhould build the confidence of our ſalutation, that we might continue ſafe againſt all aſſaults; to wit, when we were certainly perſwaded that God is our God. Now hee teacheth the ſame thing, but in other words; neither is the repetition ſuperfluous: for we know how eaſily the remembrance of this doctrine vaniſheth away, albeit we haue it often repeated vnto vs. This promiſe therefore cannot be too much praized nor inſiſted vpon, ſeeing it doth ſo hardly take roote in our hearts. Let vs be well aſſured then that wee ſhall find an vndoubted iſſue in all our perplexities, *becauſe the Lord will aſſiſt vs:* as oft therefore as we ſhall be preſſed vnder anie dangerous aſſault, let vs learne to fix our eyes vpon him.

Now when hee calles himſelfe *the Lord our God,* it is not ſo much to ſet forth his power, as his goodneſſe, which he will make vs feele. For what benefit ſhould redound vnto vs from the knowledge of his power, if therewithall we were not well perſwaded of his loue? Ac the onely hearing of his power we are aſtoniſhed; but when his goodneſſe is preached with it, the very remembrance thereof ſufficeth to appeaſe vs.

He ſpeakes of *taking by the hand,* and of the *voice* againe; for it ſerues much to the comforting of our weak faith, to know what ſignes of loue God ſhewes vs, eſpecially when the doctrine of faith is ioined therunto, which aſſures vs of his perpetuall fauour. This claule therefore, *ſaying vnto thee;* hath great weight in it: for we muſt needs remaine alwaies in ſuſpence, till we heare the *voice* of the Lord in his word. It is that alone which ſufficeth to abolith all our ſcare, and to ſet vs at reſt. Are we deſirous then to hane our harts quieted, and to ouercome the many troubles which daily befall vs? Let vs hearken direſtly to the good word of God, and euer hold faſt the comfort thereof in our hearts. For it is

Gods voice.

*Or that plead with thee.

Two ſortes of enemies.

Note. impossible for them who either will not heare this word at all, or hearing it, doe it negligentlie, to attaine this peace: nay, let them be sure that an accusing conscience and a trembling heart shall alwaies pursue them.

Verf. 14. *Fear not, thou worme Iakob, and yett men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer the holy one of Israel.*

What course God takes in ministering comfort to his afflicted Church.

HE seemes to speake somewhat too meanelly of this people in that he calles them a *worme*, and then *dead men*: but this comparison agrees well with the calamitie which the people were in: and he takes a better course this way to minister comfort vnto them, then if he had called them, The clec't nation, a royall priesthoode: an holy tree springing forth of an holy roote, or if he had adorned them with the like titles. For to say the truth, it had bin absurd to haue imposed such glorious titles vpon them, being pressed as they were vnder so base and vile a slauerie. By the name of *worme* therefore, he laments the ignominie and shame into which they were brought; and puts them in good hope of a better estate. For thus he shewes, that the Lord cares for them, notwithstanding they be abiect and vile in the eyes of men. As if he should say, Though now thou beest nothing, yet will I succor thee, and by restoring thee to thy first estate, will cause thee to come forth of this rottennes and abiect condition of thine.

Some translate the word *Meshim*, Men, which agrees not with the text, but must necessarily be translated *dead*, for it is an exposition of the other epithete *worme*, according to the Hebrae phrase. I agree with S. *Ierome* who hath so translated it, neither doe I passe much that the word is otherwise written here then elsewhere, in regard of the changing of the pricks: for this might easily fall out by reason of the likenes which these pricks haue one with another. The thing should be weyed, for there is nothing more absurd, then to reade men, in stead of wormes, vnlesse they reade it dead, or mortall. But God meant no doubt that this voice should be heard among the people who were now at last cast, to the end it might pierce euen into their graues; for on the contrary he promiseth to be the *redeemer* of these which are *dead*.

Now the Prophet had not such respect vnto his owne time, but that he meant his doctrine should extend it selfe to all ages of the world. As oft then as we shall see the Church oppressed vnder cruell tyrants, let vs call this sentence to minde, that albeit Gods children be trodden vnder foote by the proude, that they be despised, and that they haue not so much leifure as to take their breath, being persecuted and afflicted aboue measure: yet let vs know that euen such are in great account with God, so as they shall be able ere long to lift vp their heads. Let this be applied to euery one of vs in particular, that we may not be discouraged for the scoffes of the wic-

ked, nor for the miseries and calamities which we indure, no nor for death it selfe. Do we resemble *dead men*, and is all hope of deliuerance taken away? yet wil our *Redeemer* come at last, and will raise vp his Church out of her very graue.

A Consolation.

When the Prophet adds the *holy one of Israel*, he brings back the people as he hath done before to the remembrance of that *Canaan* by which Israel was separated from other nations to be Gods peculiar people: thus he encourageth them, that their miserable condition should not too much deiect nor cast them downe, though they seemed as *wormes* of the earth, and as *dead men*.

Verf. 15. *Behold, I will make thee a roller, and a new threshing instrument hauing teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountaines and bring them to powder, and shalt make the hills as chaffe.*

HE speaks still of the restitution of the Church, promising that she shall be so exalted aboue her enemies, that she shall bruise and grind them to powder. And this he expresseth vnder a very fit similitude. For the Iewes to whom he speaks were almost crushed in pieces: but now on the contrary he tels them that they being deliuered shall crush their enemies, and so render them like for like. Now it was very needfull that this consolation should be added, for had they not recovered new strength, it is like enough they had bin subiect to the tyranny of their enemies for euer: God meant to arme them then, that they might be able to repulse the outrages done vnto them: so as they were now become the executioners of Gods vengeance as our Prophet shewes.

But by these words it might seeme he meant Obiect. to inflame the Iewes with a desire to *revenge*, which is directlie contrarie to the nature of Gods spirit: to which vice we being too much inclined, the Lord often commands vs to repress these desires of reuenge; so farre off is he from allowing them in vs: nay, doth he not on the contrary exhort vs to pray for our enemies? Math. 5. 44. Wee ought much lesse then to reioice in their miseries and calamities. I answer, that the Prophet shewes here what shall come to passe; but he neither commands, nor counsels them to desire the ruin of their enemies. If any reply, that we must not only expect, but also desire that which the Lord hath promised, seeing it turnes to his glorie, and our saluation: I confesse indeed, that this consolation greatly asswageth our sorrowes, in that he promiseth to punish our enemies one day who haue cruelly vexed vs, in rendering them the same measure which they haue measured. Yet this hinders not the law of loue, which enioines vs rather to sorrow for the euils which they voluntarily pull downe vpon their owne heads, and to bewaile their condition, then to wish their ouerthrow. If we embrace this promise with such faith as is meet, that is, in casting downe all the impacencie of the flesh at her feet, then

Ans.

Obiect.

Ans.

Note.

Worme Iacob.

S. Ierome.

The Prophet had respect to the succeeding ages, as to his owne times.

then ſhall we firſt of all be diſpoſed to patience; and in the next place we will with a moderate zeale wait for the accompliſhment of Gods iudgements. We muſt therefore labour to quench all thoſe inordinate paſſions of the fleſh, and with an humble and meeke ſpirit to wait for the fit time when this iudgement ſhall be executed: not ſo much in regard of our owne particular profites, as to ſee Gods iuſtice exalted, according as it deſerves. *David* hath writtē to this effect, *Pſal. 58.* The righteous ſhall reioyce *when he ſeech the vengeance,* he ſhall waſh his ſectē in y^e blood of the wicked: not that they take pleaſure in their miſeries, but as it is ſaid afterwards in that *Pſalme*, Men ſhall ſay, Verily there is fruit for the righteous, doubtleſſe there is a God that iudgeth the earth. For God maniſeſts his iuſt iudgements to the world, when the wicked are puniſhed for their miſdoings. The Iewes (being cruell and blood-thirſtie) ſnatch vp theſe promiſes like ſavage and wilde beaſts, who rauēnouſlie deuoure the pray that is offered, and keepe a howling if they doe but apprehend the very ſent of it. But the Lord would not haue his children to forget that mildnes which he aboue al things likes of: for we can make no claime to be the children of ſuch a father, vnleſſe we be led with the ſpirit of meekenes and gentlenes. To be ſhort, by the *harow waſh ſharp teeth*, he means nothing eſſe but the fearefull and terrible end of the wicked, whom the Lord will ouerthrow by the hands of the faithfull, yet not ſo inflame their hearts with a deſire of ſhedding blood, as to comfort and cheere vp their ſpirits.

Verſ. 16. Thou ſhalt fanne them, and the winde ſhall carrie them away, and the whirlwind ſhall ſcatter them: and thou ſhalt reioyce in the Lord, and ſhalt glorie in the holy one of Iſrael.

His meaning is to ſhew that which he vttered in the former verſe, but by another ſimilitude. For he compares the Church to a *fanne*, and the wicked to chaffe, which the winde ſcatters to and fro. As if he ſhould ſay, Though the wicked *thriſh* and *fanne* you now, yet they ſhall be chaſtiſed more ſeuereſly, for they ſhall be cruſhed in pieces by their deſtruction, and ſcattered as ſtraw. But yet note the difference; for the faithfull are *fanned* in this world for their great good, becauſe they ſuffer themſelues to be brought vnder the obedience of God: but the other obſtinateſly reſiſting and abiding no yoke, the Prophet reacheth, that they ſhall be *ſcattered* as chaffe, that is, *carried away by the winde*. Thus then, God had threshed y^e Iewes with great ſtrokes of the ſlaile; he had ſmiten them downe with laying them on; and ſcattered them with his *fanne*: that ſo becomming cleane and pure wheate, he might gather them into his *Garnet*; but appointed out the prophane nations to be as ſtubble for the fire.

There is one thing more to be conſidered, to wit, that the victorious Church fannes ſome vnbeleeuers, to the end they might be

purged, and finde place in Gods ſtore: and thus this prophetic was fulfilled, as oft as any of the Genules were woon to the laith by means of the godly, thereby bringing them vnder the dominion of Chriſt. Neither had the faithfull euer any earthly power to rule over their enemies: nay contrariwiſe, they are alwaies ſaine to poſſeſſe their ſoules in patience; but the Lord cauſeth them vnder ſuch heauie burthens to ſtoſh like the Palme trees, ſo as they eſcape ſaie from danger. And which more is, they haue euen amiddeſt theſe ſtreites troden the enemies of the truth vnder their ſeete with inuincible courage.

Moreouer, it is to be noted, that the Scripture is wont often to attribute that to the Church, which appertaines to none but God only. In regard then that God puniſheth the wicked for the fauor he beares to his Church, it is ſaid that he giues them to the faithfull to tread vnder their ſeete, becauſe the fruits of ſuch a benefit belongs vnto them.

Besides, as oſe as we read theſe prophesies, we muſt liſt vp our minds to Chriſts kingdom, that putting off all peruerſe affections, we may keepe ſuch a meaſure as is fitting, and neuer with this *ſcattering* before the time. For it ought to ſuffice vs that our head will at the laſt tread downe all our enemies vnder our ſeete, and make them his very footſtoole, that we may participate with him in his victorie. Where he addes, that the Iewes ſhould haue cauſe to reioyce in the Lord: though he meant hereby to aſwage their ſorrowes, yet therewithall he alſo exhorts the faithfull to modeſty, that they ſhould not breake forth into ſurie, if it fell out that the Lord ſhould thus ſubdue their enemies. For men are inclined to nothing more then to ſwell in pride, when things fall out as they would haue them: they forget then that they are men, and as for God whom they ought to acknowledge the author of all benefits, him they vtterlie neglect. Thus then, that the Prophet might bridle this inordinate ioy of the fleſh, which often caries vs beyond our bounds, he addes, *in the Lord*, becauſe, as all our glory and gladnes comes only from him, ſo it ſhould be aſcribed only to him. Laſtly, he exhorts vs to acknowledge Gods benefits, that the higher he hath advanced vs, the more carefull ſhould we be to cut off all pride and preſumption, that we may giue our ſelues to reioycing in him, and to the ſetting forth of his praife and glory only.

Verſ. 17. When the poore and needie ſecke water, and there is none (their thourg faileth for thirſt, I the Lord will heare them: I the God of Iſrael will not forſake them.)

HE goes on with the argument begun frō the beginning of the former Chapter: for he ſets out the miſerable and poore eſtate into which the Iewes ſhould be brought being in Babylon, till God hauing compaſſion vpon them, ſhould at the laſt aſſiſt and help them. Thus he aduerteth them to prepare

fannes the wicked, to make them fit for Gods glorie.

Wherefore it is added, that the Church muſt reioyce in the Lord.

Letch'm that reioyceth, reioyce in the Lord.

We cannot approue our ſelues to be Gods children, vnleſſe we be led by the ſpirit of meekeneſſe.

Three things to be noted, in that the Church is compared to a Fanne.

The faithfull are fanned in this world for their great good.

The Church ſometimes

themselves for the induring of extreame pueritie, when he telles them of *thirst*: for wee know there is nothing more tedious to bee borne, then the *vans of vwater* when one is thirstie. This therefore was a very apt kind of speech to expresse the grearntesse of their calamitie.

But the Prophet affirms that God will aid them, euen at the very pinch; and thus we may see to whom this promise belongs; namely, to such as being in extremitie, parch away, and faint with thirst. Hence also we may note, that the Church flows not alwaies in abundance of outward things, but is sometimes brought to penurie and want, that by such goades in her sides, the might be stirred vp to call vpon God; for wee are wont to wax idle when things fall out as we would haue them. It is good therefore to bee exercised with hunger and thirst, that wee may learne to seeke the Lord with our whole hearts. In a word, it is very needfull we should be pressed with pueritie, that so wee may the better taste the Lords bountie.

Questionlesse the Prophet meant by this circumstance to set forth the grearntesse of Gods grace; as also admonisheth the people hereby, not to faint nor quail in the time of need and want. Now we are to obserue what titles he giues them: for in calling them *poore and needie*, he speaks not to strangers, but of such as the Lord had chosen and adopted for his heritage. Wee ought not to wonder then if God now and then suffer vs to languish vnder hunger and thirst, seeing hee hath exercised our fore-fathers no lesse seuerely.

When he saith, the *waters appeare not*: let vs learne that the Lord for the triall of our faith and patience, takes away all means from vs, that we might rest vpon him alone. By the word I *will beare*, he signifies that God helps not all, but such as call vpon him: are wee so carelesse then as to contemne this helpe? It is good reason we should be left destitute stil, without feeling any succor, in regard we are vnworthy of it.

Verf. 18. *I will open riuers in the tops of the hills, and fountaines in the middest of the *vallies: I will make the wilderness as a poole of water, and the waste land as springs of water.*

19. *I will set in the wilderness the Cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrre tree, and the pine tree; and I will set in the wilderness the firre tree, the elme and the box tree together.*

THE Prophet amplifies the former doctrine by another circumstance; to wit, that the Lord needs no naturall, nor externall remedies to succour his Church withall, but hath secret and admirable meanes ready, by which he can supply the necessitie thereof about all that mans reason can conceiue or imagin. When wee see no helpe, despaire

casilie creepes vpon vs; we dare hope no longer then we see worldly meanes present before our eies: if they faile vs, then all hope in God is gone. But our Prophet telles vs that this is the very houre in which we should gather greatest assurance; because the Lord hath then most libertie to manifest his power, when men are brought to extremities, and seeme vterly confounded. It is his property then to assist those that are his, against the expectation and thought of man, that thus wee might not suffer our selues to bee transported hither and thither by any difficulties or idle discourses.

Now the better to confirme this, hee promiseth to worke *miracles* conrarie to the order of nature: teaching vs thereby not to speake or iudge of these his doings according to humane sense, neither to tie his power nor promises to secondary causes: for the Lord is strong enough of himselfe, and needs no helpe from others; he is not so bound to the ordinary course of nature, but hee can change it as oft as it pleaseth him. Now we know the things heeere promiseth to doe, are conrary to nature: as to make *riuers* spring forth in the *tops* of mountaines; and fountaines in the middest of the *plaine*; and *pooles* in the desert. But why promiseth hee these things? Left the Iewes might thinke the way to be stopped vp against them, in regard of their returning home; because that great and spacious *wildernesse* was betwene them and it, wherein passengers were wont to bee parched with the heat of the Sunne, and left destitute of all necessaries. Thus then the Lord promiseth *plentie of vwaters*, and all other prouision needfull for their iournie.

These things were accomplished when the Lord turned the captiuitie of Zion; but much more perfectly when he conuerted the whole world vnto him by the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ, from whom flowed waters in great abundance, which were shed abroad thorowout the earth, to quench the thirst of poore forlorne sinners. Then there was such a change, as men could by no meanes conceiue the reason of it in their vnderstandings.

Verf. 20. *Therefore let them see and know, and let them consider and vnderstand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the holy one of Israel hath created it.*

HOW soeuer God shewes himselfe wonderful in all his works, yet when the matter concerns the restoring of his Church, it is then that he manifests his admirable power principally, so as he makes euery one astonished at it. We haue seene heretofore, and it will be repeated againe hereafter, that by bringing the people home from captiuitie, the Lord left such a testimony of his power therein, as shall be memorabile to the worlds end; and the Prophet in effect saith as much here. Now because we are either dull or carelesse in considering the workes of God, or heede

The time in which we should gather greatest assurance.

The Lord is strong enough of himselfe to helpe his chosen, without, or against meanes.

The Church flows not alwaies with abundance.

God helps not all, but such as call vpon him.

*Or, plains.

Ioh. 4. 14. & 7. 37, 38, 39.

God shewes his admirable power in nothing more then in the redemption of his Church.

them

The cause why the Prophet repeats one thing often.

them not as we should; therefore they easily slip out of our mndes : and this is the cause why he repeates one thing so often. For wee still stand muzzing rather vpon things of nothing, then to take to heart the workes of God : and if it fall out that they draw vs to a nice admiration of them, yet it is but as a wonder that lasts for nine daies, because our mndes presently runne after other fancies, in which there is no fruit at all. The Prophet awakens vs then once againe, that he might chase away all sluggishnesse and sottishnesse of mind from vs, that so all our senses might bee brought to comprehend the power of God.

First of all then hee willes them to see or behold, which gets a certaine knowledge: then hee addes consideration, which better confirms vnderstanding, and more certainly. It is not certain whether the Prophet speaks to the Iewes; that is to say, to those of the household of God, or to strangers: as I thinke, we may generally assume, that when the Church should be restored, the power of God should then be perceived of all nations neere and far off; so as all should bee compelled to admire so rare and excellent a worke. It is also certain that the Medes and Persians hauing gotten dominion ouer the Iewes, were wonderfully abashed in hearing these testimonies of the Prophets, but chiefly when they saw the accomplishment and effect thereof performed before their eyes: for they might well know that men could neuer bring such things to passe; and yet they were not conuerted to God themselves for all that.

Verf. 21. Stand to your cause, saith the Lord: bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Iacob.

IT was very needfull that this should be added to the former doctrine: for whilest we conuerse with the wicked, they scorne our hope, and thinke vs fooles, and too simple and light of beliefe. You see with what scoffes our weak faith is assailed and shaken; Oh these fellows build castles in the aire, and perswade themselves of the accomplishment of things impossible and vnreasonable. For as much as the Iewes then lay open to such taunts in their banishment, it was necessarie they should be fortified by such admonitions. And that this sentence might get the greater weight touching the assurance of it, hee sets all prophane people at nought, commanding them to stand to their cause: as men are wont to doe in iudgments. But in calling him the King of Iacob, he bids defiance to all the idols, and shewes that he will take his peoples quarrell in hand, to the end they may know at length that he is the protector and defender of his owne glory, in deliueing such as are iniustly oppressed. And yet it was needfull that the faithfull should be fortified with an exceeding measure of faith: for in what case was the estate of the Kingdome, whilest they were detained prisoners in a strange land, and in a manner ouerwhelmed with ca-

The cause why the Iewes were fortified against the scoffes of the Gentiles by these admonitions.

lamities? That is the cause why the Prophet called them *dead men*, and worne *Iacob*, verse 14. But their hearts were sustained by this promise, in which it was affirmed, Chap. 11. 1. that their root was hidden in the earth, when the people was compared to a tree hewen downe by the rootes: onely there should come forth a *rod* out of the dry stocke of *Ishai*, &c. Thus by the eyes of faith, they beheld the kingdome that was hid: for it was impossible to see it by the outward senses, no, nor to comprehend it by the light of naturall reason.

Verf. 22. Let them bring forth, and let them tell vs what shall come: let them shew the former things what they be, that wee may consider them, and know the latter end of them: either declare vs things for to come.

23. Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that wee may know ye are gods: yea, doe good or euill, that wee may declare it, and behold it together.

NOW hee directs his speech not onely to the idolaters, but permits them also to bring in their idols: as if he should say; I know you thinke your idols very wise, yet they will bee able to speake very little in the defence of so bad a cause. We see here that God takes vnto him the person of an aduocate, & speaks in the name of all the people; for he will not be separated from his Church, but is careful, as you see, to furnish and fortifie her against all the opprobries of the wicked, and against all their plots, whereby they indeuor to assaile our faith. We must be of good courage then, seeing God is pleased to bee the pleader of our cause, and stands betwene vs and the idolaters; and as one armed with his owne inuincible truth, bids defiance to the idols themselves, being ready in person to refute their vanitie.

Besides, he shewes that his elect are sufficiently furnished with his word to get the victorie; so as they need not be afraid to undertake the combate against all vnbeleeuers whatsoever. And truly he that hath profited in the heavenly doctrine as hee ought, shall easily confound all the impostures of Satan, by a constant and victorious faith. Grant our faith begins at obedience, but the reachablenesse by which wee submit all our senses to Gods worship, goes so before the vnderstanding, that from thence our minds are illuminated with sound knowledge.

By this marke wee may discern superstition from that true religion, which is directed by a rule that is neither doubtfull nor deceiueable. The idolaters vaunt themselves but too much in their errors, yet all their pride proceeds from folly, sottishnesse, and frensic. For if they would consider of the heavenly doctrine, with calme and quiet minds, all this ouerweeing by which they darken the light of truth, would forthwith fall to

Or, put the in our hearts.

How to discern superstition from true religion.

the ground. But the faithfull haue another respect, whose faith albeit it be founded vpon humilitie, yet it is not caried away with a foolish or inconsiderate zeale, because it hath the spirit of God for the conductor and leader thereof, that so the may neuer turne aside from the certaine light of Gods word. Therefore where the right rule of discerning things is absent, there can be nothing but superstitions, as *Isaiab* saith. Now because things are not to be done rashly, therefore the faithfull wils them to *bring forth, and put them in their heares*: not that they meant to halt between two opinions, being before instructed of God, but because the superstitious could alledge nothing for themselves, but that which was worthy to be laughed at of all. See here againe then the difference between blockish obstinacie, and true faith, which hath her foundation vpon Gods word, so as shee can neuer be moued.

But now let vs see with what argument our Prophet defends the Maiestie of God; for he so attributes vnto himselfe an infinite power and foreknowledge of all things, that none can take them vnto himselfe without manifest blasphemie. Whence we gather, that these things are so proper to the Diuinitie, that he indeed rightly deserues to be called God, who *knowes and can doe all things*. Thus the Prophet reasons then, If the Idols whom you adore be Gods, they must be able to *know and doe all things*: but they haue no power to *doe any thing* at all, neither in prosperitie nor aduersitie: neither do they *know* that which is *past, presents, or so come*: therefore they be no Gods.

But here ariseth a difficult question, for in prophane histories there are many predictions which the Idolaters received from their gods: for which cause it might seeme that *Apollo, Iupiter*, and others, knew of *things to come*: and therefore they were Gods. First I answer, that if we consider what the oracles were which these Idols gaue forth, wee shall finde there was either obscuritie, or great ambiguitye in them all. As, that which was giuen to *Pyrrhus*. Thy men ouercome shall the Romans. And, to *Crasus*, after he hath passed Halys, *Crasus* shall ouerthrow many kingdoms. Now the euent will shew that touching the first we must vnderstand it thus, The Romans shall ouercome thy men. And for the second, After *Crasus* hath passed Halys, he shall ouerthrow many kingdoms: not other mens, but his owne. Thus Satan at that time vexed the minds of men by these intangled ambiguities, that he might alwaies leaue them hanging in suspence, that gaue themselves to be directed by such impostures.

But besides this, that is to be noted which *Paul* saith 2. Thess. 2. 9. That the efficacie of error is giuen vnto Satan, that he might blind the vnbeleueers who delight in his delusions. When they aske counsell then of this father of lies, it is no maruell though they be deceiued vnder a colour of truth: but in the meane while, it is a iust punishment of God vpon them for their ingratitude.

We reade that a lying spirit was let loose by means of the false Prophets, the better

to blind *Ahab*, who pleased himselfe in such beguilings: 1. King. 22. 21. It was good reason also that the prophane nations who had forsaken the true God, should bee intangled in the snares of error, and so drawne headlong into perdition. Thus then it is a fond dispute whereabout Saint *Augustine* labors so much; to wit, how the diuels may bee partakers of this prescience which the good Angels haue: for the cause hereof must not be sought out in nature. So in times past, when God gaue the bridle to false Prophets, he by their fallacies auenged himselfe vpon the peoples wickednesse: not that such imposters had any great gift of knowledge, but being fitted for this purpose, they did according to the licence giuen vnto them.

As touching God himselfe, altho his foreknowledge be hid, and that it bee a bottomlesse depth, yet is it manifest enough to those whom he hath chosen: so as they may discern him from the troope of false gods. Not that hee foretold all things by his Prophets, for mens curiositie in that behalfe is insatiable: neither is it expedient they should know all things; but he hath concealed nothing from them that is fit to bee knowne, for by many excellent prophecies hee hath forewarned that he hath a speciall care of his Church: as *Amos* saith; Is there any secret thing which the Lord will not reueale to his seruants the Prophets? *Amos* 3. 7.

The Lewes haue wickedly and vnworthily abused this prerogatiue, in that they haue set their fond predictions to sale among strange nations. But the truth of God hath alwaies so shined in the prophecies, that all men to whom God hath giuen wisdom, may cleerly perceiue that the God of Israel was and is the onely God. Verily it was no more possible for the idols to beguile the faithful which were instructed in the schoole of God, then at high noone to perswade one of a perfect fight, that blacke were white: so farre was it off for them then to get any credit by their foreknowledge; and yet least of all by their power: neither of which it was any way lawfull to ascribe vnto them, seeing it appeared by continuall prophecies, that one God onely ruled and gouerned all things, both aduersely and prosperous. The Assyrian thaked his idols for his victories which he obtained: but God had long before instructed the Iews of that which should happen; yea and had made it euident in all mens sight, that hee armed this wretch to execute his own iudgements. Read Chap. 10.

Now *to doe euill*, is not taken heere to commit any outrage, which is a thing far from the nature of God, but it signifies to correct and send aduersities, which indeed ought to bee attributed to Gods prouidence, and neither to fortune nor idols. And this is often met withall in the Scriptures: as in *Amos* 3. 6. Is there *euill* in the Citie, and the Lord hath not done it? *Ieremiah* also accuseth the people, in that they knew not that God was the author both of *euill* and *good*: Lament. 3. 38. The Lord then punisheth the finnes of the people by warres, plague, famine, pouertie, sicknesses,

s. August.

The God of Israel the only God.

Bull, to be used for corrections.

Where the right rule of discerning things is absent, there can be nothing but superstition.

The difference betweene foolish obstinacie and true faith.

Who it is that rightly deserues to be called God.
How *Isaiab* frames his argument against Idols.

Quest.

Ans.

Oracles giuen forth of Idols, ambiguous.
Pyrrhus,
Crasus.

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and other the like euils, and will be knowne to be the efficient from whom all of them proceed. Now Iſaiab alleagech not all the examples and arguments, by which he was able to haue diſtinguiſhed the true God ſtō idols; for that would haue taken vp much time: but he now contents himſelfe to proue it briefly, and yet plainly: for he hath not yet ended his argument.

Verſ. 24. *Behold, yee are of no value, and your making is of nought: man hath choſen an abomination by them.*

Now he ſcornes the idols, that he might confirme the faithfull in the confidence and obedience of God, ſcizing by this compariſon, that idolaters are miſerably blinded and beguiled. The word *making*, ought heere to be taken in the paſſiue ſignification: as if he ſhould ſay; It is a vaine imagination or inuention of nought. But it ſeemeth he ſpeakes improperly, in calling the idols things of *nothing*: for are they not made of gold, ſiluer, braſſe, wood, ſtone, or ſuch like matter? The ſolution is eaſie, for Iſaiab conſidered not the matter, but the qualitie; that is to ſay, the opinion of diuinitie which men gaue vnto them. For the ſuperſtitious doe not ſimply worſhip the wood, braſſe, or metall, but the maiſticke of God, which they fondly and blaſphemouſly tie to the corruptible idol: ſo as in effect heere is nothing but a vaine imagination. To which purpoſe Paul ſaith, that an idol is nothing: 1. Cor. 8. 4. For what can that be, or what name ſhall be giuen to a worke of vannie?

[An abomination.] Others reade it, The abomination; in the nominatiue, and vnderſtand it that ſuch are abominable as eſcēt and ſet vp idols: but I thinke it is otherwiſe to be vnderſtood. I take ſ̄ verbe *choſen*, indefinitely, as the Grammarians ſpeake, & it is often ſo taken in the Scriptures. For when the Prophet ſpeakes of the common people, and recounts ſome ordinarie and vſual thing, they expreſſe not the nounce ſubſtantiue. Thus I vnderſtand it then; *Men cannot forge idols, but therein ſhall they alſo forge an abomination.* And ſurely this is a worthy text, teaching vs both to abhor idols, and the boldnes of thoſe that ſet them vp: for this cannot be done without offering great violence to the Lord himſelfe. Many eſteeme it but a ſport, but the Prophet not onely thinkeſ otherwiſe, but he calles it ſuch an *abomination*, as God neither can nor will ſuffer vnpuniſhed.

The word *To chuſe*, points out as with the finger, from what fountaine idolatry ſprings. For true religion ſhould neuer be polluted with ſo many corruptions, if men had not preſumed to make them idols of their *owne deuſing*. Whence wee may note, that all deuifed and inuented worſhips of God are heere oppoſed to true pietie.

Verſ. 25. *I haue raiſed vp from the north, and hee ſhall come: from the*

eaſt Sunne ſhall hee call vpon my name, and ſhall come vpon Princes, as vpon clay, and as the poſter treadeth mire vnder fooſe.

Now hee turnes againe to the argument which hee touched before concerning Gods preſence and power; and ſhewes that the name of diuinitie appertaines to him onely, in whom theſe things are to be found. Touching his raiſing from the north, ſome expound it of Cyrus; others, of Chriſt: but I thinke the Prophet notes out two things heere; ſo as by north, we are to vnderſtand the Caldeans, and by the eaſt, the Medes and Perſians: as if hee ſhould ſay; *There will come two changes worthy of memorie, for I will raiſe vp the Caldeans, and exalt their kingdom: afterward, the Perſians ſhall come, which ſhall be their Lords and Maſters.*

Now although theſe things were to fall out long time after, yet the Lord ſhewes that they were already manifeſt in luſt; yea, that hee ordained them in his ſecret counſell, to the end the euent thereof might be a certaine token of his diuinitie. Yet in the firſt member of the verſe, he denounceth iudgement, to feare the Iewes: in the ſecond; he ſets forth mercy, in teſtifying that the captiuitie and deliuerance of the people was his worke, that all might perceiue that the preſcience and power of God were things which did indeed belong vnto him.

The prophane nations diuide certaine offices amongſt their gods: Apollo, he foretels things to come: Iupiter, he puts them in execution: another, hee diſpatches a buſineſſe contrarie to that: but Gods office is not onely to foretell and ſignifie things to come, but to diſpoſe of things alſo according to his good pleaſure. For in whatſouer thing it be that any diuinitie ſhaines, it ought to be aſcribed to God onely, and not to any other. This is the cauſe why hee appropriates to himſelfe both preſcience, and the execution of the ſame inſeparably.

In that hee ſaith, he will raiſe vp from the north, hee prophecieth (as I touched before) of the captiuitie to come: of which there was no feare at that time, becauſe the Iewes and Caldeans were in league together: in the next place hee prophecieth of the reſtauration of the people, who had leaue of Cyrus to returne into their Country. Now who would haue imagined that things being in ſo good plight, (as then they were) that ſuch a change had been poſſible, eſpecially in regard the euent was to fall out long time after, namely, about 200. yeeres after the prophcies of Iſaiab? And yet the Lord teſtifies that he is the author thereof, that ſo all might know that the Caldeans came not by chance; but were raiſed vp of God, who viſed them as his rods to correct the Iewes withall.

The Medes and Perſians alſo ſubdued not the Caldeans by their owne power, further forth then as they were led and directed by the ſame hand of the Lord. In this place therefore hee ſets forth the greatneſſe of Gods power,

Obiect.

Anſ.

Idolaters tie a diuine maſticke to their rocks and ſtones.

This place reacheth vs to abhor the idol and the idol maker.

The originall of idols.

Apollo.
Iupiter.

Gods office;

Preſcience and the execution thereof, ought to be appropriated to God inſeparably.

About ſome two hundred yeeres before weene the time of Iſaiab's prophcies, and the accompliſhment thereof.

power, and that so plainly, that hee proues Kings and Princes to be but *dag and dirt* in comparision of him.

And thus we may yet better perceiue, that the Prophet not onely respected those of his owne time, but those also which should come after him : for they which then lued, could hardly discern what this meant ; but their successors which saw it, and had experience of it, vnderstood it much better. The end was, that all might know how there was but one God, before whose eyes all things are naked and manifest, and who gouernes all things according to his good pleasure. You may perceiue then what an excellent text this is, in that it shewes the perfection and certentie of Gods oracles. For the Iewes forged not these prophecies whilest they were prisoners in Babylon ; but their fathers hauing heard and receiued the long time before, their successors at last acknowledged Gods iust iudgement, whereof they had been forewarned before : and in the second place, they also embraced the mercy offered, in that they saw God would in due time send the deliuerance: who as he is the preferuer of his Church, so they felt him faithfull in his promises, by good trial and experience. From this place therefore we may safely conclude, that *Isaiah* spake not by his owne motion, but that God vsed his tongue as the organ of the holie Ghost, who put these wordes into his mouth.

The perfection and certentie of Gods oracles.

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Isaiah spake as hee was moued by the holie Ghost.

The certentie of prophecies.

Gods prescience and power.

In that he saith, *he shall come*, it signifies that whatsoeuer was foretold by Gods commandement, should without all peradventure come to passe. For hee speaks of a thing to come, which sets out as in liuely tables the prescience of God. Secondly, in adding that *he is the author* of these things, that is to be applied to his power. To call *upon the name of God*, signifies nothing else in this place, but to perform somewhat at Gods commandement. It is true that *Cyrus* little thought he was imployed in the seruice of the God of Israel, neither meant he to obey him : but the cunct shewed that the Lord marched before him by his secret power and prouidence, to bring him to Babylon by continuall and incredible victories.

In comparing him to a *Poster* which treads his *clay*, it is added because euery one thought the strength and power of the Caldeans was so great, that none was able to vanquish the: for they seemed inuincible then indeed. But euen at that time when the Babylonians trusted in their wealth, despised their enemies, and proudly advanced themselves, the Prophet telles vs that they, and infinit others besides, should be troden vnder foote as the *Poster* doth his *clay*. In a word, his meaning is, that the prosperous estate of the Caldeans could no way hinder the change that was to come ; neither should they be able to let the Medes and Persians from inioying their Monarchy. And truly the issue did well verifie and confirme the truth of this similitude, when *Cyrus* hauing vanquished so many nations, and got many godlie victories, did in a little space of time conquer all the *East*.

Verf. 26. *Who hath declared from the beginning, that wee may know ? or before time, that we may say, he is righteous ? Surely there is none that sheweth, surely there is none that declareth, surely there is none that heareth your words.*

The Lord hauing made prooffe of his Diuinitie, returnes againe to shew the difference betweene him and idols. For he asks whether the idolaters were able for the confirmation of their false worship to say the like for themselves : that is, to alleadge any example of such a prescience or power. Now because hee might without controuersie, rightly attribute these things to himselfe, in derision of them he answers for them ; *Surely we acknowledge, that hee which is able to doe such things, must needs be the true God.*

Word for word it is, *wee will say he is iust* : but the word *iust*, hath many significations : for it is taken sometimes for True & Approved: in which sense it is said, Luke 7.35. That wisdom is iustified of her children: that is to say, *approved*. Wee haue seene testimonies enow then of Gods diuine maiestic, which hath put downe all the vanities of idols; in regard that all things in heauen and earth are gouerned and ruled at the disposition of one onely God; who in an instant is able to bring the mightiest Monarks to nought.

Now the Lord speaks heere in the plurall number, *wee*; to shew that he defends not his own cause alone, but his peoples also. I grant his owne eternitie is sufficient for him; but we being still infirme, it is behoouefull for vs to know certainly that hee is the true God, that so our mindes may not wander after creatures, but may rest wholly and onely in him. Experimentall knowledge therefore is added with the word, the better to sustaine our weake faith, if it be yet ready to wauer. In the next member he saith, that the idols are all *mute*, and leaue those that follow and serue them in suspence. Whilst God on the contrary, makes the candle of his word to burne so clearly, that it is able to giue light to his elect people, and to giue them both what to speake and thinke.

Experimentall knowledge must be ioined with the word.

Verf. 27. *I am the first that saith to Zion ; Behold, behold them : and I will giue Ierusalem one that shall bring good tidings.*

Now God expresseth that more clearly, which he had told the Iewes touching the things to come, that hee might fortifie them in the faith : for it should little auaille them barely to know what was to insue, vnllesse the Prophets had also shewed them the end and vse thereof. The Lord testifieth then, that his predictions tend to the edification of his Church : and it was great reason this should be added to the former doctrine, that

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the people might know theſe examples were propounded not only to ſet forth Gods power, but alſo that the faithfull for their parts might ſeele the fruit thereof. For thus we ought to apply all the examples of the preſcience and power of God vnto our own vſe; that ſo we may be aſſured of the care he hath ouer vs, and that he turnes all things to our ſaluation.

Zion is commanded then to acknowledge the true and onely God. Firſt in reſpect that he had juſtly inflicted this puniſhment vpon his people for their offences: ſecondly, being redeemed out of this captiuitie, they might eſpecially take knowledge of his mercy and goodneſſe.

Behold.] We haue to conſider of mount Zion here, as of a place not inhabited; and of Ieruſalem as a Citie laid waſte: for which cauſe Ieremias brings her in ſpeaking as widows and deſolate women are wont to doe; *Behold, O Lord, how I am troubled*: Lament. 1. 20. The Lord here ſets her out as a widow left alone. Afterwards, Iſaiah will incite her to reioice, as the who hauing been barren before, ſhould now bee made fruitful by the Lord, and ſhould haue many children. In this ſenſe the Lord now ſhewes that hee will comfort Ieruſalem, euen at that time wherein ſhee ſhall ſeeme nothing elſe but a woſull ſpectacle of horrible ruines. Now the meſſage is, that a widow and one that was forſaken before, ſhould bring forth many children: or, that thoſe who were ſcattered and diſperſed by baniſhment a far off, ſhould come towards Ieruſalem in great troopes.

This waſte therefore muſt bee oppoſed to the reſtauration performed by Cyrus, where it is ſaid, *Behold, they come*. And by the word *firſt*, is vnderſtood, not onely the eternitie of God, but alſo the antiquitie of the prophecie. Afterwards, Iſaiah addes how God teacheth the faithfull touching things to come; to wit, by the *labours and miniſtrie of his Prophets*.

Saint Jerom hath translated the word *Messenger*, Euangelist; but it properly ſignifies a meſſenger. And yet there is no great difference in the ſenſe, for his purpoſe is to ſpeake of the Prophets which ſhould bring the ioyfull and deſireable ſidings of this deluerance; which God by Moſes had alſo promiſed long before; to wit, that he would raiſe vp faithfull Miniſters from time to time, which ſhould far excell all ſoothſaiers, magicians, and prognosticators. For this cauſe alſo hee gaue the Church this goodly title, Chap. 40. 9. ſaying, that ſhee brought *good ſidings*, becauſe the word of God ſhould ſound forth in her.

Now this ſerues much for the praiſe and commendation of preaching. For the Lord comes not downe from heauen to teach vs, but vſeth the miniſterie of his ſeruants, and ſhewes that he ſpeakes by their mouth; which is ſo admirable a benefit, as ſhould cauſe vs to imbrace it with both our hands. Hee promiſed vnder the law (as I was ſaying) that hee would raiſe vp a Prophet in the middeſt of his people. Deut. 18. 15. Now he confirms that promiſe, in ſaying, that *meſſengers* ſhall not be

wanting to comfort them in their dolours and extreme diſtreſſes. Hence we may alſo conclude, that there is no forme of a Church where prophecies ceaſe: that is to ſay, when there is none to bring vs *good ſidings* of comfort in our miſeries out of Gods word.

No forme of a Church where viſion failes.

Verſ. 28. *But when I beheld, there was none; and when I inquired of them, there was no counſeller; and when I demanded of them, they answered not a word.*

The Lord hauing ſpoken of himſelfe, turns againe to the idols: for in theſe Chapters you ſhall meete with theſe anti-theſes euerie where; by which he oppoſeth himſelfe againſt idols. As if he ſhould ſay; I doe theſe things whereof I haue ſpoken; but the idols can doe none of them, becauſe they are void of *counſell, wiſdome, and vnderſtanding*. They can neither *answer* them that aſke things of them, nor mitigate their griefes. Now in this comparison, he ſhewes that hee can eaſily proue himſelfe to be God. Firſt, by the doctrine of the Prophet: ſecondly, by his works: which are not to be found among idols. Therefore it follows that they are no Gods, and that we muſt reſt our ſelues wholly vpon him that is the true God.

Besides, mens eies are ſo dazeled with careleſneſſe, becauſe they neither aſke, marke, nor conſider any thing: they bewitch their owne hearts then by beholding idols, and willingly deceiue themſelues; for doubtleſſe they ſhould quickly perceiue the vanitie that is in them, if they did warily obſerue all circumſtances. Whence it is euident, that Idolaters ſhall neuer bee able to excuſe themſelues by pretext of ignorance, becauſe they loued rather to bee blinded, and to erre in darkneſſe, then to ſee the light, and imbrace the truth.

Verſ. 29. *Behold, they are all vanities; their worke is of nothing: their images are wind and conſuſion.*

Hauing condemned the Idols, now hee ſaith as much of thoſe that honour them. As it is in Pſal. 115. They that make them are like vnto them; and ſo are all they that put their truſt in them. He ſhewes then that the whole rabble of the ſuperſtitious ſort are full of vanitie, and haue neither wit nor diſcretion, I grant it is hard to perſwade them to it; for pride which poſſeſſeth them, ſo puffes them vp, that they thinke themſelues the onlie wiſe men of the world; and thoſe that follow not their traine, the onely fooles and dizards that are, in comparison of them. How proudly doe the Papiſts and their ſubtle Doctors deride and ſcorne vs? With what furie haue the Romans contained the Iewes in times paſt? What then? Let not vs care for ſuch a pride, ſeeing God condemnes them all here of *vanitie*.

The Prophet proceeds from the cenſuring of Idols, to ſay ſuch as honor them.

Papiſts deride the Proteſtants. The Romans contemned the Iewes.

Their worke is of nothing.] He calles *works*, both

How to apply the examples of Gods preſcience and power to our owne vſe.

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Saint Jerom.

The praiſe of preaching the word.

both the images which the superstitious forge to themselves, as also all the new found seruice, wherein there is neither end nor measure; when some one will bee the master and author of his owne religion. These works hee calles things of *nothing*.

In the next place he proues it more plainly, in calling them *vaine*, and *chaos*: that is to say, *confusion*: for so I expound the word *Tobin*, it being so taken in Gen. 1. 2, where *Moses* shewes that the earth was at the first without forme, and a confused lump. This place ought diligently to bee obserued against Idolaters; for they thinke images were ordained to preferue and vphold religion, and that mens mindes are stirred vp to de-

notion by the sight of them; as if God were there present: they call them lay mens books, Images lay mens books, fit for such as are not capable of the doctrine of the Scriptures. But the holy Ghost heere pronounceth, that they are formelesse and confused things, because they trouble and detain mens mindes in superstition; yea, in such sort, that all their light of wisdom and knowledge, is choked and quenched by performing seruice to them. To conclude, hee teacheth that all images and the honor done vnto them; & not to only, but those that make and follow them, are nothing but mere vanitie, and that wee may boldly so iudge of them.

The Image and Image maker meere vanitie.

THE XLII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Behold, my seruant; I will stay vpon him: mine elect, in whom my soule delighteth; he shall bring forth iudgement to the Gentiles.*



It seemes the Prophet brake off his speech to speake of Iesus Christ: but wee must call to mind what we haue said elsewhere: to wit, that it is vsuall with the Prophets in promising any thing,

hard to be beleued, forthwith to make mention of Christ: because all the promises are confirmed in him, which otherwise would be doubtfull and vncertaine. All the promises are in Christ, yea, and Amen, saith *Psalm* 2. C. 2. 20. For what acquaintance haue we with God, vnlesse the Mediator come betwene? we are so far separated from his Maiesie, that we can neither be partakers of saluation, nor of any other benefit without Christ. Now when the Lord promised any deliuerance to the Iewes, his purpose therein was to lift vp their mindes far above the thing it selfe, that so they might conceiue of better and greater things then their bodily libertie, and returne into Iudaean. For these things were onely as preparatiues to that great redemption which they at last obtained, and which we now obtaine by Christ Iesus. Yea, that grace of God that shined in the returne of the people, had been imperfect, vnlesse he had euen then bin knowne to be the perpetuall gouernor of his Church. We haue also told you before that the deliuerance out of Babylon, comprehended in it the absolute and full restauration thereof. It is no wonder then if the Prophets ioine this beginning of grace with Christs kingdome, for they vse so to doe almost in all their sermons. We must come to Christ then, without whom there is no (hearing) nor helpe in God: that is to say, we can lay no claime to the right of being in the number of Gods children, vnlesse we be graf-

ted into that body, of which hee is the head. The very scope of the text therefore shewes, that hee is spoken of in this place, as of the head and first borne. Why so? Because the things heere mentioncd, cannot be attributed to any other then himselfe: but if this reason will not suffice, the Euangelists shall end the controuersie for vs. See *Matth* 2. 18, 19, 20, 21.

He calles Christ Gods *seruant*, by way of excellencie: for although this name belongs to all the faithfull, because they are adopted for his children, on condition that they sacrifice and consecrate themselves and their whole liues to his seruice and obedience: yea albeit the faithfull teachers, and all those who haue any publike charge in the Church, be particularly called *Gods seruants*, yet there is a speciall cause why this title agrees more properly vnto *Christ*, then vnto any of them. For he is called *seruant*, in respect that God the Father hath not onely giuen him the charge of teaching, or to doe some other thing; but also in regard that hee hath called him to performe an excellent and peerlesse worke, which is common to none but him. Furthermore, although this name be attributed to the person of Christ, yet it ought to be referred to his *humane nature*: for his Godhead being eternall, and that in respect thereof he hath euer obtained equall glory with his Father, it was necessary he should take our nature vpon him, that he might submit himselfe to the obedience of a *seruant*. And therefore *Saint Paul* saith; that he being in the forme of God, thought it no robbery to be equall with him; and yet notwithstanding emptied himselfe, and tooke vpon him the forme of a *seruant*. See *Phil* 2. 6. Christ then is a *seruant*, but voluntarily, lest wee should imagin his dignity might be somewhat impaired thereby. Which the ancient Doctors signified vnder this word *Dispensation*: whereby it came to passe, as they say, that Christ subiected himselfe to all our infirmities. The affection by which he became subiect vnto God, was voluntarie: in the meane while it was to the end he might become *our seruants* also: notwithstanding

In what sense Christ is called Gods seruants.

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Christ Gods seruant in respect of his humanitie.

Christ being Gods seruants no way impaires his dignitie. Dispensation

Christs subiectio voluntarie.

When the Prophets prophesie of any thing hard to be beleued, they forth with mention Christ.

What acquaintance haue we with God, vnlesse Christ come betwene?

These promises were but preparatiues to that great redemption accomplished by Christ.

No helpe in God without Christ.

ſtanding this his ſo abiect a condition, hinders him nothing at all from inioying his ſoueraigne maieſtie; for which cauſe the Apoſtle ſaith, God hath giuen him a name aboue euery name: Phil. 2.9.

He vſeth the particule demonſtratiue, *Behold*, to bring the Iewes as it were to the ſight of the thing done: for that which they ſaw in Babylon, was able to haue put them cleane out of heart. He wil them therefore to turſe their eies from beholding things preſent, and to fix them onely vpon Chriſt. Some expound the verbe *Tamachi*, which ſignifies *To ſtay*, paſſiuely; others, actiuely. If we take it in the paſſiue, the ſenſe will bee, that God ſo ſtaires himſelfe vpon his Chriſt, that hee will giue him charge of all things, *then as maſters doe to their truſtie ſeruants*. Now it is a ſigne of great truſt which the Father repoſeth in him, that hee giues him charge of all things, and commits into his hands his owne rule, authoritie, and power. Yet I reiect not the actiue ſignification; to wit, I will erect or ſet him vp; or, I will eſtabliſh him in his eſtate: for that which followes immediately after, *I will put my ſpirit vpon him*, is but a repetition of the ſame thing. He ſaith in the firſt place then, *I will ſtay vpon him*: then he ſhewes the manner of this *ſtay*, in ſaying, that he will gouerne him by his *Spirit*: and thus hee ſhewes that he will ſuſtaine and helpe Chriſt in all things, and will not ſuffer him to fall vnder any difficulties. Now it was needfull that Chriſt ſhould bee indued with the *holy Spirit* from aboue, in regard hee was to take vpon him that diuine office of being mediator betweene God and men: for according to his humane nature, he was vnable to beare the waight of ſo great a burthen.

Eleſt is here taken for excellent; as in other places young men which are in the flower of their youth, are called men of choiſe. Hee is called a *ſeruant eleſt* then, becauſe hee ſhall beare the meſſage of reconciliation, and all his actions ſhall bee diſpoſed of by the Lord. Yet, behold heere a teſtimonie of that loue which God hath ſhewed vs in his onely Son; for in him the head, we may ſee our *eleſtion* ſhine, by which wee are adopted to the hope of a better life. Seeing then that there is an heauenly power dwelling in the humane nature of Chriſt; when we heare him ſpeake, let vs not ſo much looke vpon fleſh & blood, as liſt vp our mindes higher, that ſo we may ſee his diuinitie ſhine in all his actions.

In whom my ſoule delightis.] By this teſtimonie we may conceiue that Ieſus Chriſt is not onely well pleaſing vnto God his Father, but is alſo that his *onely beloued Sonne*: ſo as there is no obtaining of any grace, but by the meanes of his interceſſion. In this ſenſe it is alledged by the Euangelists, Mat. 3. 17. Luke 9. 35. Saint *Paul* alſo teacheth, that wee were reconciled with God through this his *wellbeloued one*, for whoſe ſake God loues vs: Ephes. 1. 6. According to which, our Prophet ſhewes that Chriſt ſhall not be adorned with the vertue and power of the holy Ghoſt for his owne particular onely, but to ſhed it abroad alſo far and wide vpon others.

By the word *iudgement*, hee vnderſtands a well ordered government, and not the ſentence which the Iudge pronounceth vpon the iudgement ſeat: for the verbe, *To iudge*, among the Hebrewes ſignifies to rule, gouerne, and direct things. He addes, that this *iudgement* ſhall extend thoroughout all the earth, as well to the *Gentiles* as to the Iewes: which promiſe was then new and ſtrange: for God was onely knowne in Iurie, *Psal. 76. 1.* ſo as forraine nations were excluded from any hope of grace. We therefore that are *Gentiles*, ſtand in exceeding need of theſe ſo cleare and euident teſtimonies, that we may grow daily in the aſſurance of our vocation and calling: for without theſe promiſes, what aſſurance is left vs? They nothing at all pertaine vnto vs. Chriſt was ſent then to bring the whole world vnder the rule and obedience of God his Father. Whence it appears, that all things without him, are but a confuſed chaos. Before hee comes therefore, it is impoſſible to ſee any right order or government among men. Let vs then learne in all things to ſubmit our neckes vnto his ſweet yoke, if we deſire to beuſtly and rightly gouerned.

Now we muſt iudge of this government according to the nature of his kingdom that we liue in, which, as you know, is not of this world, but conſiſts in the inward man: for it conſiſts in a good conſcience and integritie of life; approued not of men only, but of God chiefly and principally. The ſumme then comes to this, that our whole life being perverted ſince the time wee were altogether corrupted by the fall of *Adam*, Chriſt is now towards the end of the world come *with an heauenly power of the ſpirit*, to change our hearts, and to reforme vs into newneſſe of life.

All things out of order without Chriſt.

Iohn 18. 36.

Wherein Chriſts kingdom principally conſiſts.

The end of Chriſts coming in the fleſh.

Verſ. 2. *Hee ſhall not cry, nor liſt vp, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreetes.*

The Prophet ſhewes after what manner Chriſt ſhall come; to wit, without ſuch pompe and preparations as earthly Kings haue. For when they come in, trumpets are ſounded on euery ſide, & the Heralds make a great noiſe and crying; ſo as a man would thinke heauen and earth would goe together. But *Iſaiab* ſaith, that at Chriſts coming, none of this din ſhall be heard: not ſo much to maniſeſt his modeſtie, as to teach vs that wee ſhould looke for no outward pompe in him. Secondly, that by the beholding of his meekneſſe, by which he ſeekes to draw vs to him, wee might run with all our might to meete him. Thirdly, that our faith might not languish, in reſpect of his baſe and abiect condition.

Chriſts kingdom not carnall.

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He ſhall not liſt vp his voice.] That is to ſay, he ſhall make no ſtirres, but ſhall bee quiet and ſtill. And ſurely hee was ſo far off from popularitie, that hee forbade the publiſhing of his owne miracles; to the end we might therefore know that his government and authoritie differed much from that which Kings and

Mat. 9. 30.

Why Chriſt was to bee indued with the holy Spirit.

Chriſt a ſeruant eleſt.

Wee muſt looke vpon Chriſt in both his natures.

Princes seeke after, when they cause themselves to be proclaimed that they may get the fauour of the multitude.

Verf. 3. *A bruised reede shall be not breake, and the smoking flax shall be not quench: he shall bring forth iudgement in truth.*

Having affirmed in generall that Christ shall not resemble the Princes of the earth, he comes now to set forth his meekenes, in regard he will *susteine the infirme and weak*. By the Similie of a *bruised reede*, he shewes, that he will not vicerlic breake and bruise such as are halfe broken already, but will rather vphold and sustaine them, that he may augment that good which they haue in them. Then he sets it forth by another Similie, of *smoking flax*: which is taken from the weekes of lampes: men will not quench them though they *burne but dimly, and cast a smoke*, but will rather cleanse and keepe them in. Such tender affection the Prophet attributes to Christ, for thereby he supports our imbecilitie: And haue not all of vs good experience hereof? For looke wheresoever any sparkle of grace shines, he confers and augments it. Alas! if he should deale rigorously with vs, we should forthwith be brought to nought. Albeit then that we halt on the one side, and be much shiuered and broken, yet will not he by and by reiect vs as altogether vnprofitable, but will support vs for a long time, till he haue made vs more constant, and more strong.

God gaue vs a signe of this compassion in Christ, when hee was consecreted for this worke: for the Holy Ghost came downe vpon him in the shape of a Doue, which we know is a bird of a sweete and quiet nature, Mat. 3. 16. Now surely the signe doth full and whole agree vnto Christ, for he made no noise: he shewed not himselfe terrible like to the Kings of the earth: neither will he require more of his subiects then they are able to beare, but will rather relieue and susteine them. Did he not manifest this at his appearing; and doth hee not caufe vs dayly to feele it by his Gospel?

According to whose example, let the Ministers of y^e Gospel, which are his Lieutenants, learne to carrie themselves meekely: let them also be readie to support the weake, and with compassion to bring them home into the right way, lest by ouer-much rigor and austerenes, they quench the sparks of godlines which shine in them: let them rather hearken, incourage, and strengthen them with all their power. But lest any man should imagin that his so great lenitie should cause him to nourish vices in vs, he addes, that he shall *bring forth iudgements in truth*. Albeit then that Christ vpholds and susteines the weake, yet he is farre off from such flatteries as may nourish any vices in vs. Sinne must be corrected therefore without flatteric, because it is directlie contrary to that mildnes whereof the Prophet here speaks. We are to take heed

that we fall not into extremities then, for the weake-hearted must not bee too seuerely handled, neither must the wicked be fostered by our dissimulations.

But that we may the better know who they be towards whom this lenitie must be shewed according to the example of Christ: we must carefullie consider of the Prophets words, for he speaks of a *bruised reede, and of smoking flax*. These similitudes shew nothing at all to the rebellious and strong, nor to the rebellious and vntamed ones: for such are vnworthy so great bountie: they rather deserue to be bruised and broken with hard strokes of a beetle by the seueritie of the word. *Isaiab* then you see so commends gentlenes, that yet therewithall he shewes to whom it belongs; and how, and when, it is to be vsed: for it appertaines not to the obstinate and hard hearted, or to such as vomit out their rage, but to those that shew themselves teachable, and do with willingnes put their necks vnder Christs yoke. The word *smoke* also admonisheth vs that he neither lightens nor sustaines them that willicie sit in darknes, but the sparkles, how obscure and small soeuer they bee. Therefore where obstinacie and impietie reignes, there is neede of extreme rigor, such must at no hand be spared. Nay though vice be not growne altogether intollerable, yet it must not be nourished by this softnes, but rather corrected and amended, that it spread no further. For care must alwaies be had that the truth may remaine in her perfection, that sinnes lye not covered, nor, that secret corruptions be not thereby increased, but that the weake may by little and little be formed to an vpright course of life. He speaks of such then as haue sincere hearts, and loue the puntie of religion, though many things be yet wanting in them: for there is to be seene in them good affections, and good desires at the least. It appears by many examples how seuerer Christ shewed himselfe to scornors, for he is consteined to vse his iron rod to breake such in pieces as will not indure to be guided by his shepherds crooke. He truly pronounceth indeede that his yoke is sweet, and his burthen light to those that follow him voluntarily, Mat. 11. 30. but it is as true that he is armed with a scepter of iron to crush his enemies in pieces Psal. 2. 9. and to fill all places with their dead bodies, Psal. 110. 6.

Verf. 4. *He shall not faile nor be discouraged till he haue set iudgement in the earth, and the Isles shall wait for his law.*

The Prophet alludes to the former verse, and confirms that which he said before, to wit, that Christ should be milde and calme towards the faithfull, and yet that he should not be soft nor effeminate, because he will manfullie execute the charge imposed vpon him by his father. That is his meaning when he saith, He shall not *faile*: in which verb there is an allusion to the former verse, where he spake of the *smoking flax*. Here he shewes there-

Christs tender affection described by these two similes.

The Doue, a bird of a louing nature.

The signe and the thing signified concurred fully in Christ.

The Ministers of the Gospel must learne meekenes from Christs example.

Christs lenitie must not nourish our vices in vs.

To whom Christs lenitie appertaines.

Notes.

Notes.

Some must haue the iron rod, others the shepherds crooke.

therefore how lenitie ought to be tempered; to wit, that it incline not to ouer much indulgencie: for it muſt be vſed, yet ſo, as it muſt not hinder the faithfull diſcharge of our duties. Many win loue by their ſoftneſſe, to the end they may entertaine friendſhip with the world: but in the meane while, they wickedly and looſly betray the truth. I remember I once ſaw in a renowned citie two Preachers: one of them reprov'd ſinne ſharply and with a ſtrill voice: the other ſtudied altogether how to inſinuate himſelfe into the good grace of his auditors by flatteries. Hee that was ſo plauſible, expounded the prophecie of *Jeremiah*, and was then in hand with a very ſweete place that was full of conſolation. Now hauing found a text (as hee thought) fit for his turne, he began ſharply to inueigh againſt theſe rigoros and ſeuere reprouers, who are wont to terrifie men by thundering out the iudgements of God againſt them. But on the next day, becauſe the Prophet changed his ſtile, and agreeable to his vehemencie, roughly rebuked the vngodly, this vile flatterer was (to his ſhame) conſtrained to recant (as it were) that which all had yet fresh in memory. And thus the fauour of the people, at which he ſo much aimed, ſoone vaniſhed away; for himſelfe had diſcovered his owne heart: by meanes whereof, he was loathed both of good and bad. We muſt diſtinguiſh then, as you ſee, betwene the teachable and obſtinate, that we proſtitute not this our ſoftneſſe to all purpoſes.

In the meane while *Iſaiah* ſaith, that Chriſt ſhall bee of ſuch an inuincible force, as will cauſe him to paſſe thorow all impediments: for by theſe words, *ſil he hanc ſet iudgement in the earth*, hee meanes that Chriſts miniſtry ſhall bee ſo effectuall, that his doctrine ſhall fruſtraie. For he ſaith not onely; Till he hath preached the will of his father; but, Till hee hath eſtabliſhed iudgements: that is to ſay, gouernment: as we noted before. Hee reſtifies then that Chriſts preaching ſhall not bee fruitleſſe, but ſo powerfull, that men ſhall be reformed by it; which ought not to be reſtrained to his perſon onely, but to the whole courſe of the Goſpell: for he performed not his office, as if he ſhould ceaſe at three yeeres end, but he continues it till his laſt coming, by the miniſtrie of his ſeruants. And we are taught here by the way, that it is not poſſible for vs to diſcharge this dutie faithfully, without ſuffering many troubles, nor without ſuſtaining many hard and dangerous combats; yea, ſo far, as to be overwhelmed by them, and in a manner driuen to giue ouer our calling. But we muſt not ceaſe for all that: wee muſt conſtantly goe on, and cheerfully hold out vnto the end. The Prophet therefore ſaith here, that Chriſt ſhall be ſo valiant, that he ſhall neuer forſake his ſtanding, but ſhall fight it out to the laſt ſtroke. Now we ought to ſet this example before vs, that wee may perſeuere with an inuincible courage, to the very end of our courſe.

He takes *law* here for doctrine; for the word is deriued from another which ſignifies to teach. Now the Prophets are wont thus to

ſpeake of the Goſpell, and the doctrine thereof, thereby to note, that it was not to bee eſteemed new, but conſonant and agreeable to that which *Moses* himſelfe had taught.

By the word *les*, the Hebrewes vnderſtand (as wee haue told you before) the regions which were beyond the ſeas. And heere the Prophet againe confirms that which was ſaid in the former verſe, to wit, that Chriſt was appointed, the gouernour not ouer the Iews onely, but ouer the Gentiles alſo, though they were exempt from hauing any thing to doe with the Iewiſh policie. To be ſhort, this promiſe appertaines to all nations, that ſo all the world might feele the fruit of this reſtitution and reformation.

Where hee ſaith, the Iles ſhall *vaiſt*; his meaning is, that the cleſt ſhall embrace the Goſpell with a great and ardent affection, when it ſhall be offered vnto them: for therein the Lord maniſeſts the force of his election, when thoſe which before erred in darkneſſe, ſhould with all their hearts embrace the doctrine of ſaluation, being preached vnto them; And albeit they ran in times paſt hither and thither as ſtraied & loſt ſheep, yet they ſhould diſcerne the voice of the ſhepherd, as ſoone as they heard him, and ſhould willingly follow him, as Chriſt himſelfe ſaith, *Iohn 10.16*. Thus we may ſee the ſaying of *Auguſtine* to bee moſt true, to wit, that there are many ſheep oftentimes out of the fold, when there are wolues remaining in it. Now this *vaiſing* is a worke of God, when men who thought themſelues wiſe, ſhall ſuddenly renounce their wiſdome, and ſhall haſten to learne the Goſpell of Chriſt, that they may wholly depend vpon the mouth of ſuch a teacher.

Auguſtine.

Many ſheep without the fold, and of ten many wolues are within it.

Verſ. 5. Thus ſaith the Lord God, (he that created the heauens and ſpread them abroad, he that ſtretched forth the buds thereof, he that giveth breath vnto the people vpon it, and ſpirit to them that walke therein.)

This is a confirmation of that hee ſaid in the beginning of this Chapter, touching Chriſts Kingdom; to wit, that he will reſta- bliſh and reſtore all things. Now becauſe this might ſeeme incredible, he addes a glorious deſcription of Gods *almightie power*, by which our faith might be confirmed, but then chiefly, when the eſtate of things in the world ſhould be directly oppoſite vnto it. He brings therefore pregnant proofes in of Gods *power*, that all might bee moued to hearken after ſuch newes, and to be aſured that hee which hath created all things of nothing, who hath *ſpread out the heauens*, and makes the earth fruit- full, *inſpires life* into the creatures, and *ſuſtaines* and keeps all things by his outſtretched arme, can eaſily accompliſh the promiſes hee hath made touching Chriſts King- dome.

By theſe manners of ſpeech we are admoniſhed to fix our eies euermore vpon the

Two Preachers: the one a ſharpe reprouer of ſinne, the other a flatterer.

Conſtancie required in the Miniſters.

power of God, that so we may credit that which he hath spokē accordinglie: for *Isaiah* speaks not these things at randō, but thereby meant to dispatch our minds of all scruples, because nothing is impossible to God, who holds the whole world vnder his subiection: but in the Chapters following we shall meete with the like phrases of speech. Some translate the word *El*, Mightie, others, God: but the matter is not great, because the sense comes all to one reckning: for he describes his power and Maicstie, and adorns him diuerslie with such titles, to teach vs, that he can easly raise vp and restore that which was faine to the earth.

Verf. 6. *I the Lord haue called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keepe thee, and will giue thee for a covenant of the people, and for a light of the Gentiles.*

HE repeats the name of God againe, in which we must supplie that which was said in the former verse touching Gods power. All almost doe thinke that he speaks here of the end of Christs calling, because he was sent of the Father to establish righteousness among men, of which before they were destitute, whilest he is absent from them, and being giuen to all sorts of vice and vnrighteousnes, were detained prisoners vnder Satans tyranny. But because the word *Iustice*, or *righteousnes*, extends it selfe further, I leaue this subtletie: neither is it said that Christ should be called to righteousness, but this phrase of speech must be resolued into the aduerb *Iustly*, or *Holyly*. I rather thinke that Christ is called in righteousness, because his calling is lawfull, and therefore shall be firme and stable: for we know that things disorderedly done can not long continue, vnlesse any had rather expound it, that God in ordeining of Christ the restorer of the Church, seeks for another cause of it then in himselfe, and in his owne righteousness: notwithstanding it is certaine that this word notes out vnto vs stabilitie, and is as much to say as faithfullie.

By the holding of the hand, he meanes the Lords present help: as if he should say, *I will governe and uphold thee in the vocation vnto which I haue called thee*. In a word, as thy calling is iust, so also will I iustifie and maintaine it, euen as if I led thee by the hand. And the verb *will keepe*, which is forthwith added, shewes sufficientlie what the holding by the hand signifies, to wit, that Christ shall be so governed of his Father, that he will be his teacher and protector in such wise that he will succor and assist him in all things.

I will giue thee for a covenant.] Now he expresth the cause why God promiseth to be the protector of Christ. Moreover, he distinguisheth betwene the Jewes and the Gentiles; not that they differ ought in nature, or, as if the one were more excellent then the other (for all haue neede of Gods grace, and Christ brings saluation indifferently to both) but in regard the Lord had attributed the first degree to the Jewes, therefore it was

good reason they should be distinguished from others. Before the partition wall then was broken downe they were the more excellent, not by way of merit, but by the free grace of God, because the covenant thereof was first made with them.

But some may aske why Christ is named in the covenant, which was ratified long before: for there were two thousand yeres and more past from the time that God adopted Abraham: the originall of this separation then was long before the coming of Iesus Christ. I answer, that the covenant made with Abraham and his posteritie was founded on Christ: for thus runne the words of the covenant, *In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, Gen. 22. 18. The covenant was confirmed then only in Abrahams seed, that is to say in Christ: at whose coming it was confirmed, and established by effect, though it was done before in regard of the promise. Therefore it is that Paul saith, *All the promises of God are Yea, and Amen in Christ*, 2. Cor. 1. 20, who in another place is called the minister of circumcision, to fulfill the promises made to the fathers, Rom. 15. 8. And in another place he shewes yet more plainly that Christ is our peace, so as those who were furthest off, are made neere by his blood, and that both are by this meanes reconciled to God, and made members one of another, Ephes. 2. 17. By these places it appeares that Christ was promised not to the Jewes only, but to the whole world.

And here we haue againe another testimonie touching the vocation of the Gentiles, seeing our Prophet expresse affirms that he is giuen for a light to them. Now he mentions the light, because the vnbelieuers were plunged in most palpable and profound darknes, during the time that the Lord enlightened the Jewes only. What is our lesson then? Surely we are worthy to beare the blame for euer if we remaine in darknes, and haue this light of life in the meane while thining before vs. For the Lord calles all vnto him, none excepted, and giues Christ vnto all, that he may be our light. It remains then that we only open our eyes, then will he alone chase away all darknes, and will illuminate our minds by the word of truth.

Verf. 7. *That thou maist open the eyes of the blind, and bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darknes out of the prison house.*

Isaiah recites heere more at large to what end Christ shall be sent of the Father, that we may the better perceiue what fruit we shall reape by the same, and how necessarie his help is. Now he taxeth all men of blindness, to the end we should acknowledge it, if we meane to be illuminate by Iesus Christ. To be short, he shewes vnder these borrowed speeches what our condition is, till Christ appeares for our redemption: to wit, that we are all miserable, poore, and destitute of all good things; inuironed, and overwhelmed with infinite miseries, till Christ hath set vs free

The Jewes more excellent then the Gentiles, not by merit, but by Gods free grace.

Obiect.

Anf.

Another testimonie, touching the vocation of the Gentiles.

Things that are not done according to a good and lawfull order can not long last.

All haue neede of Gods grace.

All are blind.

What our condition is without Christ.

free from them. But howsoever the words be here directed vnto Christ, yet the intent of the Prophet is thereby to instruct the faithfull, and to teach them that it is in Christ, and in none but him, vpon whom they must depend, and to assure them that the remedie of all their euils is ready at hand, if so be they seeke vnto him for succour. For the Prophet sets not Christ to schoole heere, as if he stood in neede either of instruction, or of a commandement: but hee speaks to him for our sakes, that we might know wherefore hee is sent of the Father: as it is in the second Psalme, I will preach the decree: aske of me, and I will giue thee the heathen for thy possession. For Christs dignitie and authoritie is there magnified, to assure vs that the Father hath giuen him soveraigne dominion ouer all, that so we might haue good hope, and might boldly put our trust and confidence in him.

Verf. 8. *I am the Lord, this is my name; and my glory will I not giue to another, neither my praise to grauen Images.*

Hence wee may gather how great the disease of incredulitie is, seeing the Lord vseth so many repetitions to heale it, as if he could hardly satisfie himselfe therewith: for we are by nature so inclined to distrust, that it is impossible we should beleue any thing the Lord speaks, vntill he first of all mollifies the hardnesse of our hearts. Besides that, we fall euer and anon into the same euill by our owne heedlesnesse, if we be not withheld by many persuasions. This is the cause then why he returnes to confirme that whereof he spake before, to wit, that his promises might not want their credit and authoritie.

The word *Ihu*, is sometimes a substantiue, and so it is a proper name of God: but I willingly expound it, *This is my name*: that is to say, this name, *The Lord*, is proper to me in such wise, that they sinne grieuously who attribute the same to any other. To be short, by this manner of speech he confirms all whatsoeuer he hath spoken touching the office of Christ, and now adds (as you would say) a seale to the promise. As if he should say; He that pronounceth these things, testifies that he is the onely God, and that this name belongs to him, and to none other.

I will not giue.] That is to say, I will not suffer my glory to be diminished; which must needs be, if I should be found either a *liar*, or *inconstant* in my promises. Thus you see that hee will performe his promises, because he will thereby prouide for the maintaining of his owne glory, lest the same should anie way be impeached. Truly this is a singular text; for it teacheth vs that Gods glory shines especially in the accomplishment and fulfilling of his promises: whence we also gather a wonderfull confirmation of our faith; to wit, that the Lord will neuer faile nor be wanting in his promise; neither can any thing hinder or stay the course of that which he hath once determined. But because Satan labours by all

means to obscure and darken this glory of God, and to giue it either to false gods, or to men, therefore he protests that he cannot indure to be taken for a falsifier of his promises.

The opposition which is between the onely God, and idols, is to be referred to the circumstance of the time: for if God had not deliuered his people, the infidels might haue boasted, as if the true religion had beene built vpon a sandie foundation. His meaning is therefore, that he will not suffer the wicked to make their triumphs ouer the Churches ruin. And wherefore is it, I pray you, that God hath hitherto spared vs, and hath to this day dealt so fauourably with vs? Euen because his Gospell should not be exposed to the horrible blasphemies of the Papists. Hence let vs gather a general doctrine then, to wit, that the Lord will haue his glory wholly reserved vnto himselfe; for he will maintaine and defend it euery way to the vtmost: shewing that hee is exceeding ielous of it, when he cannot abide that the least iota thereof should be taken from him to be giuen to creatures.

Verf. 9. *Behold, the former things are come to passe, and new things I doe declare: before they come forth, I tell you of them.*

NOW he calles to mind the former prophecies, by the accomplishment whereof, he shewes he ought to be beleued for the time to come: for our former knowledge and experience of Gods goodnesse, is of great vse to confirme vs for hereafter. It is as much then as it he should haue said; I haue spoken often to your fathers, and you know that nothing hath failed of that which I haue promised, but all is come to passe: and yet when I tell you of things to come, you will not credit me. The experience you haue had touching things past, cannot moue you; neither can it prouoke you to forsake your infidelitie. This is the vse then which we should make in remembering Gods former benefits, that our saluation being for a time hid vnder hope, wee may sticke to his word and promise, and may be the better confirmed in it all the daies of our life.

By the pronoun *Behold*, hee evidently shews, that they knew by the effects that God neuer deceiued them that trusted in him, nor neuer spake any thing by his Prophets in vaine; for his truth was apparant to all, by infallible signes and tokens.

Before they come forth.] By this clause he separates God from idols, because it is he onely which knows and foretels things to come: but idols know nothing at all. Now although the gods of the Gentiles often times gaue them answers when they sought vnto them, yet we haue told you in the former Chapter, that such answers were either false or ambiguous. For those y depended vpon such toies, haue for the most part bin grossly deceiued, as they were wel worthy: and if any successe at the first hath ensued, yet they were thereby

The remedie of all our euils is in Christ, if we seeke vnto him for succour.

That which is here spokē to Christ, is rather to instruct vs then him.

The greatness of our incredulity noted.

All of vs too much inclined to distrust.

Gods glory shines principally in the performance of his promises.

The reason why God hath spared vs that possesseth the true religion.

Our experience of Gods former mercies ought to confirme vs for the time to come.

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Note.

Chap. 41. 12, 23.

The Gentils iustly punished by the delusions of Satan in their idols.

plunged the more deeply into eternal perdition. And no doubt it fell out by Gods iust judgement, that Satan by such delusions so bewitched the. But the prophecies had another drift, for the Church was by them either brought to repentance, to her great profit and saluation; or else was thereby fortified with good hope, to the end shee might not sinke vnder the weight of her afflictions. This remaines sure then, to wit, that *the euert* declares the truth of that which God hath foretold, for hee orders and gouernes all things by his prouidence.

Verf. 10. *Sing vnto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth: yee that goe downe to the sea, and all that is therein: the Iles and the inhabitants thereof.*

What effect Gods benefits should haue in vs.

This exhortation to the praising of Gods, a further confirmation of the former promises.

The matter of this song.

The reason of this exhortation.

What the Prophet means by a new song.

New, is here opposed to that which is common and ordinarie.

Now he exhorts the people to thanksgiving: for Gods benefits should euer haue this effect in vs, namely, that the remembrance of them should stirre vs vp to sing his praises. Besides, in that he sets their deliuerance before their eyes by this exhortation, he further confirms the promises whereof he hath spoken: for his drift is to be well observed; to wit, that the faithfull ought not to be dismayed nor ouerwhelmed with sorrow, though they were in euill case, but to frame their minds to a *ioyfull expectation* of their redemption, and hence forwards to giue themselves to sing the praises of the Lord.

The matter of this song is, that Christ was reuealed and sent into the world of his Father, to susteine the miseries of his Church, and to restore her to her perfect estate; yea in a manner to renew the whole world. Now the more difficult the matter was to be beleued, the more desirous the Prophet was to remoue all obstacles out of their way, that he might the better imprint these prophecies in their minds. And no maruell though he labors thus to awaken them, seeing they were brought into extreame neede, and were left as men destitute of any hope of recouerie. The only sight of present things was sufficient to shake their faith, yea and to thinke that all things which the Prophets had foretold were but vaine & ridiculous. He comes in now therefore with this *exhortation*, that in so desperate an estate they might be of good cheere, and might boldly rest vpon the certaintie of these promises.

By a *new song*, he means an excellent, an exquisit, an elegant, and no common song, but such a one as should rauish mens minds by mentioning the wonderfull goodnes of God, the like whereof was neuer seene before, in which sense this word is taken, Psal.

33. 3. 96. 1. for *new* is opposed heere to that which is common. And thus the infinit mercie of God, which should be manifested in Christ, is extolled in this place, by whose means it fell out that this mercie of God was celebrated with wonderfull praises. Hence we learne that the more God hath enriched any of vs with the abundance of his

graces, the more should we giue our selues to *A Lesson.*
sing his praises. I grant that all are bound to do it: for what is he vpon whom the necessitie of this dutie is not strictly to be imposed? But those that haue bin enriched with the greatest benefits ought also to publish them with the greater magnificence. Seeing that In Christ God then hath bin pleased in Christ to set God hath set open vnto vs the fountaine of all blessings, vs the fountaine of all his blessings, &c. and hath vnfolded his hidden spirituall treasures to all, is it any maruell if he require vs to offer vnto him a *new* and excellent sacrifice of praise? But wee are to note, that this song can not be sung by any man that is v regenerate, for it must come from the deepest ground of the heart. The holy Ghost must be the inditer and inspirer theretore of these praises, or else they can not be acceptable. Moreouer, he not only exhorts one or two to this dutie, but *all nations* of the earth, because Christ is appointed a Sauiour to all.

In Christ God hath set open to vs the fountaine of all his blessings, &c.

None but the regenerate can sing this song.

Verf. 11. *Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift vp their voyce, the townes that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rocks sing: let them shout from the top of the mountaines.*

Although the Prophet comprehends all the parts of the world, yet he mentions none but such as were best knowne of the Iewes. For Iudea had the Sea lying of the West side, and the desert of Arabia lying on the East: and where he speaks of the paulions of *Kedar*, of the *wildernes*, and *rocks*, he means Arabia; but it by a figure called *Synecdoche*, so as vnder these words he also comprehends all the East: it is as much then as if he had said, *From the sunne rising, to the going downe thereof*, these praises shall sound forth, because the Lord shall now be worshipped in euery place, whereas before he was only knowne in Iewry. Things shall be changed therefore, for this *song* shall be heard to the vtmost ends of the world.

The figure Synecdoche.

He mentions the *townes of Kedar*, because they knew that the Arabian Scenites dwelt in tents. But in speaking of the *wildernes*, he names the *Cities*: I note then, that he means not only that great desert which was between Iudea and Arabia, but the countrie lying beyond, which partly was esteemed as bordering vpon it; as also the plaines lying beyond the Mounts are called *Mountaines*, for the common people are so intent vpon that which is next vnto them, that they thinke things farre remote, resemble it. But our Prophet in the meane while exalts and sets forth the grace of God, in that it should extend it selfe to sauage and wilde people, whose crueltie and barbaritie was sufficientlie knowne.

Verf. 12. *Let them giue glorie to the Lord, and declare his praises in the Ilands.*

He now shewes what this *shouting* shall be, Heuen a celebrating of Gods praises, in regard

gard his goodneſſe and bountie ſhall be felt in all places. Thus he commands then that this redemption bee ſung forth with one voice, ſeeing the fruit thereof ſhould be common to all nations. By this we are admoniſhed to *ſing* with ardent affection at this day, when we ſing the praifes of God, that we for our parts may be inflamed, and may alſo ſet others on fire to doe the like by our example. For ſuch as haue taſted and felt how gracious God is indeed, cannot mutter them for th betwene their teeth; neither will they be luke warme, nor ſing them alone by themſelves onely.

Verſ. 13: The Lord ſhall goe forth as a giant: he ſhall ſtirre vp his courage like a man of warre: hee ſhall ſhout and cry; and ſhall preuaile againſt his enemies.

THAT which our Prophet addes now, ſerues to overcome the temptations of the faithfull: for hee attributes *ſtrength and force* vnto God, to teach them that his ſuccour is ſufficient for their ſafety. In aduerſitie we are perplexed, becauſe wee ſtand in doubt whether Gods power will be ſtrong enough for our defence; but then chiefly, when in hiding his eyes from vs, he ſeemes as it were to reiect our praies. For this cauſe the Prophet is careful to ſet forth the power of God in ſuch excellent termes, that all might learne quietly and boldlie to reſt themſelves vpon him.

The *going forth* whereof he ſpeakes, is to be taken figuratiuely: for God ſeemed *to be hid* in the time wherein he ſuffered his people to be oppreſſed and afflicted, without any appearance of ſuccour: this claue then ſignifies as much as *to goe forth to the reſcue*; which alſo is confirmed by the words following. For in that he attributes *courage* vnto God, who like a *man of warre* ruſheth vpon his enemies; they are ſimilitudes taken from humane afflictions. Whence we learne what force there is in his helpe, and yet his power without theſe borrowed ſpeeches, would moue vs little or nothing. He applies himſelfe therefore in theſe things to our capacities, as we haue told you before in many other places, that we might know with what affection he bends himſelfe to protect vs; with how great diſcontent he indures the affliction and oppreſſion of the faithfull: and in the third place, how terrible his *wrath* is, as oft as hee once prepares himſelfe to the fight.

But the circumſtance of the time is alwaies to be noted, vnto which the Prophet doubtleſſe had a ſpecial regard; & theſe prophecies muſt alſo be applied thereunto: for as long as the rage of the enemies increaſed, and as long as they triumphed over the afflicted people of God, the faithfull were to conſider of things farre about that which they ſaw with their eyes, and to be reſolved that God was ſtrong enough to ſubdue all their enemies, and to deliuer them out of their hands. Neither was it ſufficient that their

perplexed thoughts ſhould onely be quieted by this promiſe, during the time of the captiuitie; but it was alſo needfull that it ſhould continue euen vntill the coming of Chriſt: for they were conſtrained from time to time to reſiſt many incurbrances, as it appears by the histories.

Verſ. 14. I haue a long time holden my peace: I haue been ſtill, and refrained my ſelfe: now will I cry like a trauiailing Woman: I will deſtroy and deuoure as once.

THE Prophet labors to prevent the temptations which are wont to put vs to much trouble, whileſt God deſers his helpe. We are then tempred with impatience, and thinke all his promiſes vaine. For we iudge it a thing vnſeemly for God to be ſilent, and to ſleepe, as you would ſay, when the enemy awakes, and aduanceth himſelfe; in a word, that hee ſhould be cold, whileſt they be inflamed with rage to hurt; and to winke at their iniquities, whileſt they ouerflow in all manner of cruelties.

The Prophet minded therefore to ſuſtaine and cheere vp the hearts of the afflicted, which wereouer loden with ſorrowes, and to perſwade them that God had not forſaken them, albeit euery thing ſeemed to threaten their ouerthrow.

Hee doth of ſer purpose expreſſe theſe words, *a long time*, leſt ſo tedious a languishing ſhould cauſe them to faint: for in regard they had been vexed with warre vpon warre continually after the death of *Iehuſaphas*, it was hard for them to paſſe ſeuente yeeres more, being in captiuitie, out of their owne Countrey. But their calamities were not yet an end, and therefore it was needfull they ſhould bee wiſely admoniſhed, that howſoeuer God did not by and by ſuccour them, yet they ſhould loſe nothing by this delay, if ſo bee they waited with patience. Thus alſo hee rebukes the vnbeleeuers, who gaue themſelves to all diſorder by abuſing this patience of God; who proteſts that he wanted not power, though hee contained himſelfe in ſilence.

Like a woman trauiailing. By this ſimilitude he ſets forth Gods wonderfull tender affection and ardent loue: for he compares him to the mothers wonderfull ardent loue towards her onely ſon, albeit ſhe hath brought him forth with extreme ſorrowes. One would thinke theſe things ſhould agree nothing at all vnto God: but the vehement loue hee beares vs can no way be expreſſed, but vnder ſuch borrowed ſpeeches. Hee is conſtrained to vſe ſuch ſimilitudes then, as are familiarly knowne, to make vs conceiue that of which we are ignorant: for his loue farre exceeds ours; that is to ſay, it is perfect and entire. And albeit his loue ſurpaſſeth all humane affections, yet there is no exceſſe therein.

Note alſo, that he meant to ſhew, that this deliuerance of the people ſhould reſemble a birth, to teach the Iewes that their graue was

No exceſſe in Gods loue.

Wherefore the Prophet ſets forth Gods power with ſuch elegancie.

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Theſe prophecies muſt be reſerued to the circumſtance of the time.

as a *wombe* vnto them, that so they might conceiue hope of saluation, euen in the midst of corruption. Albeit then that he was able to bring forth a new Church without paine or *travaille*, yet to the end his grace might the better appeare in such a *birth*, it is not without cause that he attributes the *cry of a straitling woman* vnto him. But for as much as this similitude might diminish somewhat of Gods power and maiestie, the Prophet ioines the other affliction withall: for touching his loue, hee resembles a mother; but touching his force and power, he is like a lion.

God as touching his loue, resembles a mother: but as touching his power, a lion.

Verf. 15. *I will make waste mountaines and hilles, and dry vp all their hearbs: and I will make the floods Ilands, and I will dry vp the pooles.*

THE Prophet meanes that all the munitions which animated the wicked to retaine these poore captiues, could not hinder the Lord from setting them at libertie. It was needfull this should be added to the former. For when we see the wicked armed (in a manner) with inuincible power, wee then tremble, and haue much a doe to apprehend Gods power, so faire as to continue stedfast in our confidence. *Isaiab* therefore insists vpon this point, signifying that neither men nor munitions can resist the Lord, when he is minded to deliuer his chosen. In a word, hee shewes that the change shall bee such, that those who were the strongest before, shall be broken to peeces, and shall gaine nothing by resisting of him. This I take to be the natieue sense of these words; so that it is needlesse to stand descanting subtilly vpon them any longer, as some do, who expounding these things allegorically, thinke that *mountaines and hilles* signifie Cities; *hearbs*, the men which dwell in them. But why should we follow such sophisticities, seeing the Prophet onely shewes that God is powerfull enough to fulfill his promises, and to deliuer his Church? because hee can easilie surmount all stumbling blockes that shall be laid before him. This sentence therefore answers to other prophecies which we haue scene heretofore, where *Isaiab* teacheth, that Gods power is not tied to second causes, when he is determined to preuent the enemies of their purpose; but goes thorow with his worke after a wonderful fashion, and breakes downe all impediments which seemed to thur vp his passage.

Gods power not tied to second causes.

Verf. 16. *And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and leade them by paths that they haue not knowne: I will make darknesse light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I doe vnto them, and not forsake them.*

HAVING shewed that the force of the enemy could not hinder God from deliueering his people, he goes on with that conso-

lation which hee toucheth in the 13, and 14 verses. Now he calles them *blind*, which know not what way to turne them, nor which way to runne, by reason things goe so croosie and aukward with them. In a word, such as see no issue, but bottomlesse gulphes ready on all sides to swallow them vp: for euen as the way seemes plaine and smooth whilest things doe indifferently prosper; so in aduersitie, (but especially when all is darkened with sorrow, when all hope is gone, and death it selfe presseth hard vpon vs) wee stand then like amazed creatures. The Prophet teacheth therefore, that when all things are desperate; then, euen then is the time and houre in which wee should most of all expect succour and helpe from the Lord.

Who they be that the Prophet calles blind.

It is sometimes also very requisite that wee bee brought into straits, so as no euation be left vs, that wee be sometimes put to our shifts, and pressed on every side; yea, to be left *starke blind* in regard of the sight of any outward meanes. Why so? That we may learne to depend vpon the onely helpe of God, and to rest our selues quietly in him. For as long as we can see any leaning stocke, or are able to catch hold of any stay, bee it neuer so little, vpon that we set our whole hearts: and thus it comes to passe that wee are carried hither and thither, and vterly neglect the remembrance of Gods wonted fauour.

The time in which wee ought chiefly to expect help from God. It is good for vs sometimes to be brought into straits.

Would we be assisted and succoured then in our aduersities? Truly wee must content our selues to be *blind* then: that is to say, we must turne our eies from beholding things present, and keepe our reason shorr, that we may onely rest vpon Gods free promises. I grant this *blindnesse* will not be very pleasing to vs, and that therein the imbecillitie of our iudgements may be therein easilie discerned; yet ought wee not therefore to flee it much, if we wiselie consider the fruit that redounds to vs by it. For is it not better to be *blind*, and to be led by Gods hand, then to see with both eies, and to plunge our selues into vnauoidable dangers? He confirms this, in promising to turne *darknesse into light*. Be it then that we perceiue not so much as one sparkle of light in our afflictions, yet must wee not despaire of Gods helpe; but vse it rather as a meanes to trust more confidently in Gods promises then euer we did before: for God will easilie change our *darknesse into light*, hee will soone make *crooked things straight*, and leade vs in the way, that we may boldly walke therein without stumbling. But in the meane while, let vs know, that these things are onely promised to the faithfull that put themselves into Gods custodie, and are contented to be governed by him: in a word, to such as being acquainted with their owne dimnesse of sight, doe willingly content themselves to follow such a leader, waiting in the darknesse of their affliction, for the light of his countenance; for to such onely hee reacheth forth his hand. Let vs cleaue fast therefore to his promises, and not imitate the wise men of this world, who will walke by their own light whether he will or no; or will wander in vlawfull deliberations.

Verf. 17.

Verſ. 17. *They ſhall be turned back: they ſhall be greatly aſhamed that truſt in graven Images, and ſay to the molten Images, Yee are our Gods.*

BY this we euidentlie ſee to whom the former doctrine belonged: for now he diſtinguiſheth Gods ſeruants from Idolaters. As if he ſhould ſay, *The Lord will deſtroy his people, but in the meane while thoſe that truſt in graven Images ſhall be aſhamed.* As if he ſhould ſay, the choice is here ſet before you, either by grace to be ſaued, or miſerable to periſh. For all ſuch as put their confidence in Idols ſhall ſurely periſh: but thoſe that reſt vpon Gods word and promiſe ſhall aſſuredly be ſaued, I grant they muſt ſuffer many and tedious afflictions, yet *they ſhall not be aſhamed nor confounded: for God in the end will ſhew that this difference which he puts betweene them that truſt in him, and thoſe that truſt in Idols was not in vaine.*

Moreover, it is very certaine that by the two marks which he here expreſſeth, all Idolaters are meant, who fix their hope in any thing but in God. For albeit they bow not before their Idols, yet in attributing vnto them I know not what diuinitie, they take that glorie from the only true God which to him belongs: for the principall part of Gods ſeruiſe ſtands in faith and prayer, both which the Prophet expreſſeth in this place. But it may be demanded, whether they were ſo blockiſh as to ſay to a block, *Thou art my God.* For the moſt ſuperſtitious haue confeſſed that God was in heauen; neither haue they bin ſo groſſe as to attribute a diuine nature directly to wood or ſtone: it ſeemes therefore that *Iſaiah* makes them more ſottiſh then they are. I anſwere, that all Idolaters attribute that power to their *Images* which belongs to God; albeit they acknowledge him to be in heauen: for when they trot ſo faſt after their puppets and Idols, to whom they make and pay their vowes, doe we not euidentlie perceiue that they giue that to them which only appertaines to God? It is in vaine then that they labour to colour and cloake brutiſhnes, for they make gods of wood and ſtone, and in thus doing offer extreme violence to the Lord. The Prophet therefore hath not ouerſhot himſelfe, neither hath he framed a falſe aculaſion againſt Idolaters, becauſe *their owne words* doe ſufficientlie teſtifie the ſame to their faces, when they call their *Idols and Images, gods.* Yea let it be granted that they be not heard to pronounce any ſuch words, yet their madnes may eaſily be diſcerned, in that they thinke God can neither heare, nor help them, vntleſſe they proſtrate themſelues before a ſenſeleſſe ſtock, and mumble vp a certaine ſtint of prayers before it. Now theſe things are thus vetered, to let all know, that none can be ſaued, but he which ſhall truſt in God only.

Verſ. 18. *Heare, yee deafe: and yee blinde regard, that yee may ſee.*

HE takes *blinde* and *deafe* here in a contrarie ſenſe to that in the ſixteenth verſe,

where by this ſimilitude he noted out thoſe who were ſo deſtitute of counſell, and overwhelmed with the weight of afflictions, that it *deprived them of all fight.* For by *blinde* in this place he meanes ſuch as did *ſhut their eyes* againſt the cleare light, and would take no knowledge of Gods works. By *deafe*, thoſe that would not heare, but rather delighted to lie ſnorting in the filthines of their ignorance. He condemnes here therefore the blindnes of the Iewes, or rather of all men, as I take it. For although it be true that he reprocherh the Iewes to be *blinde* euen in ſeings, and *deafe* whileſt they heard: yet this alſo doth in part belong to the Gentiles, to whom he manifeſted himſelfe by the creatures, ingraued in their minds and conſciences the knowledge of himſelfe, and to whom alſo he had and ſhould make knowne his admirable works.

In that he calles for audience then, he giues them to vnderſtand, that the only cauſe which hinders them from comprehending Gods truth and powet, is their owne *deafnes, and blindnes*, mixed with a malicious vthankfulnes. For he is not wanting in giuing them ſufficient teſtimonies of his power, neither is he negligent in teaching them familiarly enough: but the fault is in themſelues, in that they applied not their hearts to inſtruction, nor to meditate in his word: no, nor yet to behold his wonderfull works, ſo as every one wittingly ſhut their eyes: and therefore the Prophet ſhewes that all the fault reſted in themſelues if they ſaw not Gods power.

Verſ. 19. *Who is blind but my ſeruant? or deafe as my meſſenger that I ſent? who is blinde as the perfect, and blinde as the Lords ſeruant?*

ALL expoſitors almoſt doe expound this Verſe, as if *Iſaiah* mentioned the outrages which the wicked are wont to belch out againſt the Prophets. For they caſt the ſeruants of the Lord in the teeth with the things which they haue reprinted and condemned, which ſuch companions as they can not indure. As if they ſhould ſay, Who are they, I pray thee, whom thou accuſeſt of *blindnes*, and and who are they thou calleſt *deafe*? Take it hardly to thy ſelfe. We know none ſo *blinde* as thou art. They thinke then, that it is as much as if the Lord complained thus of the Iewes, I ſee very well that you eſteeme my Prophets for no better then *blinde* and *deafe*. But we ſhall by and by ſee that this interpretation ſutes nothing at all with the ſcope of the text: for the Prophet ſhewes afterward why he calles them *blind*, to wit, becauſe *they ſaw many things, but kept them not.* Now this can not any way agree to the Prophets, ſet vs therefore follow the pure and naturall ſenſe.

Iſaiah before condemned all men of *blindnes*, but the Iewes eſpeciallie, becauſe they inioyed thoſe meanes whereby they might haue a clearer fight then any others: for they had not only that glimmering, which was common to all nations, but had alſo the word

Blind.

Deafe.

A generall blindnes and deafnes giue ouer all men.

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Two marks to diſcerne Idolaters by.

Queſt.

Anſ.

All Idolaters attribute that to Idols, which belongs to God.

The miſinterpretation of this place.

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2
The right interpretation

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founding in their eares, by which the Lord fully manifested himselfe vnto them. Though the whole world besides then was blind, yet these should haue had eyes to see and know the Lord, in regard they had the doctrine, as a burning lampe to giue light vnto them. Besides, hee speaks to these afterwards in the sixtie Chapter, Rise vp Ierusalem, and bee bright, for the darknes shall couer the whole earth, but the Lord shall giue thee light. Because the Iewes then were *blind* in so cleere light, therefore he taxeth them by this particular reprehension. As if hee should say; I strue but in vaine against those which are far off from mee, neither doe I much maruell at their blindness; but this is strange, that such a thing should befall my *seruants*, who haue the cleere light shining before their eyes. I am as one astonished to see them *deafe*, who haue the word continually sounding in their eares. The things I teach them are so plaine and euidēt, that the very *blind* and *deafe* may in a manner vnderstand them: but alas! I speake to them in vaine; for I thinke there is not a more brutish and sottish people to bee found. To be short, whereas they should haue had the quickest sense of *hearing* and *seeing*, they were the worst of all.

Whom I sent.] *Isaiah* descends by degrees
 1 from all men in general, to the Iewes in particular;
 2 then to the Priests, which were the lights of the world as it were: for it was their
 3 office to interpret the Law, to walke before others in a good example of life, and to shew vnto them the high way to heauen. Their
 The Priests. lippes, ye know, were to preferre knowledge, and at their mouth men were to seeke it: Mal. 2.7. The Prophet therefore complaines, that those who should bee *lights* and *guides* to others, were themselues as blinde as the rest.

Some refer the word *seruant*, to *Isaiah*: others, to Christ; and thinke that both were condemned of blindness. But this comes nothing neere the Prophets drift: for his meaning is, by way of comparisō to amplifye the former complaint made, touching the blindness of the Iewes. Their fault was much greater then that of other nations: but the Priests were yet in the greatest fault of all, who were their leaders and guides. Let vs know then, that by how much the more wee come neere vnto God, and the higher hee shall haue advanced vs in dignitie aboue others, the lesse shall our excuse be.

To the same purpose he calles them *perfect*; which indeede should haue been so: for hee puts them in minde by this reproch, of that *perfection* from whence they were fallen by so vnworthy a reuolt, and thereby had shamefully prophaned that holy and glorious name of their God. For seeing he gaue them a *perfect* rule of righteousness to direct them both in life and doctrine, it should haue been their parts not to haue swarued an haire breth from it.

Verf. 20. Seeing many things, but

thou keepest them not: opening the eares, but he heareth not.

Now himselfe expounds what this *blinding* is, which he mentioned before; and he shewes it to be twofold. Thus we may perceiue well enough, that he speaks only of the Iewes, who wilfully and maliciously had choked the heavenly light. The fault will bee double then when they shall appeare before Gods iudgement seat, if wee shut our eyes before the cleere light, and stop our eares whilst he vouchsafes to teach vs by his word. I grant the prophane nations are iustly left without excuse: but the Iewes, and others, to whom the Lord so many waies manifested himselfe, shall bee worthy of a double condemnation, in that they would neither see nor heare God. Let vs feare this iudgement then, who haue so many worthy lights and examples shining before our eyes; for there is a *blinding* espied at this day in many, and as great a *hardening* as was among the Iewes; but the one shall bee no more excused then the other.

What we are to make of the former doctin.

Verf. 12. The Lord is willing for his righteousness sake, that he may magnifie the Law, and exalt it.

That he might amplifye the offence of the Iewes, hee now shewes that it was not Gods fault that they were deprived of good daies. Hee said before, that the miseries and calamities which they indured, were the punishments of their wilfull & obstinate blindness. Now, to fill vp the measure of their iniquitie, hee adds that by their obstinacie they had reiected all reliefe. This place is diuersly expounded. Some read; The Lord would haue it so; others, He is gracious. But I haue translated, *The Lord is willing*: that is to say, is inclined to deliuer his people, so magnifie his law, and to exalt his iustice. And thus God yeeldes the reason why he is ready to succour the vnworthy; to wit, because he is willing that his glory may be aduanced in their *saluation*, that his *iustice* by this meanes may also appeare, and that his law might flourish in her perfect strength. Now in that the Iewes were in such a distressed estate, it was because they wittingly loued darknesse rather then light, and to heape sorrowes vpon their owne heads, rather then to obey God: for had not this come betweene, it was his only desire to haue enriched them, and to haue aduanced them.

This verse diuersly expounded See more in the sequell.

Some expound it thus; The Lord is as willing to magnifie his law, and to shew his iustice in chastising the Iewes, as hee was to threaten them by it: and thus they refer the word *righteousness*, to the punishments and plagues wherewith this people were visited of God. Others translate, For my righteousness sake: and so refer it to Christ; but they deceiue themselues in the word *Tsidō*, for doubtlesse the Prophet speaks of righteousness, minding to shew that the Lord was willing to exalt the truth of his promises, and the

the ſignes of his righteousneſſe in the conſervation of the Jewes: if they had not ſhewed themſelves unworthy of ſo great a benefit by their owne vnthankfulneſſe: others thinke that the Lord is heere excuſed, in regard it ſeemed hee ſuffered his truth to faile, when his choſen people were expoſed to ſo manie calamities; and that the Prophet meant to prevent this ſlander, by telling them that they were not thus ſcattered & made a pray, becauſe the Lord tooke any *delight* therein, but becauſe he reſpected his *iniurie* about all things. But for my part, I expound it ſimply in this ſenſe, *that the Lord to exalt his Law, v. 13* readie to doe his people good, that his glory and iuſtice might ſhine therein: but that the people deſpised themſelves of ſuch a bleſſing, and thus made their caſe deſperate by their owne obſtinacie.

The ſenſe according to Matter Caluins iudgement.

The cauſe why the Lord adorne his Church with ſo many fauours.

From hence alſo we may gather, for what cauſe the Lord adorne his Church with ſo many of his fauours; euen that hee might *magnifie his law*, and bring men to the ſeruiſe of his Maieſtie, that ſo his truth might ſhine more and more.

When the Prophet ſaith that the Lord is *willing*; it is euident that he findes no cauſe out of himſelfe: but yet he expreſſeth it further, in adding *for his righteousneſſe ſake*: for he excludes all that men bring of their owne; neither can hee be moued to doe good, but becauſe he is juſt. Adde alſo, that no dignitie or worthineſſe is to be found in any man: but there was a ſpeciall reaſon of this, in reſpect of the Jewes, whom hee had vouchſafed to adopt among the reſt.

Verſ. 22. But this people is robbed and ſpoiled, and ſhall be all ſnared in dungeons, and they ſhall be hid in priſon houſes, they ſhall be for a pray, and none ſhall deliuer: a ſpoile, and none ſhall ſay, Reſtore.

NOW *Iſaiah* ſhewes, that the people are miſerable, and appointed to deſtruction by their owne folly, becauſe they reieced God, who otherwiſe was readie to haue ſuccoured them, but they, like deſperate perſons reieced all remedies, and ſought their owne overthrow. He ſo excuſeth the Lord then that he vehemently reprobues the people, who vnkindly did caſt off the Lord, and turned his grace into wantonnes. And yet, as I haue ſaid already, this is not ſaid ſo much to juſtifie God, as bitterlie to complaine of this nation, who had ſworne to procure their owne ruine, ſeeing they wilfully threw themſelves into ſundry calamities. If we ſee the Church ſcattered and deformed at this day, let vs blame our ſinnes, for we thereby would not ſuffer the Lord any longer to continue his louing kindnes towards vs.

The cauſe of the Churches deſormitie.

Some tranſlate the coniunction copulative *Vau*, Wherefore, which I haue rather tranſlated *But*, for it is oppoſed to the willingnes wherewith the Lord was inclined to defend his people, if themſelves had not hindered the ſame. I haue turned the verb *To bind* into the future tence: for the Prophet ſpeakes

of the people which ſhould be led captiue. As touching the word *Bakrim*, I thinke they are here two dictions, ſignifying in the *cauſe*; for it they ſhould be taken for yong men, it will not agree with the ſcope of the text.

They ſhall be ſpoiled.] Thoſe who interpret this of all men generallie, of whom Chriſt only is the Sauour, come nothing nere the Prophets meaning: for he ſimply affirms that the people ſhall *periſh*, without hope of deliuerance, becauſe they reieced Gods grace. Hence let vs gather what ſhall vndoubtedlie befall vs, if we forthwith receive not Gods mercie whileſt it is offered: truly we ſhall deteue to be deſtroyed of all ſuccour, and to periſh miſerable, being made a *ſpoile* and a *pray*.

What it is to reieced grace being offered.

Verſ. 23. Who among you ſhall hearken to this, and take heed, and heare, for afterwards.

I*Iſaiah* goes on with the ſame argument, for he ſaith, that the Jewes are and ſhall be ſo beſotted, that they ſhall ſee nothing, though they be admoniſhed. In the next place he ſpeakes directly to them, and taxeth their dulnes, that could neither conceiue nor know any thing touching Gods iudgements, which yet were ſo maniſeſt, whereas in all likelihood they ought to haue been beſt inſtructed and taught of all others.

For afterwards.] That is to ſay, who being at the laſt tamed by afflictions, ſhall come againe to be thinke themſelves, though very late. We ſee then how this admiration *vho among you*! aggravates their crime and obſtinacie, when he ſaith, they ſhould be euer vn-teachable. In the meane while let vs learne what uſe to make of Gods threatnings and chaſtiſements: for the Lord neither *reprobues* nor *corrects* vs for our ſinnes as if he delighted in taking vengeance, or required any recompence, but that wee ſhould ſtand vpon our guard *for the time to come*.

To heare for afterwards.

The uſe we ought to make of Gods reprehentions and corrections.

Verſ. 24. Who gaue Iacob for a ſpoile, and Iſraell to the robbers? did not the Lord, becauſe wee haue ſinned againſt him? for they would not walke in his ways, neither be obedient to his law.

S**E**e wherefore *Iſaiah* complains, that the Jewes tooke nothing to heart; for when they ſuffered, they thought it came to paſſe by chance, and that they wanted the power to make reſiſtance, which their fathers had before them, through the want whereof they were overcome by their enemies. In a word, they looked ſo much to outward cauſes, that they neglected to thinke vpon the Prophets threatnings; neither regarded they Gods iudgements. He is ſaine therefore to ſummon them *before Gods heavenly throne*, to proue vnto them, that he was the author of their miſeries: for it was vnpoſſible to perſwade them that their corrections proceeded from God, who puniſhed them for their offences. And
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may not we say the like of the people of this age? Every one is content in generall termes to confesse that God is the author of all things: but come to particulars, men are ashamed to acknowledge that this & that crosse procedes from his hand. Why so? Because their mindes are distracted with many thoughts, and being forestalled with this opinion of fortune, they turne their mindes rather to this or that, then to the Lord. *Isaiah* shewes then that the *sinnes* of the people are the cause of such a ruin, and that the Lord is iust in bringing the same vpon them: according also as *Moses* had testified; How should a thousand haue fled at the sight of one, if their strong God had not sold them, and if the Lord had not thrust them vp? *Deut.* 32. 30.

Wee wonder to see things fall out euerie day contrary to our expectation; and in the meane while, neuer consider the fault to bee in our selues. We must therefore be brought vnto the consideration heereof by force of armes, as it were: it is needfull therefore that this doctrine should bee oft pressed vpon vs.

Now to the end they might not charge God with crueltie, the Prophet adds, that it came *iustly* to passe: for he smatched not vp the rod rashly, but that necessitie constraines him therunto; neither takes he pleasure in our afflictions.

We are to obserue two distinct things here then. First, that no aduersitie happens but by *Gods* providence, lest wee should imagin that things fall out by chance, or by some outward cause. Secondly, that no euill comes vpon vs *iniustly*, because we haue first prouoked God to chastise vs for our *sinnes* committed against him. It is in vaine for men to accuse God then of any hard measure; for wee must acknowledge his iust iudgements in the chastisement which are worthily befallen vs.

When he saith, *they would not walke in his wayes*, hee further amplifies the fault of the Iewes, but he changeth the *persons*; for in the former member hee put himselfe in amongst the rest, because hee was one of the same bodie, and therefore confessed his faults. Not that hee resembled the common people in anie leaud behauiour; or that he approved of their wickednesses, but it was vnpossible in so great an heape of vices, that he should be vtterly vntainted with some infection and contagion thereof, with the rest of the parts of the body. Therefore in as much as there was great difference betweene him and others, he *changeth the person*, and ads that *they* would not, thereby shewing, that so foule a rebellion displeased him: so as hee could neither winke at it, nor consent vnto it. For he speaks not here of pettie offenses, but of a *contemps* and renouncing of God; in regard that they brake out into pride, after they had shaken off his yoke. This is the cause why *Isaiah* in the second place puts himselfe out of the number.

Now if these things fell out iustly vpon the Iewes, let vs know that the like hangs ouer our heads, and will bee inflicted vpon the whole world, if being admonished, we repent

not: for we see how gratioously the Lord calles vs to him, how many waies hee manifestis his good will towards vs, and with what loue he protests hee is ready to be appeased, though he be iustly offended. But if after so many fauourable summons, and daily experiences of his patience, we still refuse to giue care, it is most certaine that wee shall feeble by wofull experience, that the miserie which besell these, is common to all rebels.

If Gods patience be abused, we shall be sure to smart for it.

*Verf. 25. Therefore hee hath poured vpon him his fierce wrath, and the strength of the battell: and set it on fire round about, and hee knew not; and it burned him vp, * yet hee considered not.*

*Or, but he put it not vpon his heart.

BECAUSE Gods chastisements which had begun to seize vpon them, and were afterward to be finished in their captiuitie, were very grieuous, therefore the Prophet sets forth the vehemencie of them by these similitudes. For he saith, that the Lord will *powre out his wrath*: as if some thunder-clap should fall vpon their heads with great violence; or as if the *waters* should ouerflow, and make great breaches thorowout a whole Country; as the waters gushed forth hastily in the deluge, after the windowes of heauen were broken, and that the bottels thereof were set open: *Gen.* 6. 11. In the next place he vseth another figure, saying, that God will *gather together his forces against vs*, and to assault them to the vtmost. If any vnderstand this of the enemies which the Lord raised vp against the Iewes, I gainsay him not: for it is certaine that they came forth by Gods iust iudgement. For what was *Nebuchadnezzar* but Gods rod? Yet I rather thinke it should bee taken by way of similitude; to wit, that God *entred by violence as an enemy armed, and powred out his fierce wrath vpon them*.

Now he hath diuers means to *fight* against vs; for hee corrects his people sometimes by plague, sometimes by the sword, some times by famine: and therefore I thinke that in this similitude hee comprehends all sorts of afflictions where with the Lord smites his people. And if wee thinke them now and then too sharpe, let vs consider the vglinesse of our sinnes, and we shall perceiue that they be not exccssive, neither that he is too seuer and rigorous in punishing vs.

God hath diuers means to correcte.

We must set the vglie shape of our sins against the bitter taste of our afflictions.

And he knew it not. He cries out againe against this grosse sottishnes wherewith y Iewes were so possessed, that they could no way feeble their misery; neither could they so much as lift vp their eyes to heauen, to acknowledge Gods hand which smote them.

But he put it not vpon his heart. This phrase of speech signifies to consider of a thing seriously and diligently; for if we thought vpon it, and had it *well giuen in our hearts* that God is the Iudge, and that hee iustly chastiseth vs, wee should forthwith repent. The world at this day is pressed vnder manie calamities; there is almost no corner

We wonder why God afflicts vs, but we neuer wonder at our sinnes which are the cause of them.

God takes no pleasure in our afflictions.

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The reason why the Prophet first matcheth himselfe with the multitude, and yet after wards excludes himselfe.

The vse of this doctrine belongs to vs.

Gods iudgements about in euery place, but no man layes the to heart.

ner thereof exempt from his wrath : yet who knowes it, or puts it upon his heart? Doe not all band themſelues furioſouſlie againſt him with an vntamed rebellion : it is no mar-

uell then if he lye on loades, and poure out his wrath on euery ſide vpon the mad world, which deſperately oppoſeth it ſelfe againſt him.

THE XLIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *But now thus ſaith the Lord that created thee o Iſaiah: and he that formed thee o Iſrael, Feare not: for I haue redeemed thee: I haue called thee by name, thou art mine.*



EE can not well tell whether this verſe depends vpon the former, or is ſeparated from it. For the Prophets (whoſe writings are leit vnto vs) diſtinguiſhed nor their Sermons into certain

Chapters, ſo as we ſhould be able to define of euery dayes Sermon. Yet me thinks this doctrine is ioined to the former, ſo as hauing ſhewed himſelfe very angry againſt the Iewes euen to threaten their deſtruction, he meant now to ſweeten this ſharpeness. For the Lord hath euermore reſpect to the faithfull: neither is impietie at any time ſo ouerspread, but hee reſerues a ſmall remnant which hee keeps from falling into ſuch extremities, becauſe he cares for their ſafetie, and therefore the letter *Vſu* ſhould be reſolued into a particule aduerſatiue thus, *Yes*, will the Lord leaue ſome conſolation to the faithfull which ſhall ſucceed. This place therefore is to be well obſerued, for albeit the whole world ſhould conſpire to roote vs out, and that Gods wrath ſhould burne on euery ſide about vs, and that we were brought to deaths dore, yet if there doe but two or three of the faithfull remaine, we ought not to deſpaire, ſeeing the Lord ſpeakes thus vnto them, *Feare not*.

How this verſe depends vpon the former.

The word *now*, which the Prophet here vſeth hath great weight, for it ſignifies that the calamitie is preſent, or very neere at hand. In a word, that it is the time wherein all things ſhall ſeeme deſperate and ſorlorne; yet euen then, God will neither ceaſe to comfort his elect, nor ſweetly to aſſwage their forrowes, that ſo in the greateſt of their extremities they may haue a firme and an inuincible faith. Hereunto appertaine theſe Titles of *Creator*, and *Forger*, without which theſe propheſies would haue bin vterlie vneffectuall. Now we may gather from other places, that the Lord ſpeakes not here of that generall creation which is common to vs with other men, when we are borne dead in treſpaſſes and finnes, but of our regeneration into the hope of eternall life, in which reſpect we are alſo called *new creatures*: and in this ſenſe *S. Paul* ſaith, that we are *Gods workmanſhip*, *Ephes. 2. 10.* as we haue ſufficiently ſhewed

This creation muſt be applied to regeneration.

heretofore. In this ſenſe he alſo calles himſelfe the *former*: as if he ſhould ſay, I haue not formed my Church, in which my glory clearely ſhines, to bring to excellent a worke to nought. Whence we may obſerue, that the Church hath nothing in her ſelle, whereof ſhe can boaſt, but of Gods grace, to which all theſe gifts wherewith ſhe is adorned, ought to be attributed.

The Church hath nothing in her ſelle to boaſt of.

That which is added, *for I haue redeemed thee*, may be as well referred to the time to come, as to that which was paſt: for the firſt deliuerance out of Egypt gaue them hope of that which was to come: but albeit he ſpeakes of the future deliuerance from Babylons captiuitie, yet the verb which is put in the time paſt ſutes well, in reſpect the Lord hath in his ſecret counſell alreadie redeemed vs, before the effect thereof extends it ſelfe vnto vs. Minding therefore to reſtiſie what he had decreed in himſelfe, to wit, to deliuer his Church which ſeemed as good as ſorlorne, he ſidly vſeth the time paſt, ſaying, *I haue redeemed thee*.

1
2

To call by name, ſignifies to receiue one into a neere band of familiaritie, as when God adopts vs for his children. What is the reaſon of this ſpeech? Surely the reprobates are ſo reiected of him that it ſeemes he *forgets their names*, in which reſpect the Scripture ſaith, that he knows them not, *Math. 7. 23*. Now by this oppoſition we ſee more clearly what it is to be called of God: to wit, when he leaues others to honour vs with a ſpeciall fauour, in putting vs into his familie, whereas we were ſtrangers from him before: ſecondly, when he receiues vs into his charge and proteccion to order and guide vs and all our actions.

What it is to be called of God.

1
2

To the ſame purpoſe he addes, *Thou art mine*. To giue the faithfull to vnderſtand, that he will euer haue a Church among his elect, becauſe he will not be deprived of his right of poſſeſſion. To be ſhort, he ſhewes that it is his peculiar and precious inheritance, which he will at no hand indure to be diſpoſſeſſed of.

The Churchs Gods proper inheritance

Verſ. 2. *When thou paſſeſt through the Waters I will be with thee, and through the floods, that they do not overflow thee. When thou walkeſt through the very fire thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle vpon thee.*

THIS is a preiunction, whereby the Prophet ſhewes that the faithfull ought not to faint vnder their afflictions, ſeeing God is at hand to ſuccor them. Thus he ſpeakes more plainly then he did in the former verſe: for

in teaching that the Church shall not bee free from miseries and calamities, but must wrestle with them without ceasing, he thereby incourageth her to patience and magnanimity. As if hee should say; *The Lord hath not redeemed thee that thou shouldst inioy thy pleasures, and shouldst give thy selfe so ease and idleness*, but to the end thou shouldst prepare thy selfe to indure all sorts of euils.

What is meant by fire and water.

See Ps. 66. 12.

Our faith hath need of many trials.

See Exod. 3. 2. & 2. Cor. 4. 8. 9. 10.

Though we be brought into many fraits, yet the Lord will giue vs a timely issue.

By fire and water, he means the infinit variety of troubles, to which we are subiect in this present life: for we haue not to incounter with one calamitie onely, but with many, and those of diuers natures: so as wee must make account to goe thorow fire and water. As the Apostle James also, Chap. 1. 2. exhorts the faithfull to count it exceeding ioy, when they fall into diuers tentations. For certainlie our faith hath need of many trials, in regard that oft times, he which for once hath gone away conqueror, may faint and be ouercome the second time. God exerciseth vs therefore with many afflictions, but in the end wee shall escape: the waves shall beat vpon vs, but they shall not swallow vs up; the fire shall burne vs, but it shall not consume vs. Wee shall haue a sense and feeling I grant, of the misery as well as others, but God will sustaine vs by his grace, and fortifie vs with the spirit of patience, that our hearts faile vs not, till putting forth his hand vnto vs, he hath drawne vs vp vnto himselfe.

Verf. 3. *For I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel thy Saviour: I gaue Egypt for thy ransome, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.*

*Or, in thy stead.

A confirmation of the former consolation.

HE confirms the former sentence by the Experiences of the time past. For if the Lord had in former time succoured his people, it was good reason they should stay assuredly vpon his fauour (for the time to come.) Wee must euer keepe that in minde which is contained in the first verse; *Fear not, for I haue redeemed thee*: for these things should be ioined together, because they tend all to one end. For if the Lord be our God, then by consequence he is with vs: verf. 2. and wee shall proue by experience that he is our Saviour. But if wee will find him such a one to vs, it is necessarily required, that wee proue our selues to be a part of Israel; not in name onely, but to shew some infallible markes thereof in the whole course of our life. Thus you see the foundation of our confidence is in this, that the Lord is our God. Whence it followes, that those who acknowledge him not for their father, neither will rest vpon his good pleasure, must needs haue trembling consciences for euer. The wicked reioice and lift vp their crests against God, but their securitie and ioy is nothing else but a giddines, & frensic of spirit; by reason whereof, they hasten their owne perdition the sooner. But the faithfull are heere assured, that he who hath chosen them, will alwaies continue their God and Saviour: for which cause he hath separated

To seele God our Saviour, we must be a part of Israel, not in name onely, but by some infallible testimonies.

them frō the rest of world, to be his heritage.

In this sense he calles himselfe the holy one of Israel, because amongst all mankind, which is naturally estranged from him, he chose his people Israel to be his peculiar flocke. Now howsoeuer the outward separation be to little purpose, vnlesse the elect also bee sanctified by the power of the holy Ghost; yet although Israel was polluted as well as other nations, God notwithstanding pronounceth that his couenant shall neuer be broken with them, in regard he will remaine alwaies like himselfe. Moreouer, it is euident enough that the word holy, is taken for him that sanctifies. Will wee be assured then of Gods loue? Let vs euer set before vs the pledge of our adoption, which will be vnto vs as a sure rocke whereon to settle our hearts: this grace therefore let vs beg of God with all the powers of our soule.

The meane to keepe our selues in the assurance of Gods fauour.

I gaue Egypt for thy ransome.] I meane not to expound these repetitions which the Prophet so often vseth, which also are frequent in his language: for hee puts, *To giue the ransome*; and, *to giue in thy stead*, in one and the same sense. Wee haue told you already that the Prophet consumes the faithfull, by setting these former presidents of Gods grace before them. As if he should say; You haue proued long since, that the Lord hath had care of your saluation; for how was it possible for Sennacherib to bring his forces against the Ethiopians, and other nations, but that God had a purpose to spare you, and to turne the violence of your enemies against your neighbours? Seeing then that hitherunto hee hath imploied himselfe so much in your seruice (as it were) you haue no reason to doubt of his fauour for the time to come. If therefore at any time it so fall out, that our necessities shall cause vs to call Gods prouidence or his promises into question, let vs remember what mercies he hath bestowed vpon vs in times past: for hee may iustly condemne vs of exceeding vnthankfulness, if hauing receiued so many fauours from him, wee yet stand in doubt of his good will towards vs for hereafter.

But some may aske why hee calles Egypt and Ethiopia the Churches ransome, seeing prophane nations are vnworthy of such an honor, as to be the redeemers of Gods children? I answer, the Prophet borrowed this phrase of speech from mens vsual maners of speaking: as if hee should say; The Egyptians, Ethiopians, and Sabeans were put in thy stead: I constrained them to sustaine the harmes which hung ouer thine head, even as if there had been an interchange made betweene you: for to saue thee, I destroyed them, and in thy stead, put them into the hands of thine enemies. Wee must resort to the historie for the better vnderstanding hereof: for when Sennacherib came with violence against Iudah, God arrested him by the way, and sent him to fight with others; so as hee was constrained to turne backe his forces. And thus the Egyptians and the Ethiopians were destroyed, whilist Gods people were spared: 2. King. 19. 9.

See Prou. 11. 8. & 21. 18.

Hence we may easilie gather, that the same prouidence

Gods providence the ſame in relieving his Church at this d. y. as in former ages.

providence and infinite goodneſſe of God, is as far extended vnto vs at this day, as it was towards the Iewes, vnleſſe we be more then blockiſh. Is it not he, thinke you, that makes tyrants (who would care vs vp at a morſell, and with one conſent are all of them readie in their furie to ſwallow vs vp quicke) to deuoure one another, and to tūne their rage which was kindled againſt vs, vpon others? Doe wee not ſee by experience, that to preferre vs, hee puts *others in our ſhoes*, and ſo they become our *raſome*? When we therefore are thus fauoured of God, that the wicked lets vs alone in quiet, whileſt they are aſſaulting one another, (for it is not of anie good will they beare vs that wee are freed from their furie,) let vs then liſt vp our eyes vnto heauen, and with all thankfulneſſe acknowledge that God *puts others in our places* by a miracle, to the end he might *ſpare vs*: for we are as ſheepe appointed to be ſlaine; naked ſwords are glistering on euery ſide euer vs; and if hee either plucked them not out of their hands, or turned the points and edges of them towards others, wee ſhould feele the ſmart which they doe.

Whence it is that the Church liues in peace.

A generall doctrine. God eſteems the faithfull more then all the world beſides.

See 1. Sam. 23. 26, 27.

*Or, in thy ſtead.

*Or, in the place of thy ſoule. This verſe contains the reaſon of the former.

All merit ſhut out.

The cauſe of ſaluation, and of all benefiſ beſides, comes

reſtem vs according to our vertues, he might ſoone ſhake vs off. Let vs therefore renounce all opinion of merit, which is not to be found in vs, that ſo we may wholly attribute all to Gods free grace, who ſhewes vs no meane or common fauour, when he vouchſaſeth to intitle vs *precious*. In which reſpect he alſo calles vs his *fiſt borne*; Exod. 4. 22. and friends, Iohn 1. 5. 15.

vnto vs of Gods meeer liberallie.

In that he ſaith, he *gave man for them*, it is nothing elſe but an explication of the former ſentence, taking *man* for men: as if hee ſhould ſay; There is not a man whom the Lord will not deſtroy for thy ſafetie: for hee makes more reckoning of the ſoule of one faithfull man, then of all the world beſides. And yet hee heere withall admoniſteth the Church that ſhe is heere redeemed at their coſt, who by nature and birth differ nothing at all from her.

Man taken for men.

Verſ. 5. *Fear not, for I am With thee: I will bring thy ſeed from the Eaſt, and gather thee from the Weſt.*

WE muſt not thinke there is any ſuperſtition in that the Prophet ſo often repeats this exhortation. All of vs know, and haue ſufficient experience how inclinable our nature is to diſtruſt. Now it is hard for vs to thinke or imagin into what wonderfull ſtraits and diſtreſſes the Church of the Iewes was then brought. As ſoone as we begin once but to call Gods promiſes into queſtion, our mindes are diſtracted with many paſſions, we ſtand amazed at the greatneſſe and diuerſitie of the dangers, we are daily aſſaulted with vexations of ſpirit; at laſt we grow ſottiſh, and cannot bee brought to taſte how gracious our God is. Our mindes therefore being thus poſſeſſed with deſpaire, haue we not neede that this voice ſhould againe & againe ring in our eares, *I am with thee; feare not*: that ſo this *feare* may either be whollie rooted vp out of our hearts, or at leaſt ſo corrected by little and little, that we may not be overcome of it: for I can tell you, if it take neuer ſo little rooting there, it is not ſo eaſilie diſplanted. Hence we obſerue, that we ought to place our hope in nothing but in Gods *being preſent with vs*: for if he be *abſent*, we muſt needes tremble for *feare* or wax dull and dead hearted, or ſtagger to and fro like a drunken man. And yet the Lord would not haue vs be void of feare, as that we ſhould thereby grow careleſſe or idle; but when we heare that he is *neere*, and that he will aſſiſt vs, faith muſt then overcome all difficulties in the moſt eminent dangers.

Wherein our hope ought to be placed.

I will bring thy ſeed from the Eaſt.] This place is drawne (as we know) out of Deut. 30. 3, 4. For the Prophets are the expoſitors of *Moses*, and doe gather their doctrine out of his writings, as we haue ſhewed you from the beginning. Thus the Prophet applies this place of *Moses* then to the circumſtance of the time preſent, vnto which in this Sermon he hath a ſpecial reſpect. *Moses* had thus foretold, The Lord thy God ſhall cauſe thy captiues to returne

See his preface

turne, and will haue compassion vpon thee, and will gather thee together againe out of all nations among whom he hath scattered thee: yea, though thou wert scattered *to the utmost parts vnder heauen*, yet from thence thy God will gather thee, and from thence will he take thee. *Isaiah* applies that now to a particular, which *Moses* then spake in generall, vttering the same thing, only changing some of the words. The summe is, that howfoeuer it be as difficult to gather together in one a people not only disioined, but also scattered among many nations to the utmost coasts vnder heauen, as to gather ashes together againe, being sprinkled here and there, yet God by his admirable power will cause these members thus rent in sunder, and diuided so farre one from another, to be gathered againe together into one body.

Verf. 6. *I will say to the North, giue: and to the South, keepe not back: bring my sonnes from farre, and my daughters from the end of the world.*

See verse 5.

VNDER the *fourre quarters* here mentioned, he comprehends the whole world, for so it is vsually taken in all languages. But *Isaiah* speaks somewhat in an higher stile then *Moses* doth, because he meant as it were to set the people againe to the possession of their land: and this is very fitting for such descriptions which place things before our eyes as if they were presentlie acted: he might haue determined this matter in a word, but this varying of the sentence hath much more weight in it; for he brings in the Lord as it were vsing his prerogatiue royall ouer all creatures, *commanding all parts of the world so for his people againe as libertie.*

Not all Israel but the true Israel shall be gathered.

Bring my sonnes.] By this he signifies that all Israel shall not be gathered, but that part only which is the true Israel: for all those that descended from *Abrahams* loines according to the flesh, were not Israelites indeed, but there were many bastards. These things therefore appertaine to the true seed: for the whole body of this great people escaped not, but a little handfull only, as we haue seene heretofore in the tenth Chapter. The number of those that were led captiue was exceeding great: the flock or remnant that returned was very small: there was that seed with which the Lord would not breake his couenant made with their fathers, nor suffer them to perish.

But this seemed an hard matter for the Iewes to beleue, who were despised of all, and were not only hated, but reiected as the cursedest nation vnder heauen, so as they were thought vnworthie to be reckoned among the comon ranke of men. It was needfull for them then to cleaue fast to these promises: they knew well enough indeed that *Cyrus* should come, but yet they could not imagin what maner of man he should be, seeing he was yet vnborne. Had they not need then, thinke you, to be armed with a constant and firme faith to wait vpon the Lord with

inuincible hope and patience, when many held these prophesies for no better then fables? Let vs from hence learne to looke only vnto God, that so we may be resolu'd of his help, and of the performance of his promises in due season.

Verf. 7. ** Every one shall be called by my name: for I created him for my glorie, * formed him and made him.*

* All called by my name.

* Or, yea, I haue.

RESOLUE this sentence thus, because the Prophet vseth the singular number in stead of the plural, and therefore the expositors haue erred here. For thus they translate, All those that are called by my name, I haue formed for my glorie. But I rather vnderstand it thus: All called; that is to say, All shall be called by my name: as in another place he saith, My name shall be called vpon them. Why so? Because I haue created, made, and formed them for my glorie.

You shall finde the exposition of these words in Chap. 29. 23. & 43. 21.

Hee continues the argument which hee handled before touching the gathering of the people into one body, though it were dispersed into diuers and farre Countries. As if he should say, If this worke seeme incredible, you must not iudge of it by the order of nature, but according to the absolute power of God.

By my name then, signifies vnder my conduct, for we haue told you in another place, that he shewes himselfe fauorable vnto vs, when in respect of the right of adoption, he reputes vs for his people. Now because the Iewes were to be led vnder his government and power, and not by the strength or riches of men, he affirms that his name shall be exalted in this deliuerance.

For my glorie.] The Prophet addes a reason, which contains in it a strong confirmation, to wit, God will haue his glory to shine in the saluation of his people: wherein he protests, that it is his proper office to protect his Saints, and to be as careful for their good, as for the glorie of his owne name, which he will neuer suffer to be blasphemed. In a word, that his honour (of which he is the perpetual defender) and the saluation of his people, are things so neerely conioined, that nothing can separate them.

Gods glorie shines in the Churches saluation.

And the further to amplify the same, he repeats one and the same thing in diuers formes of speech, that he might the better perswade them to be the finisher of that good worke which he had begun in them. To this appertaines the particle *Al*, which signifies *Yea*, or *Also*, and in some places, *Now*: so as many expound, Euen as I haue created and formed this people, so doe I desire to set them in their first estate, and restore them to their former libertie. It may also be translated *Yea*, which I thinke agrees best, and I haue also followed it in the text, to shew, that whatsoever the people receiued, proceeded from the meere grace of God, who had a speciall care ouer their saluation, so as he could not indure his fo faire and excellent worke to remaine vnperfected. This place then sets before vs a singular testimonie of Gods exceeding

ceeding fauor, in that he hath not only created vs men, but hath also reformed vs according to his owne image.

Verf. 8. *I will bring forth the blind people, and they shall haue eyes: and the deafe and they shall haue eares.*

The breuitie and shortnesse of the words breeds some obscuritie in the sense. For some translate thus; I will bring forth the blind, and him that hath eyes: that is to say; as well him that sees, as those that see not: The deafe, and those that heare. Others, by this word Blind, vnderstand such as haue eyes; but yet so dazeled, that they cannot behold the secrets of Gods heauenly wisdom. But when I consider the words well, I had rather expound them distinctly thus, *I will so bring forth the blind, that I will giue them sight; and will deliuer the deafe in such wise, that they shall recover their hearing.* Word for word it is; *To bring forth the blind, and there shall be eyes; the deafe, and they shall haue eares.* For the drift of the text requires that this benefit should be noted distinctly: so as the people must first be deliuered, and then eares and eyes shall bee giuen them.

The Lord effected this, when he brought his people forth of Babylon: but the Prophet doubtlesse looked further off; euen to the kingdome of Christ: for then the faithfull were not onely gathered out of Caldea, but from the foure quarters of the world also; as wee may plainly and excellently see in the first sermon made by Saint Peter, where *manie of diuers nations* were gathered together to profess the same faith. Many also afterwards, which seemed altogether strangers, came and ioined themselves to the same bodie, and shewed that they were the true children of Abraham.

Therefore if we will finde the full accomplishment of this prophesie, we must come to Iesus Christ, by whom onely wee are deliuered from the bondage of Satan, and maintained in a free estate. It is he that giues vs eyes and eares, who before were both deafe and blind by nature. But we must call to minde that which I haue often said heretofore; to wit, that this restauration wrought by Christ, is ioined with the returne of the people: for that which God then began in drawing his people out of their captiuitie, he continues while Christs second coming, and then in the end will finish it: and thus there is but one and the same deliuerance still. Whence it follows, that the benefits mentioned in this verse, ought not to bee restrained to so narrow bounds, as to the captiuitie onelic.

Verf. 9. *Let all the nations bee gathered together, and let the people bee assembled: who among them can declare this, and shew vs something? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may*

be iustified; but let them beare, and say it is truth.

The Prophet takes to him heere the person of God, and derides the Idols; as hee hath done before. For it stood him in hand (especially then in respect of the time) to separate the true God from Idols. It is no great matter to attribute the glory of the diuinitie vnto God in generall termes, but it is exceeding difficult to giue it to him onely, and to suffer all false gods to be brought to nothing, which then were in great request. For in the destruction of the Iewes, the Idolaters feasted their gods of gold and siluer, no lesse then if they had overcome the God of Israel. The Prophet therefore instructs the people afore hand, what they should answer touching the scoffes and taunts of their enemies, in respect of whom, they were but a litle handfull; and chargeth them notwithstanding to continue constant in their holy profession against all the power of their aduersaries, and not to feare though great troopes of them should bee assembled to defend their errors. We haue told you before that prescience and power belongs to God onely, in regard that he sees and gouernes all things according to his will: by which two arguments, hee conuinceth all false gods of fallhood: Chap. 40. and 41. Now he repeats the same thing, not so much to draw the Idolaters from their error, amongst whom these prophesies were not read, but to confirme and establish the Iewes in faith, who were assured that they knew the true God. I grant this doctrine now is common both to Iewes and Gentiles. The Iewes haue indeede depriued themselves of it by their owne vnthankfulnesse: so as that benefit which was then proper to them, is now translated vnto others. But *Isaiah* spake then especially to the Iewes, to force them to an vnfaired detestation of Idols, and of the superstitions of the Gentiles, which had then their full swing. Now hauing summoned the Idolaters to maintain their Idols cause, he takes it for granted, that it will be but in vaine for them to giue such honour to their puppets, because they are able to foresee nothing to come.

He addes, that no witnesses will be found, which can auouch that the false gods haue euer indeede prophesied of any thing truly: in which regard their cause is left destitute of a lawfull defence. It is not to be denied but in all times there haue gone many flying reports touching the miracles which Idols haue done: and we heare of many wonders now a daies: for Idolaters are no lesse obstinate in auouching their fables and lies, then they are bold and impudent to inuent them: but if we come to examin them, we shall find no truth therein, but meerer fancies and sottish deuices. For this cause the Prophet giues them the prize, if they bring in such witnesses as are worthy of credit: and thus it is to God onely then, to whom this honour appertaines to haue witnesses on his side.

To conclude, as if the matter were cleere enough of it selfe, he stands vp more boldly,

The reason why the Prophet instructs the people againe in the doctrine of Gods prescience.

Where we shall find the full accomplishment of this prophesie.

Three extents of this and the like prophesies.

Lying miracles.

See verf. 13.

The only let that keepe men from the knowledge of the truth.

Those that are willing to learne, shall soone perceiue that the truth is grounded vpon infallible arguments.

and commands the vanquished to hold their peace. Yet in that he bids them *heare*, it is to shew that the only let that keeps men from the knowledge of \bar{y} truth is, that their minds being forefalled with error, they scorne to giue care vnto God. For this contempt hinders them from coming to repentance, but rather stand proudly to defend the inuention of their owne braine. But the Lord was ready to haue taught them if they had had but a *patient care*. For where could they haue found a better Master? But their pride and rebellion blinds them so, as they can not see the truth, and thus vp their eare from hearkning to the voice of God. Are they not iustly left without excuse then, seeing they obstinately reiect him, and will not lend their eare to his doctrine, who offers himselfe in such milde sort to instruct them? For if they were in any measure teachable, *Isaiah* well assures that they should be constrained to subscribe to their owne condemnation: for in truth, all such as shew themselues teachable shall easily vnderstand that the truth of God is grounded vpon infallible arguments, and not vpon vncertain opinions which haue their foundation in the ayre.

Verf. 10. *You are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my seruant, whom I haue chosen: therefore ye shall know and beleue me, and ye shall vnderstand that I am: before me there was no God, neither shall there be after me.*

THE Lord hauing prouoked the Gentils to disputacion, and hauing shewed that all that which they esteemed touching the excellencie of their Idols, was meere vanitie and lies: now he leaues their assemblie, and brings forth his *witnesses*, that men may know, that his case is not like that of the false gods. He rightly boasts then that the true witnesses take his part: for the Iewes had bin taught by reuelations from heauen so farre forth as sufficed to giue them vndoubted assurance of their saluation. And yet he priuily taxeth their ingratitude, if so be they did not publicly and vnfeindly protest that they had learned all things requisite for the defence of Gods glorie: and this indeed he also summons them to vow neuer to forget nor conceale \bar{y} truth of these prophesies, by means whereof they might be able to shew the certentie of the true religion: for it had bin treacherie in them to haue defrauded so good a cause of any defence which they were able to bring vnto it.

By the name *seruant*, some vnderstand *Isaiah*: but I had rather vnderstand it of all the Prophets, because there is here a change of the number. This name then is giuen particularly to the Prophets whom the Lord chose to maintaine his truth: and yet I doubt not but in vsing the singular number he had a speciall and chiefe respect vnto *Christ*, who is the end and accomplishment of all the prophesies: and it is also very sure that he is the speciall *witness* that shall conuince the whole

world. But yet we must haue regard to the Prophets intention, which is, to call the Iewes indeed to be the Lords witnesses: and to accuse them of ingratitude if they did not frankly profess what they had heard and seene. For hauing had so many good lessons taught them from time to time, they could not without grosse disloyaltie either doubt or call into question the power and goodnes of God. Thus then he shewes that the Church is picked out to *bear witness* to the truth of God: in which sense *S. Paul* calles her the pillar and ground of truth, *1. Tim. 3. 15*. It is her office then to publish and maintaine it, so as it may be receiued of the posteritie from age to age. Not that the Lord stands in need of such an aid, but because it is his good pleasure neither to approue nor establish the same among men by any other meanes.

Isaiah therefore vnder this one word comprehends all the *seruants of God*, who stand bound to defend their Masters quarrell, but chiefly the *Ministers*, who ought to be as the Standard-bearers, and by their example to shew the way vnto others. It is therefore speciallie spoken to *them* here, though in general he is to be held no faithfull seruant of God, who so smotheres the knowledge of the truth within him that he dares not auouch it before men.

Therefore you shall know. That the Lord might not seeme to procure to himselfe witness of things vnknowne, he adds, *you shall know, you shall beleeue, you shall vnderstand*: thus shewing by the order of the words, that faith precedes, or goes before confession. If this confession then haue no deeper foundation then in the tip of the tongue, and is not laid in the heart, it shall be held but vaine and friuolous, for the Lord neither allows nor approues of it. And yet there is some difficultie in the order of the words, To know, To beleeue, and To vnderstand: for faith is not alwaies ioined with knowledge: for a man will not say that such beleeue because they know; faith is often absent, where knowledge is present. Besides, it is doubtfull in what sense *vnderstanding*, which is here added after beleeue, is to be taken, as if it should differ from knowledge. But our Prophet in this place shewes that there is a certaine preparation vnto faith, by which God first giues authoritie vnto his word as oft as he sees a necessarie vse of that meanes. I grant, that faith begins at humilitie, which captiues all our reason vnder Gods lore: but because we embrace not the doctrine that is offered with such an assurance as we ought, therefore God confirms it vnto vs by sundrie testimonies, and by our owne experience, the better to settle vs firmly in this faith. In this sense the Euangelist *S. Iohn* shewes, that himselfe and *S. Peter* beleeued the Scriptures after they had seene the signes of Christes resurrection in the Sepulchre, *Iohn 20. 8*. In another place also he saith, That the disciples beleeued in Christ, when that was accomplished which he had spoken with his mouth, *Iohn 2. 22*.

The summe then is, that the Iewes shall seele

The Church must beare witness to Gods truth.

Faith goes before confession.

Many haue knowledge that are destitute of faith.

The truth of the prophesies must neuer be forgotten.

Gods cause must not be left destitute of our defence.

Christ, the end and accomplishment of all the prophesies.

ſeele by the effects that they worſhipped the true God, after their faith ſhall be confirmed by viſible ſignes. In the meane while, he diſcernes true faith from that wauering infidelitie, which carries vnconſtant men hither and thither; for God giues knowledge & judgement alwaies to his elect, whereby they ſhall be able to diſtinguiſh truth from lies. After this, followes faith and ſtedfaſt confidence, which cauſeth them without doubting to receiue whatſoener the Lord hath revealed vnto them: and then faith kindles a greater light in the *vnderſtanding*, and as we profit by degrees, ſo *knowledge* growes in vs, and ſhines more clearly. But this is not effected in vs by our owne reaſon, but by the power of the holy Ghoſt; for it is his office to enlighten vs.

That I am] His meaning is, that it is needfull to know *what a one God is*, if we would rightly beleue; and that it is he only, and none other that we worſhip, leſt our mindes ſhould wander & erre in receiuing whatſoener men ſhould approue, or thruſt vpon vs. That is not properly termed faith, which forgeth ought according to mens fancies, or that lightly credits whatſoener is ſet before her: neither is that faith which by and by cleaueth to whatſoener is ſet before her, or wauereth in vn-certainte: but true faith is grounded in ſuch aſſurance, that in giuing her ſelfe to the ſer- uice of the onely true God, ſhee boldly con- temnes all falſe gods, and deliuer mens vnderſtandings from all feare of error.

By this we may know what to iudge of the implicit faith of the Papiſts: for they account them beleueurs, who are ſenſleſſe and ignorant of that they beleue, and are not able to vtter one word touching the knowledge of God, (for alas they know not what he is) in regard they openly proteſt that they beleue as their mother the holy Church beleue. But the Lord contents not himſelfe with ſuch abſurdities, but ioines *faith* with *vnderſtanding*, to teach vs that the one cannot be ſeparated from the other.

Moreouer, it is no faith, vnleſſe we beleue in one God the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, who ſpake by the Prophets and Apoſtles. Hauē we not this God? Then is our faith but a fancie. Which that they may the better confirme touching that he ſaid before, I am the onely God; he addes in the ſecond place, that there is *no other before him*. The words *La-nogaz*, may indeede in another ſenſe be taken for a creature, or worke of God; for they ſignifie, There is none. But becauſe it ſeemes that this is conſtrained, I willingly agree to the vſual expoſition, that There is no God formed before. In which there is a kinde of Ironie: as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; *There is none other God but he, vnleſſe hee be forged by mortall men*. I trow then you will not compare them with the eternall God.

He addes, *that there ſhall bee none after*; becauſe himſelfe holds alwaies the intire and perfect ſoueraigntie, and is not changed by age or corruption. The ſumme is, that we cannot ſay we haue faith indeed, till we come to reſt the ſame wholly in him: for thoſe which

acknowledge a kind of diuinitie, and yet are ignorant what it is, are alway perſued with trembling conſcience, and are wrapped in wonderful ſnares. Let vs therefore ſtay our ſclues vpon that God which cannot indure any companion with him; or that the leaſt portion of his maiſtie ſhould be unpaired; becauſe He onely is.

Verſ. 11. *I, euen I am the Lord, and beſides me there is no Saviour.*

THE Lord triumphs heere as hauing gotten the victorie. In the former verſes he hath ſufficiently inſtructed vs touching the meanes whereby to come to his knowledge, and hath ſhewed that there is no other God but him. Now to confirme this doctrine hee breaks out into this exclamation; It is I, euen I, that am the Lord, and there is none beſides mee. And thus wee may ſee how dangerous a thing it is to forge a god according to our fantaſie: for wee haue no ſooner effected it, but behold, an Idoll in ſtead of God. Let not vs therefore accept of any thing but that which proceeds from him, leſt we runne out in this behalfe. Hath hee manifeſted himſelfe vnto vs? It is good reaſon wee ſhould daſhe profir, grow, and become and more confirmed in his knowledge. And this is the vſe wee ſhould make of this repetition, *I, I am the Lord*.

Yet I would not haue you thinke he ſpeaks heere of his eternall eſſence onely; but let vs know that his power and goodneſſe, which he fully manifeſts by cauſing vs to ſeele the ſame, are here comprehended. And that is the reaſon why ſo epithete of *the only Saviour* is added; which is a mark whereby to ſeparate him from all his creatures. For the world deceiues it ſelfe in attributing vnto God a naked and bare title, and in the meane while transports his dignitie ouer to the creatures. In the Papatie I grant there is mention made of God, but they ſtrip him of his honour; when one part thereof is giuen to *Peter* and *Paul*, and another to *William* and *George*: that is to ſay, when his offices are diuided into ſo many parts, that they leaue nothing to him but the bare title of God. They brag that they worſhip but one God: I wot well; but when wee come to ſpeake of his offices, they forge as many gods as there are creatures, and to them they diſtribute his authoritie and power. But the Lord will haue theſe things to remaine wholly and ſoly vnto him; neither can they be attributed to any other without committing horrible ſacrilege: for it is he onely that beſtows all good things vpon men, and he onely defends and preſerues them.

The latter member of the verſe then, expreſſeth that knowledge which proceeds from experience, that ſo we might ſeele ſaluattin in none but in him, who is the author of it. Whence we gather, that the principall part of Gods ſeruiſe conſiſts in faith; which is, when he is acknowledged to be the *fontaine* of life, when he is adorned with the title of *Saviour*; as alſo when theſe things which

A true faith diſtinguiſhed from inconstant infidelitie.

The power of the holy Ghoſt, and not mans reaſon muſt effect all theſe things in vs.

True faith forgeth not fancies, neither wauereſh, but is grounded vpon the inſallible truth.

The implicit faith of the Papiſts, is to beleuee at their mother the holie Church beleuees.

Saint Peter; Paul, William, George.

The Papiſts leaue nothing to God but his bare title.

he affirms to be proper to him onely, and to dwell in him, be not transported ouer vnto others.

Verf. 12. *I haue declared, and I haue saued; and I haue shewed when there was no strange god among you: therefore you are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God.*

THis verse is as it were a rehearfall of the former; for the Lord tells them againe that hee hath foretold things to come, and hath brought them to passe accordingly, thus; *To declare, is, or may be referred to his foreknowledge; and, To saue; to his power and goodnesse.* In a word, his meaning is, that he is the onely God who knows and accomplisheth all things. Now howfocuer this was spoken to the Iewes, yet wee are to know that it also appertaines vnto vs: for all the prophccies which remaine on record, ought to be so many lessons to reach vs the wisdom and power of God, that so wee may wholly rest vpon him. Now, that wee should abolish all superstitions, and suffer him to sit as our onely Doctor in his heavenly chaire; he tels vs againe, that hee hath *shewed his power, and manifested the signes of his fauour,* without any mans helpe: whence it followes, that those are too ingratefull and peruerse, which will not content themselves with him alone.

When there was no strange God among you (saith he) to worship, euen then did I openly discover my power in the sight of the whole world. How dare you then attribute that to Idols, which belongs to me onely? And yet the Prophet doth not so much in this place commend the antiquitie of the peoples religion, as he labours to reiect all false succors. As if he should say; Seeing you haue knowne none but the true God, whose miracles haue been so wonderfull and apparant, you ought to be resolu'd, that there is no helpe but in him. Therewithall also the Prophet shewes, that our infidelitie hinders God from shewing his power in the midst of vs: let vs therefore abandon all errors, and all false opinions of God; if we will haue experience of his power; for if we turne aside after idolatries and superstitions, are wee not well worthy to feele the want of his power and goodnes?

In conclusion, he calles them *witnesses,* as accusing them of froward and cursed ingratitude, if they dissemble that goodnesse of his, which was so publickly manifested: for the more God shall haue declared his power by many visible *testimonies,* the more are wee bound to publish and make knowne the same vnto others.

Verf. 13. *Yea, before the day was, I am; and there is none that can deliuer out of mine hand: and I will doe it, and who shall let?*

HE speaks now of Gods eternitie; but we must still keepe in minde the Prophets

drift. For he which had a beginning, is not of himselfe, neither can hee hold vnder his dominion, nor gouerne the things which hee created nor. When the Lord therefore calles himselfe *the eternall,* it is to shew that the world was made by his hand, and that this goodly order of nature fell not out by chace, but tooke the originall from his admirable wildome and power: Gen. 1. 1.

And therefore he addes in the next place, that *none can deliuer out of his hand:* which yet shewes vs more plainly, that by his eternitie wee may proue his soueraigne and infinite power. For were he not eternall, hee could neither retaine all things in his hands, neither could hee defend his people, nor serue his turne of the creatures according to his owne will. But because he is *without beginning,* it necessarilie followes, that all things be subiect to his disposition. Heereunto appertaines that which is added, that nothing can *let him from doing* that which hee hath once determined. All which, serued to teach the Iewes, that they should not stand amazed nor be discouraged, in regard of the force, furie, and multitude of their enemies.

Verf. 14. *Thus saith the Lord your redeemer, the holy one of Israel; For your sake I haue sent to Babel, and brought it downe: they are all fugitiues; and the Caldeans cry in the ships.*

THE Prophet saith that Cyrus shall be as an hired souldier, which shall bestow his trauell in the Lords seruice, for the redemption of his people. I grant hee names not Cyrus, but hee speaks of the host which marched vnder his conduct, to subdue the Babylonians. We know this was brought about by *Cyrus and Darius;* but all of them were Gods executioners, who had foretold these things long before. He directes not his speech onely to those that saw the accomplishment of all these things, but also to all those whom the Lord meant to sustaine with this hope of deliuerance, which they could neuer haue dreamed of by any humane reason. For he speaks to the captiues, who being oppressed vnder the cruell seruitude of the Caldeans, were left destitute of all meanes of comfort: in which respect these promises might seeme most fabulous, because in mans iudgement there was no hope that euer they should get out of this prison.

But we must giue this honor to Gods word, euen to beleuee that which otherwise is incredible, to the end wee may hope about hope: for such is the power of faith, that the stands not gazing vpon things externall, but fixeth her eyes in the heauens, and pierceeth thorough euen to the very throne of God.

Now there is great force in that which is added, *for thy sake.* For seeing pride, and an insatiable couetous desire to rule, prick'd *Cyrus* forward to this action; and that there were many occasions for which this war was raised, a man would not haue thought that the whole world should thus haue bin shaken

He which had a beginning, is not of himselfe.

Gods souerainie proued by his eternitie.

1

2

3

Cyrus.

Darius.

Wee must giue this honor to Gods word, as to beleuee things incredible. The vertue of faith.

ken in the ouerthrow of this Monarchie, and that the poore Iewes the miſerableſt of all people vnder heauen, ſhould by this meanes haue had a way made to returne home into their owne countrie. But God proteſts, that he will giue the Perſians victorie, ſo as they ſhall eaſily conquer all the Eaſt, becauſe he *ſauors his Church.*

For this cauſe he ſhewes in the firſt place, that it is *he* which is their *redeemer*, and the *holý one*, the better to perſwade them that he held thoſe whom he had choſen to be his peculiar people deare and pretious vnto him. Notwithſtanding, this ſeemes contrarie to that which we haue ſene before in the 33. Chapter, Woe to thee that robbeſt, when thou waſt not robbed: the Lord meant by this that he would auenge himſelfe vpon the crueltye of the Babylonians, and render them that meaſure which they had met out vnto others : now hee ſhewes that the Perſians rooke armes by his commandement, that by meanes thereof he might worke his peoples deliuerance. But theſe things may be eaſily reconciled, to wit, that the Lord had reſpect to his people euen then whileſt he ſcourged the Chaldeans: for as his prouidence extends it ſelfe ouer the whole world in generall, ſo hath he a ſpeciall care of his Church : and as he dearly loues his Saints, ſo he turns all things to their ſaluation. It is not without cauſe then that he ſaith *he ſent* them to performe this worke by his *free grace*, becauſe he meant thereby to procure the ſaluation of his Church. In the ſame ſenſe he addes, that at his commandement hee brought them downe: for albeit the Medes and Perſians had another end, yet their iorney was gouerned by an heavenly inſtinct. And thus God meant to ſhew what loue he bare to his choſen people aforehand, leſt they ſhould haue fainted in their extreme anguiſhes and afflictions. This promiſe therefore was of great vſe, in reſpect the poore captiues might from hence greatly comfort themſelues that they were beloved of God, although all the world beſides contemned, hated, and reiected them as the offſcouring of all things, ſeeing they ſaw that God in the end was minded to ſuccor them, and for their ſakes to deſtroy the Monarchie of the Babylonians.

Where he ſaith, *they ſhall flee*, it is to ſhew that God ſhall ſo proſper the affaires of *Cyrus*, that the Chaldeans ſhall be aſtoniſhed at his arriuall, and ſhal throw downe their armes to take them to their heeles: for it often fallies out, euen to ſome mightie Prince, well appointed with all furniture to enterpriſe war, in which notwithstanding the iſſue ſhall be woſull. It was not enough then that *Cyrus* was ſent with a great armie, vnleſſe therewithall his enterpriſes had ſucceeded well.

And that he might further ſet forth their *haſtic flight*, he addes, there ſhall be a *crie*, or tumult in the *ſhips*, for they could not flee by land. True it is they had a riuer fit for the purpoſe, to wit Euphrates, which met with the riuer Tigris, by reaſon whereof they had meanes to eſcape: but they were diſappointed of their purpoſe in this behaſe, in regard

the riuer was drawne drie.

Verſ. 15. *I am the Lord, your holy one, the Creator of Iſrael, your King.*

This verſe conteines in it only a deſcription of him that ſpeakes: firſt, ſhewing how great his power & maielte is: ſecondly, with what affection he entertaines his elect, and all to the end the promiſes before mentioned might haue the greater waigh. I call this verſe therefore a ſcale to the former ſentence, as if the people ſhould haue ſaid, We heare much ſpoken of God, and of his promiſes; but I pray you what is this God? The Prophet anſwers, Euen he that is *your holy one, the creator of Iſrael, and your King.*

He is called *holy one*, becauſe he culled and ſeparated a people to conſecrate them vnto himſelfe. By this title then he puts them in minde of their adoption, wherein he joined himſelfe vnto them by a ſpeciall band, to aſſure them for the time to come that he would be their Father and Saviour. In which ſenſe wee at this day ought to acknowledge that God is *our holy one*, in that he hath put vs a-part to be members of his Church, whereof he hath aſſured vs, by our vocation and calling.

The title *Creator* is not to be referred to the generall creation of all things: for ſo he is alſo the Creator of the wicked: but to reformation, in which reſpect we are called his workmanſhip, Ephes. 2. 10.

In that he addes *your King*, it might ſeeme ſomewhat ſtrange: for what appearance was there of a *kingdome* among the Iewes now? Were they not loaden with reproches and contumelies, becauſe they were left deſtitute of all ſuccor? Yet ſaith was to breake thorow all theſe obſtacles: in this title therefore the Prophet gaue them hope that the *kingdome* ſhould againe be reſtored, howſoeuer to the eies of fleſh and blood it lay now in the duſt, yea vtterly extinct; notwithstanding all this, they were to hold God for their Soueraigne and King ſtill.

Verſ. 16. *Thus ſaith the Lord which maketh a way in the ſea, and a path in the mightie waters.*

HE once againe comes to confirme that which otherwiſe ſeemed incredible: and that this confirmation might haue the greater authoritie, he takes vnto him the perſon of God. Now he puts them in mind of former benefits, to reach them, that as they had found him an Almighty Saviour before, ſo they ſhould aſſure themſelues that he would be no leſſe powerfull and gracious vnto them for the time to come: neither leſſe able nor willing to worke their deliuerance. As if hee ſhould ſay, *The Lord vwho ſpeakes* will certainly ſhew the greatnes of his power by the effects: of which *as your forefaſhers haue had experience, ſo his meaning is to giue you no leſſe triall of it then they had.* Are we not too vnthankfull then if by former benefits received, we be not drawne to hope in him for hereafter? but eſpeciallie

Obic. 3.

Anſ.

Medes and Perſians.

Euphrates. Tigris.

This verſe a ſcale to the former ſentence.

Holy one.

God our Holie one now.

Creators.

King.

God alwaies the ſame.

Vnthankfulnes.

especially when hee hath shoune so certaine and so excellent testimonies of his continuall care ouer vs.

Israel deli- uered out of Egypt, to the end they should neuer forget it.

Hee brought Israel out of Egypt, vpon condition they should neuer forget such a deliuerance: Exod.13.9. The Prophet now sets the same God before their eies, shewing that nothing could withstand him, which by his power hee ouercame not, when he tooke his peoples saluatiō in hand, For then he made a way for them in the sea, Exod.14.21. and guided them thorow the tempestuous & mightie waters; to wit, thorow the riuer Iordan, which he dried vp, though it was very boisterous: Iof. 3.16. Now hee exprefly names these two admirable miracles, because they might imagine that all passage was shut vp against them, in regard of their returne into Iudea: and that all these promises therefore were but fables.

Verf. 17. *When hee bringeth out the chariot and horse, the armie and the power lie together, and shall not rise: they are extinct and quenched as tow.*

Now he shewes that neither *munition*, nor *strength* can resist God, or hinder him from deliuering his people when hee thinks good, no more then the sea was able to let him from sauing them: but hee diuided the same, and drowned their enemies with their chariots and horses therein. See here then an amplification of the former verse: as if he should say; Be it that the whole world haue conspired your destruction, and would hinder mee from working your deliuerance; shall it not be in vaine? For when I list, I will not onely find out a passage for you in the midst of bottomlesse gulphes, but I will also scatter and overthrow all force and power of your enemies: yea, I will so dash them in funder, that they shall neuer be able to arise. It may be he that hath lost one v.ictorie, will gather his forces afresh together the second time, and win that hee lost before: but the Lord in this place promiseth a *perpetuall victorie*; shewing that their enemies shall bee so discomfited, that they shall be vterly extinct. Which sudden destruction he further exprefseth by the similitude of *rowe*: when fire is put to *rowe*, it may well make a blaze for a while, but forthwith it is consumed and gone.

*Or, Forget ye the, &c.

Verf. 18. **Remember ye not the former things? neither regard yee the things of old?*

This verse must bee vnderstood by way of comparation.

2

The Prophet hitherunto hath shewed at large how mightie the Lord is to saue his people: now hee saith that all the miracles which were wrought in the first redemption, were nothing in comparison of those that should be effected hereafter: that is to say; the glory of this second deliuerance should be so rare & excellent, that it should darken the first: not as if the Iewes were to forget so great a benefit; for the memorie thereof wor-

thily deserued to be celebrated from age to age, euen to the worlds end; and as the Lord had commanded, was to stand vpon perpetuall record. For in the preface of the Law, Exod.20.2. thus he speaks; I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. He also commanded the fathers to be often recording of it to their children, and to continue the remembrance of it to their succellors. This therefore must be taken by way of comparison: as in *Ieremias*; Behold the daies come, saith the Lord, that they shall say no more, The Lord which brought the children out of Egypt: but the Lord liues, which hath brought the posteritie of *Isaiah* out of the land of the North, and out of all the coasts of the earth, whereinto he hath scattered them: Ier.21.7. The summe is, that the last deliuerance shall be far more glorious then the first, if the one be compared with the other. Whence it followes, that this prophecie is not to be referred to a few yeeres; because the Prophet extols not here the beginnings of their deliuerance onely; but extends the fruit of this returne euen vnto Christ, at whose coming both the kingdome and priesthoode were really established.

Verf. 19. *Behold, I doe a new thing; now shall it come forth: shall you not know it? I will euen make a way in the desert, and floods in the wilderness.*

BY this wee may yet better perceiue what the Prophets drift was in the former verse. For here he saith, there shall be a new worke: that is, no common or ordinary, but such a one as by the excellencie and greatness of it, shall darken the fame of all the rest, no lesse then the Sunne when it shineth in his might, darkens all the starres in the firmament. In that hee saith, it shall now come forth; the meaning is, it shall not be long deferred. I grant these things were not by and by accomplished; but when wee haue respect vnto him that speaks, foure hundred, nay a thousand yeeres in his sight, are but as yesterday. Thus hee comforts them, because hee would not that their seuentie yeeres captiuitie should discourage them.

A new worke is here opposed to that which is common and ordinarie: See Chap. 43. 10.

When hee adds, shall you not know it? This interrogation hath more force and vehemencie in it then a simple affirmation. And this manner of speech is much vsed both among the Hebrewes, and also among Greeks and Latines.

The interrogation hath more force in it then a bare affirmation.

Further, hee promiseth to make a way in the desert, wherein he hath respect to that desert which was betwene Babylon and Iudea: for here he speaks of the peoples returne homie. And for that cause also hee mentions the floods: for they might well haue perished for thirst, in traouling thorow a place so barren and waste. Therefore the Lord promiseth to prouide them of water for their journey: as if he should say; Feare not for want of necessities, for I wil furnish you sufficiently; so as you shall returne vnder my conduct and leading.

The desert betwene Babylon and Iuda.

But

But it seemes the Prophet passeth his bounds, when he magnifies this deliuerance in such excellencie speeches. For we reade not that the *riuers* were heere turned into *blood*, nor that a grosse and *palpable darknesse* troubled the air, or that the *first borne* were flaine, or that any *vermin* were sent to deuoure the fruits of the earth; neither any of the like wonders which came to passe in Egypt: none of these happened, as wee know in Babylon. What meanes hee then by this *new* deliuerance? This hath caused almost all the writers that are Christians, to expound this place simply of Christs comming; wherein no doubt they haue been decciued no lesse then the Lewes, who onely restraîne this to the deliuerance out of Babell. And therefore as I haue said in another place, wee must heere comprehend the whole time that passed betweene the deliuerance out of Babylon, vntill the comming of Christ. The redemption out of Egypt may be compared to the first birth of the Church; because the people were then gathered into a body, and the Church was established, which before was without forme: yet this redemption ended not at the peoples comming forth of Egypt, but continued till they were possessed of the land of Canaan, which was giuen them after the Kings were driuen thence. The like may be said of this birth by which the Lewes were brought out of Babylon, and restored home into their owne Country: for this restauration must not be restrained to their going out of Babylon onely, but it stretcheth it selfe vnto the comming of Christ; during which space of time, there came great and wonderfull things to passe indeed.

Was it not an admirable thing that a fort of poore captiues, contemned of all as miserable abiects and slaues; yea held and esteemed as detestable as the disease of the pestilence, should notwithstanding be restored and sent home into their Country by insidell Kings? Besides, that they should be furnished with all things fit for their iourney, and order taken for their affaires: as also for the building of the Citie, and restoring of the Temple? But yet behold wonders much greater then these, which came to passe afterwards; when there were but a few of the people which would returne backe againe, and the most were so discouraged, that they preferred so miserable a seruitude before so blessed and happy a freedome. When a small handfull (I say) of them then returned into Iudeah, in respect of that great multitude which was led into captiuitie, yet fell there out greater lets and hinderances. For were there not conspiracies, new hatreds & grudgings raised vp against this people, who were in too much contempt and disgrace already? Did not the worke cease, and was not all means procured to hinder the finishing of it? In which respect they might well haue thought that the Lord had brought them out in vaine, seeing they were now exposed to greater dangers then euer they were before. After the Temple was built, things succeeded no whit better; for they were inuoi-

ned on all sides with mightie aduersaries, who hated them most deadly, and vexed them without ceasing. Afterwards they were visited with sundry afflictions and persecutions; so as it might seeme they were as good as ouerwhelmed and rooted out by them. Yet notwithstanding God ceased not still miraculously to preferue them euen in the midst of fire and sword. If we consider their poore and miserable estate, and the sore trials they were put to by tyrants, wee may well admire how any one of them escaped.

That we may the better vnderstand then how wonderfull this deliuerance was, and in what sort it surpassed the first, wee must haue an eye to the histories of things begun and continued vntill Christs comming; who then added infinite graces and benefits to the former: for doubtlesse the second deliuerance was greater then the first.

Neither is this any constrained exposition, but it agrees with the manners of speech vsed among the Prophets: for they haue alwaies respect vnto the Messiah, and incessantly did they fix their eyes vpon him. The Prophet *Haggai* therefore will giue vs much light for the vnderstanding of this place. For he shews, that when the Temple was built, the olde men which had seene the excellencie of the first, wept, saying, that this *later* was nothing in comparison of the former: and hardly could they be perswaded but that God had utterly forsaken them, and that his promises were of none effect. But *Haggai* to comfort them, and to shew that the glory of the second Temple shall far surpass the first, albeit the outward forme of it were lesse beautifull, brings them forth with to the Redeemer, saying on this manner: Thus saith the Lord of hostes; Yet a little while, and I will shake the heauens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and all nations: the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hostes. The gold and siluer is mine, saith the Lord of hostes: the glorie of this house shall be greater then the first: *Haggai* 2.7. As *Haggai*: then continues the restauration of the Temple till Christs comming, to which he refers the true glory of it: so this deliuerance out of Babylon held on the course thereof till Christ; for these things are conioined together, or rather haue affinity one with another; so as it is no maruell though he say, it did euery way surpass the deliuerance out of Egypt.

Verf. 20. *The wild beasts shall honour me, the Dragons and the Ostriches; because I gave water in the desert, and floods in the wilderness to giue drinke to my people, euen to mine elect.*

HE adorne the former sentence; for all things standing in this confused manner, it was needfull to set our Gods power in the highest termes that might be, that at least the word might supple that which seemed to be wanting in effect. His meaning is then, that Gods hand shall be so sensible felt and perceived

To vnderstand this last deliuerance of the Church aright, wee must looke to the histories of things begun and continued till Christs comming. The Prophets shall keep their eye vpon Christ.

The Churches redemption out of Egypt, may be compared to her first birth.

See Exod. 14. 12. 12.

What impediments happened to the Lewes in their returne.

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ceived in this worke, that not only men but *wild beasts* also should be touched with a sense of it, so as they should yeeld a kind of honour and thanks vnto God. This prophetic therefore answers to Plal. 114.3,4, where it is said, That the sea saw it and fled, Iordan went back; the mountaines skipped like sheepe; and the little hilles as lambs: the earth trembled at the presence of the God of Iacob.

Isaiah's attributes heere the same feelings to the *brute beasts*, in regard that by a secret instinct they should be constrained to giue place, that the people might passe with more securitie. And yet the reason hereof hath a larger extent, to wit, that they shall stand amazed at the beholding of so many miracles. To be short, God shewes, that he will not leaue his people destitute of necessarie foode that they should be enforced to retorne back through want: for by this excessiue kind of speech, he expresseth the incomprehensible loue of God towards the Iewes, that by the power of their hope they might mount aboue all present obstacles.

The vsf. Now when we heare of these things, let vs not measure his power (in our distresses) according to the order of nature: but by faith let vs fix our eies about all things visible and comprehensible.

Moreover, lest these poore banished orphanes should lose all hope of Gods euertlasting fauor in seeing themselues thus reiected and despised of all: *Isaiah* brings them to the remembrance of their adoption, as if he should say, Thinke not but *y*ou remain the people of God still, notwithstanding this your horrible scattering: for he who hath once elected you neuer changeth his counsell. As oft then as we stand in neede of encouragement to hope well, let vs remember the calling of God: for albeit we feele our owne vnworthines, yet it ought to suffice that the Lord hath vouchsafed vs this honor, to make vs his people.

My people, mine elect.

We must in temptation oppose our vocation against our vnworthines.

Verf. 21. *This people haue I formed for my selfe: they shall shew forth my praise.*

The Prophets meaning is, that the Lord must needs performe that which he spake before, because it concernes his owne glorie to deliuer the people which he hath chosen to himselfe. This appertained therefore very much to the consolation of the Iewes, as if he should say, Do ye thinke I will suffer my glory to fall to the ground? It is ioined with your saluation, and therefore it stands me in hand to looke to it, *Be you sure therefore that all shall goe well with you: for I can not suffer you to perish, but my glorie must therewithall be abolished also.* But your saluation is sure; for I haue determined that you shall magnifie my greatness for euer.

Gods glorie and our saluation ioined together.

Where he saith he hath Created this people, it is to let vs vnderstand that our regeneration is a worke supernaturall: for we are to hold this principle which we haue often told you of heretofore, that he speakes not here

of that generall worke of his creation touching mankinde; but of regeneration or adoption, by which God separates his Church from the rest of the world, and from all the remainders of it. Let no man be so bold theras to attribute this worke either to himselfe, or to the merits of men; but let vs from this place learne to ascribe so excellent a benefit whollie and only to the free grace of God.

Isaiah speake here of our common creation, but of our spirituall regeneration. See Chap. 29. 23.

They shall shew forth my praise.] Although the Prophets meaning be (as I haue said) to shew that the people should be deliuered in regard it neerely concerned Gods glorie: yet from this place we also learne, that the end of our election is the setting forth of Gods glorie in all things. I grant that the reprobates are instruments of this glorie; but it shines in a farre diuers sort in vs: for we are chosen, as *S. Paul* saith, that we should be holy and without blame before him in loue: and he hath also predestinated vs, to adopt vs in himselfe by Iesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will to the praise of the glorie of his grace, wherewith he hath freely accepted vs through his beloued, *Ephes. 1. 4, 5, 6.* Hereunto appertaine the words of *Peter*, where he saith, We are a chosen generation, and that we should shew forth the vertues of him who hath called vs out of darknes, into his marvelous light, *1. Pet. 2. 9.* And *Zacharie* sings, That we are deliuered out of the hands of our enemies to serue our God in holines and righteousness before him all the daies of our life, *Luk. 1. 75.* Here ye see the end then both of our election and calling: which is, that we being consecrated and set apart for Gods vs if it were, we might praise and honor him as long as wee haue any being in this world.

The end of our election & vocation.

Exod. 14. 4. and 17. 13.

Election.

Vocation.

Verf. 22. *And thou hast not called vpon me, o Iacob: but thou hast wearied rather me o Israel.*

With this priue rebuke he confirms that which was said in y former verse: to wit, that the merits of the people had no way moued him to deale so graciouslie with them. This deliuerance therefore was to be ascribed to his free goodnes. For prooffe hereof, he saith, *Thou hast not called vpon me:* vnder which word he cōprehends the whole seruice of God, whereof prayer was a principall part. And thus he takes a part for the whole, according to the vsuall maner of the Hebrues. Now the Lord manifests it sufficientlie in other places, that Inuocation is a speciall part of his worship: for hauing said in the fiftieth Psalm that he reiects sacrifices and ceremonies, he presentlie addes, *Call vpon me.* For this cause the Scripture mentions this exercise of prayer, when it notes our the marks of Gods worship. For *Moses* minding to shew that the same was againe restored, saith, that then men began to call vpon the name of the Lord, *Gen. 4. 26.*

God saues none for his merits sake.

The prooffe.

This phrase, Called vpon me, expounded.

Prayer, a speciall part of Gods worships.

I take the particle *Et* in the second part of this verse for a coniunction aduersatiue thus, But thou hast wearied me. Others translate, For thou hast trauailed: as if he should say, Thou hast done that which I commanded thee

God requireth a willing obedience. Psal. 110. 3.

thee vnwillingly; which comes all to one. For as the Lord requires obedience, ſo would he haue his ſeruants to performe the ſame cheerfully and readily. Hee loues a *cheerfull giuer*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, 2. Cor. 9.7. but thoſe that ſerue him by halues, or by *conſtraints*, cannot properly be called his ſeruants; neither doth he accept of them, nor of ſuch ſeruices. To ſhew then that the Iewes had not worſhipped as they ought to haue done, hee ſaith, they did it *vnawillingly*.

If any had rather haue it an expoſition of the former member, and ſo tranſlate it thus; *Thou haſt not called upon me, O Iſrael, becauſe thou haſt yeelded me but a forced and conſtrained ſeruice*; I gainſay him not, becauſe the difference is not great as touching the ſenſe. Yet if it be taken as I haue tranſlated it, I thinke it is neerer to the Prophets meaning; and the oppoſition contains alſo in it a rendering of the cauſe. Will we haue our ſeruices acceptable vnto God then? let vs yeeld him a frank and willing obedience.

Verſ. 23. *Thou haſt not brought me the ſheepe of thy burnt offerings, neither haſt thou honoured mee with thy ſacrifices: I haue not cauſed thee to ſerue with an offering, nor wearied thee with incenſe.*

Some may demaund why the Prophet ſhould thus reproch the Iewes, ſeing it is apparent that they were vey diligent in offering ſacrifices, according to the ordinances of the Law. Some refer this to the captiuitie, during which time they could offer no ſacrifices, though they had bin willing ſo to haue done. Why ſo? Becauſe it was vnlawfull to offer them any where but in Ieruſalem: for which reſpect, their ſacrifices could not be acceptable vnto God. But I rather take it as a generall reproch: for whileſt the people had opportunity to ſacrifice, yet they could alledge no merit nor worthineſſe, as if God had been any way beholding vnto them for the ſame: for there was neither faith nor obedience to be ſene in their ſacrifices. But faith, as we know, and obedience, are things which God chiefly looks vnto, without which, nothing we doe, is, or can be pleaſing in his ſight. They wanted therefore integritie of heart; their hands were full of blood; they were wholly defiled with robberies and deceit; iuſtice and equitie was baniſhed far from them. Albeit then that they brought their *beaſts every day vnto the Temple, and offered them there*, yet hee rightly affirms that they offered none of theſe things (to him); becauſe God accepts of no ſacrifices which are ſeparated from the truth, and ſo offered them to another, and not to him: for all he required was, that by theſe outward meanes, his people ſhould exerciſe their faith and obedience. But theſe being wanting: what worth was there in the ſacrifices? Hence wee gather that the Prophet ſpeakes here of no new thing, but continues that which hee began to teach in

the former verſe; to wit, that hee reiects all hollow and ſeruile ſeruices.

Verſ. 24. *Thou boughteſt me no ſweet ſauour with thy money, neither haſt thou made me drunke with the fat of thy ſacrifices: but thou haſt made mee to ſerue with thy finnes, and wearied me with thine iniquities.*

By the word *Caneh*, he meanes that where-with they made the precious ointment which was ſeldome vſed; as is recorded in Exod. 30. 25. For therewith were the high Priests, the Tabernacle, the Arke of the covenant, with the instruments thereunto appertaining, anointed. Hee ſaith then; Albeit thou ſhouldeſt lay forth thy money to buy me of that odoriferous ointment, thou ſhalt but ſpend it in vaine, if thou lookeſt that I ſhould accept of it. For all their labour was loſt, becauſe they aimed not at the right marke. God eſteemed none of all theſe ceremonies, as long as they were ſeparated from faith, and the vprightneſſe of the heart, and a pure conſcience.

Where he ſaith, *thou haſt not made me drunke*; it anſwers to a phraſe of ſpeech in the Law, where the Lord teſtifies that he felt a ſweete taſte in the fauour of the ſacrifices; not that he tooke delight in the killing of beaſts, but becauſe by ſuch helpe he meant to keep his people in true obedience. Here on the contrary he ſaith, that the people ſacrificed not rightly, becauſe they defiled all by their impuritie. As if he ſhould ſay; You haue *affaſhliſhed me* (as much as in you is) *in that you bring me nothing in ſinceritie, but that which through your finnes is corrupt and vitious fauour*. Preſently after the Prophet ſets out the foulneſſe of this fact, in that the people were not onely careleſſe in doing their ſeruices to God: but which is worſt of all, induored to ſubiect the Lord their God to their will, or rather to their diſordered appetites and luſts.

Thoſe who refer this place to Chriſt, offer violence to the Prophets meaning; and therefore the expoſition which I haue vſed, ſeemes to me the moſt naturie: for the Lord complains that they haue inforced him to beare an *heauie burden*, in regard of their finnes, whereas they ſhould haue ſubmitted themſelues to him in all reuerence, and with all good conſciences: for when we aduance our ſelues againſt God, we doe by our inſolencie and rebellion, make him as it were a ſervant to our luſts.

Now hee expreſſeth this better when hee ſaith, that hee hath been *vi. caried*: that is to ſay; I haue ſuſtained many diſcontentments, in regard of the diſſolute behauiour of my people: for we wound and pierce him to the heart, when we reiect his voice, and will not indure that he ſhould raigne ouer vs. But it ſeemes he alludes to that hee ſaid erewhile touching the peoples *vnwearineſſe* in ſeruing of God: which being ſet as oppoſite vnto the

Or, caneh.

High Priests,
The Tabernacle.
The Arke.
The Inſtruments.

The vſe.

Obiect.

Anſ.

God looks rather to our faith and obedience, then to our ſacrifices.

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God eſteemeth not her of our labour nor large expences in his ſeruices, if the integritie of the heart be wanting: See Mich. 6. 6, 7, 8.

same, it shewes that these rebels did much grieue him.

Verf. 25. *I, euen I am he that putteth away thine iniquities for mine owne sake, and will not remember thy finnes.*

to vs, and so the pardon should not be free. For this cause *Ezechiel* expresseth the opposition, *I do not this for your sakes* & house of *Israel*, but for mine owne sake: Whence it followes, that God is the author of forgiveness, and is also inclined freely to forgive, because he finds no cause at all in man (vnlesse it be his miserie) why he should do it.

The conclusion.

No man is saved for his merits.

BY this exclamation the Lord puts an end to the former sentence, as if he should say, that he for his part can reioyce, that he puts away the iniquitie of his people, and holds them in freedome, that they can pleade no merit whereby to obtaine this at his hands, seeing they deserue rather to be seuerely chastised, nay to be vtterly confounded.

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Now he repeats *one and the same thing twice*, that he might touch men to the quick for their vnthankfulness: for we are wont either to take vnto our selues, or in some sort to obscure the honour which belongs to God only. Those take the Prophets words in too naked a sense, which thinke that God attributes vnto him here the authoritie and preeminence in pardoning of finnes, for he rather *opposeth his mercie to all other causes*, as if he should say, *There is nothing moues me to shew mercie, but only my free fauour*, and that *Redemption* therefore is wrongfullie attributed to *Merits* or satisfactions, seeing I am the only author of it. The summe is, that the people were to continue their hope of returne, because God was willing for his owne *names sake* freely to remit their finnes, and to worke their deliuerance.

The doctrine of remission of finnes handled in this place.

Why God speaks rather of remission of finnes, then of redemption. Simile.

In this place then there is handled the doctrine of the remission of finnes. It now remains to see vpon what occasion: for there is no doubt but the Prophet promiseth deliuerance in regard of Gods free grace. And for this cause he rather spake of forgiveness of finnes, then of Redemption: for they being sore pressed & corrected for their finnes, the cause was to be removed ere the effect could cease. A disease can not be cured till the matter which feeds it be first removed: so, as long as Gods wrath stands vnappeased, so long must our chastisements continue. Therefore it is necessarie that this wrath be pacified, and we reconciled vnto God, before we can be freed from our afflictions.

This manner of speech therefore is to be well obserued against a childish distinction of the Sophisters: who confesse indeed that God pardons the fault, but they wrangle and say, that we must satisfie for the punishment. And hence haue proceeded Satisfactions, Indulgences, Purgatorie, and infinite other inuentions. But our Prophet speaks not only here of the faults, but makes expresse mention also of the punishment, which is likewise done away, in regard *their finnes and iniquities* were freely pardoned. Which is yet more clearly proued, in that he addes this particle, *For mine owne names sake*. For it is certaine that this exception is opposed against all merits. As how? *I has God respects neither our persons, nor oughts that is in vs, when he is to do away our offences, but is moued thereunto by his owne free mercie*. For if he should consider any thing in vs, he should then seeme to be bound

This exception opposed to merit.

And therefore *I will not remember thy finnes.*] The Prophet added this for the consolation of the faithfull, who by the feeling of their owne vnworthines, might easily haue slipped into despair. For this cause he puts them in good hope, and confirms them in this confidence: to wit, That they should obtaine remission of their finnes, and so be deliuered out of captiuitie, notwithstanding their vnworthines. Hence we haue to gather a very profitable doctrine, to wit, That no man can assure himselfe of obtaining pardon, vnlesse he rest vpon the free grace of God. For such as looke to their works must of necessitie waiver, and in the end despair. For if they were not befottered with grosse hypocrisie, they would alwaies set their guiltines before their eyes, which would confine them whether they would or no to doubt of Gods fauour.

None can be assured of obtaining pardon, vnlesse he rest vpon Gods free goodnes.

Where it is said, that the Ministers also do remit finnes, that is not repugnant to this place, for they are witnesses of this free remission. They vse this common distinction, *That God forgines finnes by his power, and The Ministers by their office*: but because this distinction doth not sufficientlie explaine the Prophets meaning, it is best to hold that which I haue set downe, to wit, that God not only pardons finnes by his power, but also that all benefits which we are to expect, flow vnto vs only from his free grace. And thus the Lord hath so adorned the Gospel and the Ministers with this authoritie, that he reserues it notwithstanding intirely in his own absolute power.

A distinction.

How God is said to pardon by the Ministers.

Verf. 26. *Put me in remembrance: let vs be iudged together: count that thou mayst be iustified.*

BECAUSE it is an hard matter to correct mens pride, the Lord goes on still with this argument; and insists the longer vpon it, that he might the better bring the Iewes to humilitie, as also that he might cause them to renounce the confidence of their works. *He giues them libertie freely so say and alledge what they can in their owne behalfe*, to make their partie good against him: *vnlesse if vpon better aduice, they should rather thinke it best for them to lay their hand vpon their mouth*.

Mans pride not easily subdued.

God giues vs leaue to make our defences, if we thinke his accusation ouerstrick.

By way of yielding so much vnto them therefore he bids them *put him in minde*: If thou hast any thing to alledge for thy selfe, saith he, I pray thee remember me of it. Speake thou in thy turne, and I will giue thee audience. And by this manner of speech he gaules men more to the quick, then if he should haue spoken to them in plaine termes, For thus he shewes, that they are more then senselesse, if they dare ascribue any thing vnto themselves. Why so? Because, if libertie were giuen them

Ironie, a figure in speaking, when one means contrary to the signification of his words, to mock him whom he reasoeth withall.

them to tell their faire tale, they would be conuicted of their vanitie and emptines, without being able to say ought for themselves.

Iroala.

That thou mayst be iustified.] That is to say, that thou mayest get the day, and goe away conqueror: I therefore giue thee free leaue to say what thou canst. Now this is spoken after such a kind of taunting and detiding of the Lord, as did more cut their combs, than if the Lord should haue stood to haue iudged the in his own person, according to his absolute authority. In the meane while we must not forget the Prophets drift, who was constrained to plucke this maske of merit from the Iewes, that in all humilitie and meeknes, they might receiue the grace of God.

The Prophets drift.

Verf. 27. Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers haue transgressed against me.

The Prophets argument according to some interpreters. Adm. Abraham. Moses. Aaron.

THE expositors for the most part vnderstand this place of the *first Father Adam*: others rather refer it to *Abraham*. As if the Prophet should say; You haue not onely sinned, but your father *Abraham* also: notwithstanding all the holinesse wherewith he was indued. By *teachers*, they vnderstand *Moses* and *Aaron*, which *sinned*: albeit they were adorned with singular graces. And if the case stood so with your *father* and *teachers*, how much more are you *sinners*, who are their inferiours? And thus according to their sense, it should bee an argument taken from the greater to the lesse.

An argument from the greater to the lesse.

But I vnderstand it otherwise; for vnder this word *father*, he comprehendeth not onely one or two of their predecessors, but many; and that by a change of the number. A thing vsuall among the Hebrewes. And this manner of reprehension is often found both in the Prophets, as also in the booke of *Psalms*: for they knowing themselves to be the holy nation, they swelled in pride against the Lord; as if this honour had been due vnto them, either in regard of the excellencie or merites of their *fathers*: and thus the right of inheritance made them swell. The Prophets therefore were carefull from time to time, to discouer the iniquities of their *fathers*: for which cause *Saint Stephen*, who succeeded them, is bold to pronounce, that they had alwaies resisted the holy Ghost: *Acts 7. 51.* As if he should say; You haue not begun this day to be thus wicked; your *fathers* were as bad long agoe. Of an euill Crowe, there is issued forth a naughty egge. But you, saith our Prophet, are growne worse than your *fathers*, and far surpass the wickednesse of your predecessors: so as if the Lord had onely respected you as you are in your selves, hee might iustly haue consumed you long since.

Stephen.

A Prouerbe.

In the next place he addes their *teachers* to shew that the fault rested not onely in the people: for euen those which ought to haue been their guides and leaders, to wit, the *Priests* and *Prophets*, were first in the transgression, and plunged them into error which

followed them. And thus (to bee short) hee shewes that there was no estate nor condition free from vices nor corruptions. As if the Lord should haue said; Let them goe now and brag of their merites, & let them alleadge any way but the least shew of reason why I should be bound to succour them, and they shall find there is nothing but my free mercy.

If any shall object, that it is iniustice to reproch the children vnto the offences of their forefathers, because it is written, *The soule that sinneth shall die*: and, *The sonne shall not beare the iniquitie of his father*: *Ezech. 18. 20.* The answer is easie, for the Lord punisheth the finnes of the fathers vpon their children which succeeded them: and yet they are not punished for the faults of another, seeing themselves stand guiltie of the same crimes. And when it so fallies out that the Lord smites the whole body of a people, hee couples the fathers with the children, that he may wrap them all in the same condemnation.

Obiect.

Ans. God punisheth the children of wicked parents, because they walk in their steps.

Verf. 28. Therefore I haue prophand the rulers of the Samarie, and haue made iacob a curse, and Israel a reproch.

THE letter *Ver*, must bee resolued into a coniunction of concluding: and the verb *To pollute*, should bee translated in the future tense, though it may also bee left in the preterperfect. Yet I had rather turne it; *shall pollute*: and to apply it to the time of the captiuitie, in regard hee speaks properly to those which should lue in *Babylon*. If any had rather extend it to the diuers calamities wherewith the Lord afflicted his people, and so ioine it to the captiuitie of *Babylon*, it will not be greatly amisse. And it may be the sense will runne better, if we should say, that hee speaks here of those things which often fell out before; to the end he might warne them for the time to come, not to stand too much vpon their parables, lest with shame and great dishonour, they againe receiued the iust reward of their ingratitude. He sets forth the cause of their ruine then, in regard that both fathers and children were to drinke of one cup, who ceased not to sin, but would fro day to day kindle Gods wrath against them without ceasing, not giuing euer their bad courses till God seuerely scourged them.

This verse conuinceth the cause of the Iewes ruine.

The sense of this word, is profane. *Psal. 9.*

Now it is said that God prophand the rulers of his Church, when hee despoiseth and rejects them as things of nought: and so it is taken in *Psal. 89.* and in many other places. For euen as when we are set apart, and sanctified by him, we dwell vnder the wings of his safeguard and protection, as long as wee retaine and keep that sanctitie pure and vndefiled: so as soone as we cast the same off, hee prophand vs, because wee cease to be holy; and so wee make ourselves also vaworthy of his defence. And thus hee laies them open for a pray to the enemies, which before he called his anointed, and could not indure that any should touch them. But is it not strange that the *Priests*, which represented the person of

God prophand vs, because we cease to be holy.

Christ, should be said to be polluted? The reason is, because they erred out of the right way themselves, who should haue been lights to others.

The Hebrew word *Cherem*, which I haue translated *execration*, is as much to say, as cutting off: but it also signifies execration; and therefore I haue iudged it to sute best with this place, because *reproch* follows. The Prophet borrowes all these words from *Moses*, whom he follows so neere, that we may well discern the stile of the one, in the writings of the other. The Prophets therefore forged nothing of their owne heads: for thus saith *Moses*; Thou shalt be an astonishment, a *prouerbe*, and a *scorne* to all nations, whether the Lord thy God shall leade thee: Deut. 28. 20. 37. Thus then hee threatens to afflict this people in such wise, that they should be a *reproch vnto all*; for wholoever hee were that gaue

himselfe to cursing, this people should bee a fit subiect for such a one to exercise his *execrations* vpon, so as hee might make them the foote of his cursing song. Every one should haue such a fling at them, that their name should sit abroad as a common *prouerbe* from one to another, in euery ones mouth that were disposed to scorne. As for example, the name of a Iew at this day (howfoeuer it bee honourable in it selfe) yet how odious and hatefull is it? The Lord then pronounceth by *Isaiah* these horrible threatnings, to teach them that they could not bee too severely punished for their hainous offences; and that when God should begiune to visit them, they should haue no cause to complain of our hard measure, neither should they thinke that the Prophet was too sharpe in his reprehensions.

The name of a Iew iustly execrable at this day, howfoeuer it be honourable in it selfe.

Isaiah follows Moyses stile.

THE XLIIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Yet now heare O Iakob my seruant, and Israel whom I haue chosen.*

into his household from his mothers wombe: Psal. 116. 16.

Verf. 2. *Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the wombe; he will helpe thee: Feare not O Iakob my seruant, * and thou righteous whom I haue chosen.*

* Or, my beloved whom, &c.

The coherent of this verie, with the latter part of the former Chapter.



Isaiah hauing a little before taxed the wickednes of the Iewes; and also hauing pronounced that they were all worthe to perish eternally, in regard that as well small as great, had

desiled themselves in all things. He now somewhat sweetens the sharpnesse of the chastisements, and begins to comfort them. I expound the particle *Vau* here, *Yes*: as in many other places. Euen as if he had said; *Albeit you are inuironed with many miseries, yet heare now what I will doe for your sakes.* For this verfe ought to be knit to the argument afore going, because the Lord shewes hee will neuer suffer the people vtterly to perish, though he be content they should feele much smart for a time.

Albeit he dealt roundly with the Iewes in the latter end of the former Chapter, to strippe them of all false confidence, and to humble them that hee might driue them to seeke pardon: yet now hee sweetly alliaies that tartnes, with a speech full of exceeding comfort, to assure them that they should lose nothing by renouncing themselves. Therefore we must heere supply some oppositions thus; *True is it, O Iakob, that in thy selfe thou art nothing: but thy God that formed thee will not despise the worke of his owne hands. There is no worshinesse as all in thee that can procure thy redemption from ruin and destruction; but mine adoption, for the which I haue vouchsafed as a mercifull father to receive thee, shall be more then sufficient to saue thee.*

Chap. 43. 25.

Some oppositions supplied.

God will neuer suffer vs to erill, though he lets vs feele a little smart for a time.

Doctrinc.

Hence let vs gather, that Gods wrath is neuer so far inflamed against his Church, but he alwaies leaues some place for his mercie, which we haue often noted before. As often therefore as the Prophets threaten; they euer adde some word of *consolation*, seruing to mitigate the former severity.

But we must note what I haue oft told you before; to wit, that the Prophet speaks not heere of the *first creation*, as wee be borne naturally the sonnes of *Adam*, but of *regeneration*, which is onely proper and peculiar vnto the elect, by which it comes to passe that they haue place in the Church of God. And to the end men should attribute nothing to themselves, as if they had moued God hereunto, hee addes, *which formed thee from the wombe*: by which words, he sets before them that covenant which was at the first made with their fathers, in the right whereof, God had set them apart also to be his people, euen before they were borne: which some refer vnto the person of *Iakob*, because by taking his brother by the heele, he gaue an excellent testimo-

See Chap. 43. 25.

Merits still excluded.

Coloss. 1. 12.

Election goes before vocation.

But lest we should imagin men derued this by their good *seruices*, he addes, *whom I haue chosen*: for God calles vs not to be his *seruants* for any dignitie or merit he sees in vs, but because he hath made vs meete to be partakers with the Saints in light) by his free *election*. In this place then the two words, *seruants* and *chosen*, haue the same signification: yet so, that *election* goes before. And therefore *Dauid* saith, that hee was Gods *seruant* before he was borne; because he was receiued

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nie of his election: but this is conſtrained. I rather therefore referre it further; to wit, That the Lord ſhewed himſelfe liberal and bountifull vnto his people ſiſo the beginning: and thus he takes away from them all boaiſting of merits, becauſe he *formed* them at the firſt of his free grace, and hath ſill from time to time freely added new benefits to the former.

He will help thee.] Others ſupplie the relatione *ſi*, as if he had ſaid, Thy helper: notwithstanding, it ſeemes beſt to reade it apart, and the ſenſe had bin clearer if we had read it in the firſt perſon, *I will help thee*: but the difference is not great. The ſumme of the whole comes to this; that he which is the Creator of the people, will be reade to ſuccour them when the appointed time is come. In which regard it is free for euery one to reſt in the expoſition he thinks beſt: yet I had rather follow the plaine and the leſſe conſtrained ſenſe, without ſupplying any thing.

The word *Ioſhurin* is diuerſlie expounded, for ſome would deriue it of *Iaſchar*, which ſignifies, To be vpright, or, To pleaſe: others deriue it otherwiſe: but I agree rather with thoſe who tranſlate *Beloued*, deriuing it from the verb aboue mentioned. *Mofes* alſo hath giuen this title to the Iſraelites in his ſong, Deut. 32. 15: for howſoever ſome tranſlate the Hebrue word there *vpright*, as in this place, yet the old tranſlation agrees beſt, which reads it, *My beloued* is waxed fat. Now our Prophet adornes his people with this name, to the end that by the remembrance of benefits paſt, they might conceiue good hope for the time to come.

For the faithfull are to hold this as a generall and perpetuall rule, that by mercies formerlie receiued they ought to expect no leſſe fauours for hereafter, otherwiſe we ſhould fauour too much of ingratitude; and ſhould ſhew our ſelues not to reſt at all in the promiſes: which if they were foundly and deeply imprinted in our hearts, would worke a ſetled peace and tranquillitie of ſpirit: not to make vs idle, but to chaſe away al inordinate feares and diſtruſt.

For which cauſe he once againe repeates, *Feare not o Iacob*: whereunto alſo belongs that conſolation of Chriſt, Luk. 12. 32. *Feare not little flock*, for my Father takes pleaſure in you, and will giue you the Kingdome. And queſtionleſſe among ſo many dangers which threaten vs with death on euery ſide, there is no remedie more ſoueraigne to appeaſe our feares then this ſentence, namely, that God vouchſafeth ſo farre forth to fauour vs, that we ſhall be euerlaſtinglie ſaued by him. By the word *Beloued* then he giues them the better to vnderſtand, that their ſaluation depends vpon the grace and good will of God, who referres and attributes whollie to himſelfe all that which is found praife-worthie in his people.

Vers. 3. For I will powre water vpon the thirſtie, and floods vpon the dry ground:

I will powre my ſpirit vpon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing on thy buds.

HE continues on the ſame argument, and therewithall ſhewes wherein this promiſed help ſhall ſtand. We muſt ſill keepe in mind therefore that theſe prophesies are to be referred to thoſe woſull and dolefull times whereof mention hath bin made before: to wit, when all things were conſufed, the people iorſaken, and all the promiſes of God ſeeming as if they had been of none effect: the Prophet therefore meets with theſe doubts, and compares the people to a *drie* and *thirſtie* ground which hath no moyſture left in it: which ſimilitude *Dauid* vſeth Pſal. 141. 6. to ſet forth his miſerie. Now howſoever they were ouerwhelmed with ſorrowes and had loſt all vigor, yet leſt their hearts ſhould faint within them in theſe extremities, they were to ſet theſe and the like ſweete ſentences before them.

And wee alſo are to haue our recourſe to ſuch promiſes as oft as dangers beſet vs on euery ſide, ſo as we can ſee nothing but preſent death ready to ſwallow vs vp quick: and by this meanes ſhall we remaine more then conquerors. But it is required that we be ſuch as haue a ſenſe and feeling of our *thirſt* and pouertie, that ſo our fainting and parched ſoules may cheerefullie receiue reſreſhing from theſe floods.

By the word *ſpirit*, he tels vs what is ſignified by *waters* and *floods*. The *ſpirit* is alſo called *water* in Ezech. 36. 25. but in a diuers ſenſe. For when *Ezechiel* attributes the name of *waters* to the *holy Spirit*, he calles them *pure waters*: hauing reſpect to the purgations vnder the Lawe. *Iſaiah* will afterwards likewiſe call the holy Spirit *water*, but in another reſpect: to wit, in that it giues ſtrength and vigor to fainting ſoules, by his ſerret and inward power. But here the Prophets words haue a further extent: for he not only ſpeakes of the Spirit of regeneration, but there is an alluſion to that generall vertue which it ſheds into all the creatures, whereof the Pſalmiſt ſpeakes, Pſal. 104. 30. When thou ſendeſt forth thy *ſpirit*, they are created: and thou reneueſt the face of the earth. Now as *Dauid* there in the firſt place ſhewes that all the parts of the world are reuiued by that ſerret power which God breathes into them: ſo afterwards he attributes vnto the Lord a ſufficient abilitie, forthwith (as ſoone as it pleaſeth him) to reneue the whole frame of heauen and earth, that it ſhould not fall to ruine. In the ſame ſenſe doth our Prophet call *water*, the ſudden reſtauration of the Church: as if he ſhould ſay, the reſtoring thereof is in the hand of God, as well as it reſts in him by dewes or ſhowers to fruſtifie barren & parched grounds. Thus the *Spirit* is compared vnto *water*, becauſe without it all things would fade and wither with drouth: he it is alſo that reuiues the world by a ſerret ſprinking of it with his power, and redreſſeth the barrennes that proceeds of heate and drouth, whereby the earth recouers a new face as it were: which

In the forme verſe he promiſed them help: here he deſcribes the meanes.

The vs for vs.

This word Spirit here not only ſignifies the Spirit of regeneration, but that generall vertue which it ſheds into all the creatures.

If God haue regenerated vs he will ſurely help vs.

A generall and perpetuall rule.

A ſoueraigne remedie to appeaſe our feares.

is yet further amplified by the word *blessing*, added in the end of the verse.

Verf. 4. *And they shall grow as among the grasse, and as the willowes by the riuers of waters.*

This verse is an amplification of the former.

There is nothing contained in this verse, but that which I haue alleadged out of the hundreth and fourth Psalm; to wit, that when God sends forth his Spirit, then the whole face of the earth is renewed, and the things which were before parched vp with heate, shall beginne to wax greene and flourishing; euen as the hearbs sprout, after they haue been watered by the dewes from heauen. He amplifies his speech by these similitudes, and shewes more plainly, that it shall be no lesse difficult for God to repeople his Church a new, which was barren and deformed, in regard of the wofull estate in which shee was, then to giue the earth power to bud, and bring forth grasse and hearbs. Moreover, albeit hee speaks not properly heere of regeneration: yet may wee refer this sentence vnto it, because hee handles the doctrine of the Churches restauration, whereof regeneration is a principall part: for God thereby repaires his image in his elect & chosen people. We might insit longer vpon this matter, and lay it out more fully, but we must first labour to attaine the Prophets meaning, and shew the plainc and natue sense of his words.

Regeneratiō a principall part of the Churches restauration.

Verf. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lords: another shall bee called by the name of Iakob: and another shall subscribe with his hand vnto the Lord, and name himselfe by the name of Israel.*

Hitherto the Prophet hath spoken vnder borrowed speeches, now he sets forth the thing plainly.

Hitherto the Prophet hath spoken by similitudes, but now he deliuers his mind plainly and without any figures, shewing what these buds and hearbs bee, whereof hee hath spoken; to wit, that the Lord will gather his people out of all nations, and will bring them into his Church, which were far off before: also that he would restore and augment the same, which in a manner seemed to bee brought to nothing: for all should runne vnto it out of all quarters of the world, and should craue that they might bee imolled among the faithfull: according to that which is said in Psal. 87. Behold, Philista, Tyre, and Ethiopia; there was he borne. Which place of the Psalm, howsoever it hath seemed to be obscured by the ignorance of the expositors, yet it serues to giue light to this prophetic. For we know the number of those which returned from the captiuiy were very few: the faithfull therefore had cause to bee astonished, and to blush for shame; much more cause had they to be hindered from comprehending the glorious and wonderfull worke of their redemption, which was so highly extolled by the Prophets. The author of this Psalm therefore labours to preuent this astonishment, and giues them to vnderstand

that the *Babylonians* and *Egyptians* shall also become members of the Church: that the *Ethiopiens*, *Tyrans*, and all such as were strangers, should come and be incorporated into the number of Gods chosen. As if he should say, *Ierusalem* is now desolate indeed, yet will God not onely gather together his banished, but will also call from every part of the world, and make them one body, which now are sundered, in such sort, that they shall reioice that God hath made them Citizens with the Saints, and shall no lesse appertaine to the body of the elect, then if they had issued forth of the same.

Now for as much as wee are wont to take their names, who are to be imolled in bookes, the Prophet hauing respect vnto this custome, vseth these phrases of speech: One shall subscribe with his hand vnto the Lord, and shall name himselfe by the name of Israel: another shall protest I am the Lords, and shall call himselfe by the name of Iacob. By which words the Prophet signifies that this shall bee a new and extraordinary worke, when hee which before was a meere stranger frō God, should now reioice that hee was adopted of him. *Shall be called*, signifies heere as much as we usually say, To bee called by anothers name: as in the fourth Chapter, where it is spoken of the women which desired husbands, onely to take away their rebuke and shame, We will eat our owne bread, and will weare our owne garments: onely let vs bee called by thy name.

Now howsoever *Isaiah* seems to make distinction heere betweene such as in expresse termes protest themselves to be Gods people, and those which desired to bee called by the name of *Iakob*, yet the two members are to be referred both to the one and to the other: for to be Gods child, and to bee of *Israel*, are things conioined with an inseparable band. Why so? Because God will be Father to none, but such as haue the Church for their mother. And yet we also note, that there are no true Citizens of the Church, but such as submit themselves vnder the Lords dominion.

God will that all his children should acknowledge the Church for their mother.

If the Prophet had omitted this word *Lords*, and had onely mentioned *Iakob* and *Israel*, yet we must haue risen from thence to the fountain of *Iakob*, of whom all things in heauen and in earth are named. But to take away all ambiguity, he repeats this order twice; to wit, that those onely are to bee accounted the children of *Iakob*, which submit themselves to God.

By this we may easily see the Prophets drift: for he shews that the church no sooner desire the want of Gods blessing, verf. 3. but by little and little shee falls to ruin, and withers away: on the contrary, when the Spirit is shed abroad vpon her, she by & by recouers new strength and force; not onely in regard of obtaining her first beautie and glory, but contrary to all hope, shee attaines wonderfull increase. We are also to note that the Prophet speaks not heere of the order of nature, as if the new children of the Church were borne so; for no man gets such a dignitie by his owne industry: but when those which were strangers

The Prophets drift.

gers before, ſhall be regenerated; then the Propnet ſaith, they ſhall come and *give in their names*, to teſtifie, that they are indeed the children of God. We ſee here therefore a deſcription of a change which farre ſurmounts nature, and all reaſon of fleſh and blood: to wit, when out of the *curſed race of Adam*, there iſſues a *ſpiritual Iſrael*.

Some thinke that *Iſaiah* notes heere how ſmall the number of the faithfull ſhall be, when it is ſaid, *one ſhall ſay: and another ſhall be called; and the third ſhall ſubſcribe*: but this conicecture wants ground, and the very ſcope of the text eaſily confutes their error. As I thinke therefore, wee haue rather to gather, that the Church ſhall come in by troopes out of diuers nations far remote one from the other: in regard that God will bring home ſtrangers vnder his dominion, and to touch their hearts, that they ſhall glory not *in words onely, but in truth*, that they are of the number of his people. Hence alſo wee may obſerue, that true faith cannot be in the heart, but it will forthwith breake out into a voluntarie and franke confeſſion, which may be gathered from theſe foure diſtinct members: *one ſhall ſay, I am the Lord; another ſhall be called by the name of Iſaiah; the third ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand; and the fourth ſhall call himſelfe by the name of Iſrael*. For the very truth is, that Gods ſeruants ought not to be *mute or ſilent*, but both by words and deeds to teſtifie what is in their hearts, ſeeing they profeſſe to obey him, and reioyce in his name the whole courſe of their life.

Verſ. 6. *Thus ſaith the Lord the King of Iſrael, and his redeemer the Lord of hoſts; I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and without me there is no God.*

The Prophet enters not into any new diſcourſe, but onely confirms the former doctrine, which it was needfull for him to do: for mens mindes are wonderfully inclined to diſtruſt, and they are quickly out of heart in the time of aduerſitie; neither can they be raiſed vp by one or two exhortations. He ſpends no waſt labor then in *confirming* this doctrine with ſo many words, becauſe we neuer attribute ſo much to Gods power as we ſhould. We are often diſtracted with penſiue cares, and are ouermuch glued to the things of this life. The Prophet therefore hauing fixed this vnumerable name of *Iehouah* in the forefront, he alſo calles him *King*, and *Redeemer*, becauſe it is not enough to apprehend his power, vnleſſe we be alſo aſſured of his fatherly loue which he beares vs. That the promiſes of God then might haue their authoritie with vs, he not onely mentions his *glorie*, but his goodnes alſo, to aſſure vs that it appertaines vnto vs. But it might ſeeme ridiculous that he calles himſelfe *King*, ſeeing the people were in a maner brought to nothing, yet were the faithfull notwithstanding to cleaue faſt to this promiſe, ſo as by faith they were euen in this ſeruitude to apprehend a *kingdome to come*, though for the preſent they

ſaw not ſo much as any glimps of it. And the very truth is, the former doctrine would neuer haue entered into the minds of men oppreſſed vnder ſo extreme a bondage (yea almoſt ouerwhelmed with deſpaire) had not this preface prepared a way and paſſage for it. But when God familiarly inuites vs vnto him, ſhewing that he indeed is *our*, faith being allured by ſo ſweet a ſummons breakes forth though it were euen out of hell it ſelle.

In ſaying *I am the firſt*, he means not to magnifie the *eternitie* of God, but to ſet forth his *unchangeableneſſe*, that to the Iewes might belecue him to be ſuch a one for the time to come, as they had found him in times paſt. But what neceſſitie was there of this, may ſome ſay, ſeeing he ſpeakes to the faithfull, who were rightly informed of this truth already? I anſwer, that albeit men beleue in God, yet doe they not kn w him fir ſuch a one as he is, and oftentimes they attribute leſſe to him then to a creature. Therefore the Prophet would haue vs to liſt vp pure hearts vnto heauen, that being emptied of falſe imaginations concerning him, we might intirely fixe our faith vpon one God onely. I adde further, that it was needfull this people ſo extremely vexed ſhould be confirmed againſt ſuch violent temptations, that they might neither loſe their hope, nor patience.

Verſ. 7. *And who is like me that ſhall call, and ſhall declare it, and ſet it in order before me ſince I appointed the ancient people? and what is at hand, and what things are to come? let them ſhew vnto them.*

Now the Lord compares himſelfe with Idols, as we haue ſeene before, Chap. 40. 18. 19. His purpoſe is to deliuer the Iewes from being diſcouraged or offended when the victorious Babylonians ſhould proudly triumph ouer them: for, the reproches wherewith the wicked loded them, were exceeding intolerable and fearful, as, *Where is your God? Why doth he not help you now?* Such blaſphemies were ſufficient to haue ſhaken the hearts of the faithfull in ſunder, and ſo farre to diſmay them, as to diue them into viter deſpaire. The Prophet therefore inſits very carefully vpon this point, that he might euer be confirming of them againſt ſuch defaults.

This lamentable deſolation into which the people were then ſalne, was as a thick cloud which ſhadowed from them the ſight of Gods louing countenance: and the wicked on the other ſide reioiced, as if their gods had now obtained the preheminance. But the Prophet intending to ſcatter the darknes of ſuch miſts and clouds of errors, ſhewes, that Gods glorie ſhines as it were in certaine and inſalable marks of his *diuinitie*, which diſcernes him from Idols. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord *foretold all things* that ſhould come to paſſe, to the end his people might acknowledge him a iuſt Iudge in his chaſtiſements inflicted vpon them, and yet might alſo about hope be aſ-

The faithfull by the cies of faith behold glorie in their loweſt abailement.

The vſe of this claue, I am the Lord.

Obedi,

Anſ

Another confirmation of the former doctrine.

Wicked blaſphemies,

A change farre ſurmounting all humane reaſon.

True faith in the heart will miniſter it ſelfe by a voluntarie confeſſion. Pſal 116. 10. 2. Cor. 4. 13. Rom. 10. 10. Act. 4. 20.

A confirmation of the former doctrine. The reaſon of it.

By theſe two titles of King and Redeemer, the Lord ſets forth his power and loue.

sured, that he would be fauorable and mercifull vnto them.

To call, is taken heere two waies: either it is to be referred to Gods foreknowledge, or to the execution thereof: for as all things are gouerned by his *providence*, so doth hee also know what is to come, and giues plaine proofes of his *prescience*. But we neede not stand long in discussing the signification of this word, seeing it plainly appeares, that the Prophet attributes vnto God both *prescience*, and the administratiō of all things. Yet I rather iudge, that he refers it to the act: as if he should say; Shall there be found any among the gods of the Gentiles, *that can call*: that is, can publish, ordaine, and raise vp deliuerers? May you not easilie discern by this, that there is none other God but me? And thus hee derides the Idols, to whom men attributed such power causelie.

By the verbe *to shew*, which is presently added, he sets forth the speciall goodnesse of God, who vouchsafed to reueale his secrets to the elect and chosen people, by the ministerie of the Prophets. By the *ancient people*, some vnderstand the Gentiles, saying, that the singuler number is put for the plurall; because the Lord no sooner furnished the nations with people, but he separated them one from another, and established an order which should indure for euer. Others extend it vnto the creatures, so as the starres should be one people; and the hearbs, beasts, and such like, should be another. But when I consider all circumstances, I am constrained to follow another exposition; to wit, that the Lord speaks of his people, and calles them *ancient*, because he preferred them before all others: and yet it is certain that there were some long before them. The Egyptians, Arcadians, and others, brag of their antiquitie. As touching *Abraham*, he came out of Mesopotamia, whilst the Caldeans flourished: and liued solitarily in his house, as if the memorie of his name should haue been buried in obliuion, when the neighbour Countries were replenished with people, and with all sorts of benefites. Neither must we iudge of the *antiquitie* of Israel by the length of yeeres, or in respect of any thing externall, *but by Gods election*: for which cause indeed, the foundations of Ierusalem are called *euerslasting*. It is as much then as if he had said; Before there were any men to forge or frame Idols, I determined in my secret counsell to haue a Church, which should indure for euer. This people therefore is the *most ancient* and excellent of all others, though others be before them both in yeeres and in dignitie. For as all things were created for man, so all men were made to serue the Church: yea, there is not any nation whatsoever, be it neuer so high or mightie, which is not much inferior. For the Church is the body of Christ, which far surpasseth both in age and excellencie. We will not stand to recount fables, as the Iewes doe, who affirme Ierusalem to be built from the beginning: for the Prophet respects not *beginnings of time* here. And yet wee must hold this principle, that the elect people are more honourable and ancient,

then the strange nations; because they approach neerer vnto God, who is the *fountainne of eternitie*.

Let them shew.] This permission giuen, shewes that men shall but lose their time in looking for any answer from Idols, touching the foretelling of things to come: and if they should, yet their answers would proue nothing but impostures and words, hauing alwaies a double signification, wherewith they were sure to be seduced that went to aske counsell of them, as wee haue said heretofore.

Verf. 8. Feare yee not, neither be afraid: haue I not told thee of old, and haue declared it? You are euen my witnesses, whether there be a God beside me, or a God that I know not.

*Or, strong.

I Saiah shewes now wherefore hee spake of the power of God; to wit, that hee might confirme the peoples faith: for this is the conclusion which he gathers out of the former arguments: Seeing the Lord is so powerful, and gouernes all things after the counsell of his own will, therefore the people whom he hath taken into his protection, haue no cause to feare. In the next place hee repeats that which was said before; to wit, that God had not onely succoured the Iewes in hugger mugger, in shewing himselfe at vnwares, when none waited for his helpe; but had also vpheld their faith by many prophecies, and gaue them sufficient testimonies of his fatherly fauour: so as his diuinitie was manifested to the utmost. For what should it profit vs to know that God both foresees and is able to doe all things, if he did not therewithall manifest the same vnto vs concerning our saluation? Albeit then it is his pleasure that many things should be vnknowne to vs, yet hee communicates so much of his counsels, as is expedient and fit for vs to vnderstand.

The knowledge of Gods pre-science and power should little auaille vs; if he manifested not the same for our good.

The word *Meax*, signifies a long time: or, (if any had rather take it otherwise) it notes out an opportunitie or fitnessse of time: for the Lord reueales his secrets vnto his elect, when he sees the time to be conuenient. But the first interpretation seemes to me the least constrained.

Wherefore you are my witnesses.] His meaning is, as I haue touched before, that the people could not pretend ignorance, if they contented not themselves with one God, seeing he hath so fully manifested himselfe vnto them, that they might be the best witnesses of his diuine power. What is the end of our knowledge then concerning Gods glorie? Euen openly to witnessse the truth of God before men, as hath been said before: vnlesse we had rather be counted smotherers of that light which hee hath manifested vnto vs by his holy Spirit. Moreouer, we can be no lawfull witnesses of Gods truth, if he confirme vs not by his truth: for what validitie is there in his testimony, who doubts of the truth which he is to profess? Wee must therefore be both taught by Gods word, if we will haue

such

Egyptians,
Arcadians,
Abraham.
Gen. 11. 31.

We must
fetch out
antiquitie
from Gods
election.

All men
made to
serue the
Church.
The Church
Christs bodie,
therefore
shee is the
most ancient
and excellent
of all.
Fables,
A principle.

ſuch a faith and hope as accompliſheth ſalutation.

He attributes heere vnto God the title of *ſtrength*, as in many other places; becauſe it is not enough to know the eternall eſſence of God, vnleſſe wee therewithall aſcribe vnto him power & ſtrength. Otherwiſe, we ſhould leaue him onely a bare and naked title, as the vnbeleeuers doe; who indeed confeſſe there is a God with their mouthes, and afterwards attribute his power to this and that creature.

Verſ. 9. *All they that make an Image are vanitie, and their * delectable things ſhall not profiſe them: and they are their owne witneſſes that they ſee not nor know: therefore they ſhall be confounded.*

THe Lord now on the contrarie ſhewes how miſerable the Idolaters are which erre and vaniſh away in their inuentions, being not faſt grounded vpon his eternall truth, to wit, they are ſenſeleſſe and void of ſound iudgement. And as he hath heretofore juſtly condemned the ingratitude of the people, if by the teſtimonies of Gods preſcience and prouidence they were not encouraged to hope well: ſo now on the contrarie, he armes and fortifies them againſt the ſuperſtitions of the Gentiles. But in regard the vnbeleeuers were many in number, and ſlowed in forces and riches, he denounceth that *all is vanitie*; and to be ſhort, that all their goodly ſhewes would proue deceitfull helps in the end. By their *deſirable* things, he not only comprehends their Idols, but alſo all their ſeruiſe, veſtments, pomp, and ceremonies, which fooles are wont to honour them withall. And he ſets out theſe things by a very fit word: for ſeeing the chiefe end of mans life conſiſts in aduancing the true knowledge and worſhip of God (wherein ſtands the maine difference betweene vs and brute beaſts) ſo muſt it be preferred before all things be they neuer ſo excellent: to this (Iſay) we ought to referre all the thoughts and *deſires* of our hearts. It is not without cauſe then that the Scripture vſeth this word, when it ſpeakes of Gods worſhip and ſeruiſe: but it is vſed here touching a corrupt and *ſurriouſe* zeale wherewithall Idolaters are carried away after their Idols, and their ſeruiſes: for this cauſe he ſaith that all their *deſirable things* about which they ſpend ſo much time, are both vaine and vnprofitable. Oftentimes alſo this *deſire* is compared to the ſildie luſt wherewith men are ſo bewitched, or whollie blinded, that they can not ſee their villanie, nor yet obey common reaſon, whereof we haue largely ſpoken in the firſt Chapter.

In that he addes, *themſelues are vniueſes*: ſome expound it that the Idols beare witnes againſt themſelues, and plainly teach what vanitie there is in the, ſo as they which perceiue it not are wonderfullie blinded. But I like not of this expoſition: I had rather fol-

low thoſe therefore which referre this to the Idolaters, who can *giue ſufficiente* teſtimonie themſelues of their vanitie, and know that indeed their Idols neither *heare nor ſee*.

There is an oppoſition in this place betweene Gods witneſſes verſe 8. and the Idols witneſſes in this verſe, for the firſt yeeld a glorious witnes to the truth of God by the light of his works, and the vnderſtanding of his propheſies and promiſes: the others are conſtrained to ſtand mute and dumb, vnleſſe they will be falſie, and beare witnes to vaine things, hauing no truth at all in them. I denie not but Idolaters brag of their ſeruiſes, and extoll them about the ſkies: but this blind conſcience of theirs doth more then ſufficiente witnes how great vanitie and waueing of mind there is in that which they doe: for they alwaies tremble and are in continual vniquietnes, though they carie it out with great ſtirres by their rebellions. *Themſelues* then are *vniueſes* againſt their Idols: as if one hauing an ignorant teacher, ſhould plead againſt his inſufficiencie. So the Idolaters ſhall *teſtiſie* that their gods neither know, nor are able to doe ought; becauſe they are driuen to confeſſe that the matter whereof they conſiſt is nothing but wood and ſtone, or ſuch like ſtuſſe wrought with hands: and that things thus framed and faſhioned can neither ſee nor ſeele ought at all. The faithfull therefore only are the lawfull and true witneſſes, in affirming that their God both ſeeeth, gouernes, and effects all things done in heauen and in earth. The reſt muſt needs be *confounded*, albeit they ſtoutlic maintaine their errors now with fire and fagot, for their owne conſciences beare them witnes that their minds are enthralled with a vaine opinion, and corrupt imaginacions.

Verſ. 10. *Who hath made a God, or molten an Image, that is profitable for nothing?*

HE now derides mens madnes who preſume to be the forgers of gods: for is it not an horrible and execrable thing that a mortall creature ſhould dare to *make himſelfe a Creator*? truly there is no reaſonable man that would not greatly deteſt ſuch a ſurie, and yet the moſt part are carried away with ſuch a ſenſeleſſe rage euen to *make gods*; and no admonition whatſoener can reclaim them. But they will anſwere me, that they haue no ſuch thought, and that we do them great wrong to accuſe them of ſuch follie. And the Papiſts at this day tell vs that we belie them, and offer them iniurie, in vſing this and the like teſtimonies of ſ̄ Prophets againſt them: but they indeuor in vaine to iuſtifie themſelues by ſuch cauils. For *Iſaiab* very truly affirms that they are ſo bewitched, that they thinke they can *make a god*: in regard they attribute a diuinitie to blocks and ſtocks; as ſoone as they be once framed and poliſhed, then they forthwith run a gadding after the, they vow vnto them, they pray and bow their knees before them: in a word, they attribute

* Or, deſirable.

The faithfull armed againſt the ſuperſtitions of the Gentiles.

Deſirable.

The chiefe end of mans life.

Idolaters need no better conſutation of their Idollworthip then their owne blind conſciences.

Simile.

Idolaters ſcorned.

Papiſts forgers of gods.

Papiſts attribute a diuinitie to the Images which the caruer hath made.

that

that to them which belongs only vnto God.

[Which is profitable for nothing.] This is to be well obserued, for by these words it is euident that all figures, by which men would represent God, are condemned for vaine and vnprofitable. Whence it followes, that God is not only blasphemed, and oft times his glorie giuen to dead stocks, but that those which make and receive them, do also lose their labor to their owne confusion of face. The Papiſts alledge that these be lay mens bookes. But this is a weake and childish shift: for the Prophet testifies, that they are profitable for nothing. I wish them therefore either to confesse that their Images are vaine and vnprofitable, or if they dare be so bold, to blot this testimonie of our Prophet out of his booke. In a place before, hee hath expressed somewhat more: for Chap. 41. 23. he saith they teach nothing but lies. But wee haue spoken sufficiently of this matter in the 40. and 41. Chapters.

Images made to represent God, good for nothing.

Images lay mens bookes.

Note.

Verſ. 11. Behold, all that are of the fellowship thereof shall bee confounded; for the Workemen themselves are men: let them all be gathered together, and stand vp, yet they shall feare, and be confounded together.

A reproofe both of Idoll makers, and Idoll worshippers.

HE not onely rebukes the workemen and forgers of Idols, but all Idolaters, who are so blind and senselesse, as to close the power of God within a trunk of wood, as soone as it hath but receiued a new forme. His meaning is then, that the *aris* men should not onely be punished for their *presumption*, but those also which shall be *companions* with them in their superstitions. These shall not escape: for it is good reason that both being guiltie of the same crime, they should both receiue like iudgement. Now they cannot by anie meanes excuse themselves, in regard they see that their Idols are vaine and dumbe, forged and framed with mans hand: how can they be gods then?

See Psal. 97.7

[Let them all be gathered.] As if he should say; Let Idolaters and their Idols combine themselves together; yet shall they feare and bee confounded, when they shall stand vp before Gods tribunal seat.

But it is not without cause that the Prophet threatens them with feare and confusion: for Idolaters are wont proudly to aduance themselves, and to despise others. They glory much in their multitude, as the Papiſts doe now adays; who in reproch and disdain, esteeme vs but a small handfull. They insolently insulte ouer vs, and band themselves with wonderfull pride both against God and his word. *Isaiah* therefore appeales heere to the consciences of such men: for howeouer obstinacie and extreme rebellion of heart hath possessed them, yet are they constrained to tremble and quake when they are alone, crying out, What shall wee doe? especially when they looke towards the end of all their actions: for they haue no stabilitie whereupon they may boldly rest. When their rage

A multitude.

Idolaters forced to quake, will they nil they, because they haue no firme resting place.

pricks them forward, then they are audacious enough; but when they come againe to themselves, and at leaſure be thinke them what they haue done, they melt away for verie feare. Their furie, pride, and multitude then, ought not to terrifie nor astonish vs. Why so? Because all this wil in a moment be brought to nought. Let vs not be much moued therefore at the combinations, brauadoes, and diuillish plottings of the Papiſts, seeing we know that all these things shall turne to their ouerthrow; for the more they ouerflow in inuolency, and aduance themselves against God, the more heauie and shamefull shall their extreme fall be.

Papiſts bold for a brunt.

Verſ. 12. The smith taketh an instrument, and worketh in the coales, and fashioneth it with his hammers, and worketh it with the strength of his armes: yea, hee is an hungred, and his strength faileth: hee drinketh no water, and is faint.

13. The Carpenter stretcheth out a line, he fashioneth it with a red threed: he planteth it, and he pourtraiet it with the compasse, and maketh it after the beantie of a man, that it may remaine in an house.

IT is not in vaine that the Prophet makes this large description; for his meaning is to rouze vp the drowsie consciences of the superstitious, out of their senselesse blockishnes; if by any meanes he might either terrifie, or at least hinder the Jewes from being made drunke with this poisoned cup: for they were compassed about on all sides with an infinite number of idolaters. He disciphers out euerie thing point by point, that he might giue them cleerly to discern the their spirituall frensie and madnesse. I grant he might haue condemned this their wickednesse euen in few words; but this large description makes it very apparant, when hee thus reckons vp the *Smith*, the *Carpenter*, the *tooles*, *labours*, and *diligence* of these workemen; to bring vs (as you would say) euen to the acting of the thing it selfe. For men who naturally haue these errors ingrauen in their vnderstandings, are more moued this way; then by a plaine sermon. Neither can they be wakened from their sluggishnesse, but by continuall loud cries. All things therefore must of necessitie be minced out vnto them by small morsels; yea they had neede haue it chewed for them, and put into their moutnes like young children, that so at the last they may comprehend that doctrine, which otherwise seemes new and strange vnto them.

The furie of idolaters amplified.

[Yea, is hungry.] Hee expresseth the zeale wherewith Idolaters are carried away in forging their gods: for they are so ferie and vehement, that they can keep no measure at all. Their lusts picke them forward as mad men,

men, to runne vpon their owne deſtruction: they will not allow themſelves time to *eaſe* nor *drinke*. Thus ſitie therefore may well be compared to the raging luſts of whoremongers, as we haue ſaid before. In a word, they ſpare not their *ſtrength*, but employ all the faculties & powers both of ſoule & body in this buſineſſe; which is better vnderſtood by *The ſtrength of the arme*. As it he had ſaid, They deſpise themſelves of *dies* and *reſt*, they apply to the vtmoſt the *ſtrength of their armes*: yea, they will ſcarſly allow themſelves the common comforts of nature. In a word, they ſpare neither *paines* nor *loſſe* to finiſh their gods, which they ſo much *deſire*. verſ. 9.

Now, whereas hee ſaith, that though theſe *faine*, yet they *giue noi ouer*, but indure *hunger* and *thiſt*, rather then to hinder their work, it is to be vnderſtood of the *workmen*; yet it may alſo as well extend it ſelfe to all the indeuors of an inconfiderate *cale*. For we ſee how the ſuperſtitious will torment their bodies in their ſeruent deuotions (as they call them.) But the more they melt and pine away themſelves to fall into perdition, the more vile and abominable is our ſloth, when wee deſraud God of that ſeruiſe which to him appertaines. But in the end hee ſhewes with what folly this diligence is filled, ſeeing the whole fruit of their labour is to behold their Idols, idly to reſt without feare in whatſoeuer place they were faſtened: as if ſome lazie bodie ſhould wallow in the aſhes, or lie all day ſoaking in his bed.

Verſ. 14. *He will hew him downe cedars, and take the pine tree and the oke, and taketh courage among the trees of the foreſt: hee planteth a ſiſre tree, and the raine doth nourish it.*

In this verſe the Prophet deſcribes not onely their violent ſurie, but their wilfull obſtinacie.

THE Prophet ſets forth not onely the zeale and witteſſe rage of Idolaters, but alſo their obſtinacie and rebellion. For in that he ſaith, they *cut downe cedars*, and did *plant a ſiſre tree*; it is to ſhew that they perſeuered long in their follie, and were not ouertaken with any ſuddē paſſion, which droue them to forge theſe gods. They are not content onely to *chufe trees* of ſufficient growth, but they alſo *plant* them young, water, and husband them, and *vaiſt a long while*, till they be come to a ſufficient ſtature to make an Idoll of. When wee read theſe things, and ſee ſuch an horrible rage, let vs know that God takes vs by the necke (as it were) to pull vs thence, and to continue vs in true picie. Wee muſt take theſe foxes (I meane theſe luſts) betimes, and kill them whileſt they be cubs, leſt if we nourish them ouer long in our breſts, they grow wild and impregnable. Wee are euermore to watch ouer our owne hearts, that a wicked luſt no ſooner creeps in to carry vs away to the loue of Idols, but wee forthwith roote it out, for feare of falling into theſe deepe gulphes; becauſe euen the beſt of vs all beares about with vs ſome ſeedes of this brutiſhnes, which by no meanes can be weeded out: nay, they wil bud & ſprout vp in vs with-

out ceaſing, vnleſſe we be purged of them by the power of the holy Ghoſt.

Moreouer, ſeeing Idolaters are thus violently carried downe the ſtream in ſeruing their Idols, haue not wee cauſe to bluſh for ſhame, that are ſo cold in the ſeruiſe of our God? Let vs (*ſay*) bluſh and be aſhamed of our ſloth and lukewarmeſſe; nay, kee coldneſſe, whileſt theſe that worſhip Idols, are fire hote as it were with zeale; and let vs alſo bethinke vs of the count wee are to make. With what vehenencie are the Turkes carried away, when the matter concernes the maintenance of their Mahomet and his blaſphemies? Are they not ready to ſhed their owne blood, and to giue their liues for the defence thereof? The Papiſts are not behind them herein: for they are no leſſe inflamed with ſurie to vphold their ſuperſtitious. And we in the meane while can content our ſelves to ſit ſtill; much adoe there is to quicken vp our zeale; nay, doe we not often euen quench thoſe good ſparkles which God hath kindled in vs by his holy Spirit: Hearkē what *Jeremiah* ſaith; Hath any Nation changed their gods? But my people hath forſaken me the fountaine of liuing waters, to dig vnto themſelves broken pits that can hold no water: *Jer. 2. 11.* This compariſon therefore ought to be well obſerued, leſt wee be found leſſe conſtant in maintaining the truth, then Idolaters are obſtinate in defending lies.

In that Idolaters are ſo vehement in their Idoll ſeruiſe, it ought to make vs bluſh, that are ſo cold in Gods ſeruiſe.

Turkes.
Mahomet.
Papiſts.

Note.

Verſ. 15. *A man burneth thereof; for he will take thereof, and warme himſelfe: alſo hee kindleth it, and baketh bread, yet hee maketh a god, and worſhippeth it; he maketh it an Idoll, and boweth vnto it.*

16. *Hee burneth the halfe thereof in the fire, and vpon the halfe thereof hee eateth fleſh: hee roſteth the roſt, and is ſatisfied: alſo hee warmeth himſelfe and ſaith, Aha, I am warme, I haue been at the fire.*

17. *And of the reſidue thereof he maketh a god: hee boweth vnto it, and worſhippeth, praieth vnto it, and ſaith; Deliuer me, for thou art my god.*

HEE worthily taxeth their ſottiſhnes, that manifeſt experience it ſelfe cannot lead them to conclude it for a thing vnpoſſible, that a *ſmoke of wood* ſhould become a god. He alſo taxeth their vnthankfulneſſe, in deſrauding God of his honour, ſeeing his power may eaſily be diſcerned euen in the *growth* of themſelves. For when a man puts wood to diuers vſes, the bountie of God forthwith preſents it ſelfe before his eyes, be it in *vvarming* himſelfe by it, or in *baking* bread in the oven, in *roſting*, or heating his meate with it. In a word, as oft as we warme vs, and inioy theſe benefits by our fires, ſhall wee not be conuincid of inexcusable ingratitude, if we therein

Experience; which uſthe Millis of ſoules, cannot make theſe ſoules wife in heart.

therein consider not of Gods goodnesse, who hath so provided, as to destitute vs of nothing, that is needfull for vs?

Hereunto appertaines these words, *Aba, I am vaine*: for this spech expresseth the ioy of such as being freed from incommodities and wants, begin to blesse their owne good estate. But can there be a more vnworthe or vnreasonable thing committed, then for men in such comfortable maner to haue the vse of Gods blessings, that their hearts are therewith filled with gladnes, and yet neuer to be thankfull to the author from whom they proceed; nay, to abuse his great riches to violate his honor? No doubt in the meate that is in their kitchens, and in other commodities, they see that the wood is their seruant and made for their vse, why then should they bow before a trunk of wood, that shall resemble the shape of a man? Is not God robbed of his right by such a course? And when they pray to their Images, rob they not the Lord of that sacrifice which he principallie requires? The very prophane writers haue sometimes derided the follie of these Idolaters, which durst after their owne inuention frame a god of a corruptible substance, wherof they made no reckoning before. Thence came this flout of the Poet *Horace*, who brings in an Idoll speaking thus:

Horace.

I was once the stock of a figge-tree, seruing to no purpose, whilist the Carpenter not knowing whether is worse best to make me a seat to sit vpon, chose rather to make me such a god as you now here see mee.

But such folke notwithstanding could not see the fountaine from whence this impietic sprang, because they gaue not themselues to consider of that goodnes and power of the only true God which shines in all his creatures.

Now when the Prophets dealt thus bitterly against Idolaters in laying forth their furie and sortishnes, no doubt but they complained as if he had offered them great iniurie: neither wanted they their tricks, but to the vniuersal coloured over their errors with goodly pretences: to wit, they confessed that the gods were in heauen, as may be seene euen in their owne writings: neither would they in expresse termes affirme the stone or wood was a God indeed. And this shift also the Papists haue found out at this day against vs, because they would not be condemned of so grosse a blindness. But we haue told you, that the Prophet stands not so much here to debate about the simple essence of God, who also were no better then an Idoll, if nothing but that were giuen vnto him: but the question here is touching his properties, to wit, his *prescience, power, providence, iustice, saluation*, and such like, which our Prophet would haue ascribed vnto him fullie and whollie. And when Idolaters erect Images and runne vnto them for aid and succor, supposing that God heares them; also, when they speake to their puppets which they set before them, tie they not their saluation to the things themselues? But this brutishnes proceeds from the ignorance of the nature of God, in that

A shift of the Papists.

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they imagin him to be carnall like themselues, who is a pure and spirituall substance: and thus they manifest the base opinion they haue conceiued of God, whose glorie they reject and prophane, in likening him to corruptible and earthly things: for what is more disonant from his Maiestie then Images? and yet those that worship them, inuolue to inclose God in heauen, and to make him flout to their lusts. The Prophet is iustly displeas'd then with such corruptions, and therefore gauls the furious desires of these superstitious ones, seeing a man can not thinke of nor viter a thing more detestable.

Nothing
Iannes more
with Gods
Maiestie
then Images.

Verf. 18. *They haue not knowne, nor understand: for * God hath shut their * Or, he. eyes that they can not see, and their hearts that they can not understand.*

His conclusion is, that it were impossible for men indued with common reason to be thus reasonlesse, if God had not shut up both their eyes and hearts. For had they but a dram of wit in their heads, they must of necessitie be drawne to consider how absurd a thing it is to worship a fragment of that wood which themselues had burned, and with their owne eyes saw it consumed to ashes before them. But in as much as they neither know nor understand any thing, nor will be brought to beleue their owne senses, a man may well conclude, that they are become beasts: for this ignorance wherewith *Isaiah* reprocheth them, is as much as if hee had said; *They are beasts in the forme of men.* And howsoeuer many among them were otherwise sharpe witted enough, yet in this behalfe they were more then iustly conuinc'd of their brutish senselesnesse.

They are
become brutish
that will
not beleue
their owne
senses.

The reason added in the latter member of the verse, is not to lessen their fault, but to shew how odious and hatefull their sinne is: for men would neuer become so senselesse, vnlesse God in his iust iudgement had giuen them vp into a reprobate sense. Some supplie God heere: others, the falsc Prophets: affirming that the people were blinded, because they were seduced by their impostures; otherwise they had neuer bin plunged into such grosse errors: for false doctrines blind the eyes. There are others who take it in another sense, and they refer it to Satan. But because the first exposition is most vsed in the Scriptures, I rather allow of that; to wit, that God blinded them iustly. Vnlesse any had rather referre it to the Idolaters themselues, who wittingly are wont to put out the eyes of their owne reason: and in this sense there must bee a change of the number; to wit, they: a thing much frequented among the Hebrewes: But I haue set downe that which seemed fittest. You may also adde, that it is verie vsual in the Hebrew tongue, to conceal the name of God, when it mentions him.

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Falsc doctrines
blind the
eyes.

Now it appears by many places of Scripture, in what sense God is said to blind the eyes, and to harden the hearts; to wit, when he takes away the light of his holy Spirit, and

How God is
said to blinde
and harden.

and

and giues men vp to their owne luſts : ſo as they can no more be reclaimed by any perſuaſion. He alſo armes Satan with the efficacy of error, by cauſing him to lay ſuch ſnares in the way of thoſe that receiue not the truth in loue, as they can neuer wind themſelues out, but muſt ſtill be ſubiect to his illuſions and bewitchings. What remains then but groſſe darkneſſe and blockiſh ignorance, through which this tyrant, the father of lies and of darkneſſe, gets free egreſſe and regrette. For there is not left vs ſomuch as one ſparkle of light to ſcatter theſe miſts of error: but wee ſhall be driuen on with the Spirit of giddineſſe, wherewith the Lord ſmites the reprobates, ſo as we ſhall be ſtrangely halod to and fro at Satans pleaſure.

And yet we muſt not lay the blame of this blinding vpon God, for hee alwaies findes iuſt cauſe ſo to doe, though many times it be hid and concealed from vs. Neither is it fit we ſhould curiouſly prie into this ſecret, nor to enter into his hidden counſell, vnleſſe we meane withall to beare away the puniſhment of our owne preſumption. I grant the cauſes for the moſt part are moſt apparant, as mens vnthankfulneſſe and rebellion againſt God : as Saint Paul deſcribes it at large in the Epistle to the Romans, Chap. 1. 28. for their blinding is the iuſt fruit of their deſerts. Howſoever men excuſe themſelues then through ignorance, yet this will be no ſufficient pleaſure for they had neuer been wrapped in ſuch errors, if the Lord had not done it for their wickedneſſe ſake.

Now from the iuſt iudgements of the one, we may draw ſound and infallible arguments from the iniquities of the other: for God is iuſt, and therefore neuer puniſheth any man vniuſtly; he blindes no man till himſelfe hath deſerued it, and hath wittingly ſhut his owne eyes : let the fault therefore reſt wholly in men, who of ſet purpoſe ſeek their owne blinding and hardening. The Propheets meaning then doubtleſſe is, that men who ought to ſuffer themſelues to be governed by diuine inſtincts, being naturally indued with ſome light of reaſon, were worthily reiected of the father of lights, to be the bondſlaues of Satan.

Verſ. 19. * *And none conſidereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor underſtanding, to ſay, I haue burnt balſe of it euen in the fire, and haue baked bread alſo vpon the coales thereof. I haue roſted fleſh and eaten it; and ſhall I make the reſidue thereof an abomination? ſhall I bow to the ſtocke of a tree?*

This is a confirmation of the former ſentence, whereby the Prophet labours to prevent all excuſes, becauſe vnbeleeuers delight to maintaine and vphold their owne ignorance. And whereas it commonly falles out that men haue ripe wits in deuiling and foreſeeing things for their owne aduantage

in the world, but are as blind as Moſes or Baekes, in things belonging to Gods worſhip and ſeruice; the chiefe cauſe is, that they are too eager in purſuing worldly profits and pleaſures, ſt are too ſlacke in ſeeking firſt the kingdome of God. In this ſentence therefore the Prophet reproues this contempt of pietie and religion, in that hauing fetched ſuch long circuits, yet theſe vnbeleeuers conſider not in themſelues whether they are in the right way or no, or whether they labour not in vaine in ſpending ſo much coſt and labour in the purſuit of their errors and ſuperſtitions.

He alſo proues that their ſottiſhneſſe is inexcusable, in that they giue themſelues to ſuch new ſound ſeruices. For if they did but weigh all circumſtances a litle in an equall balance, they might eaſily perceiue their owne groſſe folly: but ſeeing they be blind, it is a ſigne they meane to deceiue themſelues, and to pleaſe themſelues in their blindneſſe. And therefore there is no pretext of excuſe at all left them, which can ſtand them in any ſtead: ignorance they can pretend none, becauſe they will not apply their wits to ſearch out the truth. *Returning into the heart,* is taken heere for conſulting apart by a mans ſelfe: for there is ſcarce a child ſo rude, that may not bee a ſufficient Iudge to condemne ſo palpable a madneſſe. The ſuperſtitious therefore fauour themſelues too much; for they ſinne not altogether of ignorance: neither is this vice ſo much to be attributed to mans naturall corruption, as to his obſtinate and heady opinion.

Verſ. 20. *He feedeth of aſhes: a ſe-duced heart hath deceived him, that hee cannot deliuer his ſoule, and ſay; Is there not a lie in my right hand?*

This verſe againe confirms the former ſentence. *To feede of aſhes,* ſignifies as much as to be repleat with aſhes: as, to feede vpon winde, Hoſ. 12. 1. ſignifies to be filled with winde; for the ſame may be ſaid of the one, that is ſaid of the other. As on the contrary, Thou ſhalt feede the truth; Pſal. 37. 3. for thou ſhalt be ſaciare with truth: that is to ſay, filled. Others againe expound, Thou ſhalt adminiſter ſpirituall foode: others, Thou ſhalt feede faithfully. But I had rather follow the firſt interpretation. Heere his meaning is to ſay, that men are ſwollen indeed, but in the meane while they are windie and emptie: for they are onely ſtuffed with vanity, which hath no ſtedfaſtneſſe in it. And therefore they rather burſt with pride, then by being any way ſatiſfied with good nourishment.

Afterwards he comprehends both the former points againe; to wit, that they ſee nothing, becauſe they are intangled with deceitfull baits; and yet that they wittingly and willingly caſt themſelues into theſe ſnares of vanity. The Prophet inſiſts long vpon this matter, to ſhew that nothing puſheth forward theſe Idolaters, and the ſuperſtitious ſort to commit theſe outrages, but their own

ſf free

The blame of blinding not to be laid vpon God.

The fault muſt reſt on man.

*Or, hee returns not to his heart.

A confirmation.

Another confirmation.

free will. What reason haue they then to lay the blame vpon others, seeing the cause of these euils proceedes altogether from themselves? which euils they will needs retaine and carefully nourish within them. They aduance themselues in wonderful pride against God, they are repleat with a fallie opinion of their owne superstitions: in a word, all vnbelieuers are readie to burst with pride. Let vs in the meane while feed vpon the solid meate of sinceritie and truth, and let vs beware we suffer not our selues to be misled by any such delusions.

Notwithstanding he taxeth them (iustly) you see, for pleasing themselues in so foule a vice: for who is it that wil pardon such a carelesnesse, as is joined with the losse of mens felicity? We see how busilie men bestir them, when the naturall life is in icopardie: stands it not vs much more in hand then, to awaken men out of the slumber of their soules, which are in danger of eternall damnation; especially if we may doe it by putting forth our hand in pulling them out?

Moreover, it is said that he *deliuer his soule*, which by repentance escapes out of Satans nets. And in that sense we are said to saue one another, when we bring men that haue erred into the right way by our holy admonitions. Whence comes it then that Idolaters runne headlong into perdition? Because they take the bridle in their teeth, and wilfully rush into the same, euen as the horse iusteth into the battell.

Lastly, in the end of the verse hee shortly shewes, the meane whereby men may recover themselues out of this danger; to wit, in *considering their owne workes*, without flattering of themselues: for he that please himselfe in his error, and inquires not whether he doth well or no, such a one shall neuer be able to *deliuer his owne soule*. As for example, our Papists will not examine vpon what reason their diuine seruice is grounded, but content themselues to couer such a beastlinesse vnder the cloake of simplicitie; as if God meant to haue a Church of rude asses, or as if hee had not commanded vs to distinguish betwene that seruice hee accepts, and that which hee reiects: or as if hee had not commanded vs diligently to search what his good and acceptable will is, lest we should indifferently allow darknesse for light, and sower for sweete. For these things must be examined by the touchstone of his written word: which if we shall doe, it shall be easie for vs to escape out of the dangers; if not, then let vs lay the cause of our ruine vpon our selues. Why so? Because our meaning is to perish wilfully, in regard wee will not suffer our selues to be brought into the right way, or will not beare the words of exhortation.

Verf. 21. *Remember these (O Iacob and Israel) for thou art my seruant: I haue formed thee: thou art my seruant; O Israel forget me not.*

Application. **N**OW hee applies that to the peoples vse, which he hath so long insisted vpon be-

fore, touching the lies and superstitions of the Gentiles; wherein the ignorant deceiued themselues, especially in the matters belonging to Gods worship and seruice. Now hee writ not this so much for them of his owne time, as for the sakes principally which were to succede, and should afterward remaine captiues in Babylon. In which regard, they by their long abode among the Idols, were in danger to be corrupted, & declined from the true seruice of God, if they had not been restrained by such bridles. The Prophet therefore admonisheth them, that howsoeuer they should be detained seuentie yeeres in captiuitie, yer they should call these exhortations vnto mind, thereby to sustaine their hearts in their greatest temptations.

Thou art my seruant.] Hee adds this as the reason why they should remember these promises; euen to keepe themselues from this common contagion. For it had been a thing insupportable for the elect people, whom God had inclosed within the limits of his law, thereby to separate them from others, if they consuledly and indifferently should haue mingled themselues among the pollutions of the Gentiles. As if he should say; Wonder not you that the Caldeans are so rife in their errors, neither follow their example: because I haue formed thee to serue mee: that is to say, I haue reformed and regenerated thee, that thou mightest be heire of eternall life. Of this creation we haue amply spoken heretofore; to wit, that it appertaines to the renewing of the inward man. Now the Scripture is often wont to vse this argumēt, to wit, You are called to holinesse, and not to vnclannesse: 1. Thef. 4. 7. Also Phil. 2. 15. Walke as children of the light, in the midst of a peruerse and froward nation, With many the like places.

Since we gather that wee are worthy of many stripes, if by our carelesnesse and negligence, wee suffer that light of Gods grace wherewith he hath enlightened vs, to go out; because our fault will be much greater then theirs who haue not tasted of the like fauour. I grant the prophane are worthily punished; neither shall the excuse of ignorance be able to setue their turnes; but those that haue receiued grace, and haue abused it, shall bee worthy to be the more seuerely chastised.

Forgets me not.] His meaning is, that it is vnpossible for those which were once entred into the good way, to turne aside; ylesse it bee by forgetting of God. For as long as the remembrance of his Maiestie remains imprinted in the tables of our hearts, neither errors nor impostures shall euer bee able to take place. Is any reuolted from God then to turne to superstition and impietie? Let him impute it to his owne malice.

What is the cause of apostasie then? The *forgetsfulness* of God: for that by little and little drawes vs out of the right way, till at the length we be wholly reuolted. But by the remedie heere prescribed, he assures them that they shall be cut of danger to reuolt, namely, if they exercise themselues in continuall meditation: for if our minds grow once carelesse heerein, they gather rust (as it were) which

Men busie
themselues
too: and
naile for the
matters of
this naturall
life.

The cause
that plungeth
Idolaters
into
perdition.

Note.

To the law
and to the
testimonie.
Chap. 8.

Errors will
neuer take
place in vs,
if the remembrance
of Gods
name bee
throwlie
imprinted in
vs.

which infects and corrupts all knowledge of God, till it be cleane eaten out.

Vers. 22. I haue put away thy transgressions like a cloud, and thy sinnes as a mist: turne vnto me, for I haue redeemed thee.

The Lord promisseth deliuerance to his people: for the truth is, that our mindes cannot be raised vp to remember him as we ought, vnlesse we first feele him gracious and *fauourable* vnto vs. That hee might preferue his people which he had formed for himselfe from reuolting then, he addes now a *promise of consolation*; to persuade with them, that this their banishment should not indure for euer: for God (as hee is a most patient and louing Father) somitigates their corrections, that hee alwaies forgiues the faults of his children.

As touching the *putting away* of their iniquities, it properly belonged to the captiues, which for their *iniquities sake* suffered that punishment. Hence it followed therefore that God being appeased, their deliuerance was at hand: for it is an argument taken from the cause to the effect. If the fault be remitted, so is the punishment. For the Iewes were no sooner reconciled with God, but the punishment which they suffered for their *transgressions* ceased.

Now in these words there is hid a close exhortation to repentance, not onely to moue them to *sigh* under the burthen of their *afflictions*, but to acknowledge them as *iust recompences of their iniquities*, whereby they had prouoked God vnto wrath. As oft then as he handles vs roughly, wee must not craue so much to be disburthened of this our sorrow and miserie, as rather to beginne at the forgiveness of our sinnes, that God would not impute them vnto vs. And heere wee haue cause giuen vs againe to meet with that fond distinction of the Papisls, who confesse that the *fauls* indeed is *forgiuen*, but not the *punishment*.

By the similitude of the *cloud*, hee means that the Lord would no longer continue to pursue them in his wrath, nor to correct them in his displeasures; because their sinnes being put out of his sight, the punishment was therewithall also abolished. For you see that in a faire day, the *clouds* which before darkened the light of the Sunne from vs, are *vanished* and gone. Let vs therefore reiect these diuelish inuentions of men, whereby they labour to ouerthrow this comfortable doctrine of the free remission of sinnes, seeing it flatly crosseth the doctrine of the holy Prophets.

This clause which is added, *returne to mee*, may be taken two waies: either that the Lord thereby exhorts them to repentance: or that therein he giues them hope of deliuerance: but both expositions may suite well. We haue told you that it is vsuall in the Scriptures to exhort to repentance, as oft as it mentions our deliuerance: for the Lord purposeth by

this meanes to draw vs to himselfe, that hee might thereby fit vs for the receiving of his benefites. But because the people were in a manner past hope of their deliuerance, in respect of their owne infidelitie, wee may take these words as a confirmation, that from thence the people might vndoubtedly conclude in themselves, that they should *returne*. As if the Lord should haue said; I know you thinke me to be far from you in this your distresse, yet be of good cheere, for I am mindfull of you still. Now this latter exposition pleaseth me best, because as I thinke it suites best with the text. For the Prophet about all things studies how to confirme these poore captiues in the promises: yea, and if it were possible, to ingraue them in their hearts: Well, he commands the Iewes to *turne* vnto the Lord, howsoeuer their long exile hindered them from hoping that he would be their *redeemer*. As if he should haue said; Though I seeme to be far from you, and to neglect you, yet be not discouraged, for I am resolu'd to *redeem* you.

Vers. 23. Reioice yee heauens, for the Lord hath done it: show yee lower parts of the earth: brag forth into praises, yee mountaines; O Forrest and euery tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Iakob, and will be glorified in Israel.

Hee now exhorts the Iewes to *giving of thanks*, not onely as a testimonie of their dutie, but also to assure them the more fully of their deliuerance. And thus he brings the people as it were to the thing done, no lesse then if they had seene their deliuerance before their eyes. For such manner of speeches doe affect vs much more then if the promises were deliueted in naked and bare termes. Seeing then the people might stand in some doubt of their returne, because they languished long in their miseries, and were almost consumed in them: the Prophet awakens them, and not onely frames them a *song* fit for the paying of their vowe, but also shews that this worke of God shall bee so glorious, that the very *heavens* and the *earth*, with all the *insensible creatures* shall admire the greatness and nouelty of it.

[*Ye mountaines sound forth praises.*] We may well interpret, *ye high heauens*, and *show earth below, sing praises*: but because he makes mention of the *mountaines*, he calls those the lower parts of the earth which are euen, as the plaines and vallies, to the end that all Countries on which side soeuer, might be incited to celebrate and magnifie the name of the Lord.

He addes afterwards, that this work which all the creatures are called to behold and admire, is the *redemption of his Church*: (for that is comprehended vnder *Iakob* and *Israel*) and signifies that Gods *glory* shall wonderfullie shine therein. Besides, we are to consider that which I haue said elswhere; to wit, that their returne is not simply set out heere, but the

A consolatorie promise.

When God forgives the sinne, he also remits the punishment.

An argument taken from the cause to the effect.

I
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We should not desire so much the removall of our punishments, as the blotting out of our sins. The fond distinction of the Sophisters meet withall againe, touching the remitting of the fault, and retaining of the punishment. Simile.

I
2

An exhortation: to thanksgiving.

end thereof also is comprehended vnder it: for they were redeemed out of their captiuitie, vpon condition that God in the end might gather vnder one head (to wit, Christ) a Church composed of all nations vnder heauen.

Verf. 24. *Thus saith the Lord thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the wombe; I am the Lord that made all things, that spread out the heauens alone, and stretched out the earth by my selfe.*

A description
of Gods
power.

Now the Prophet will forthwith according to his custome, fall into a description of Gods power; because the promises would little moue vs, vnlesse the doctrine of Gods power were also added, to remoue all doubts and scruples out of our hearts. For it often fallies out that by our obstinacie and distrust, wee diminish both the goodnesse and power of God, in attributing lesse vnto the same then we ought: for which respect the Prophet heartens on the faithfull by the excellent titles afterwards mentioned, to the end they might hope about hope. And yet he begins with the commendation of the goodnes and fatherly affection which God beares his Church to the very end: for the setting forth of Gods force and power would moue vs but little, if himselfe should not therewithal draw neere to confirme vs in the assurance of his goodnesse. Wee must not begin at his Maiesie then, nor mount so high, for feate of being ouerwhelmed: but this loue of his, by which he graciously drawes vs vnto him, must be embraced of vs also.

The title of redeemer in this place, is referred to the time past, in regard that the Iewes, who were once redeemed out of Egypt (as our of a bottomlesse gulph, and that by a miracle almost incredible) ought from the remembrance thereof to be confirmed, in hope of the euerlasting continuance of it from age to age. Hee calles himselfe their former, in the same sense which we haue often expounded it before; to wit, because in regenerating those by his Spirit whom he adopts, he makes them new creatures. And thus by the way he puts them in mind of the benefits they had already receiued; that from thence they might conclude, that God would be sure in his promises concerning their deliuerance for the time to come.

From the wombe.] Hee addes this also, to teach them to acknowledge that all the benefits they had receiued from God, were vnderferued: for he had preuened them by his mercy, euen before they were able to open their mouths to aske any benefits of him. And by this consideration David cheereth vp his spirits in his extreme distresse: It is thou O Lord, saith he, that hast drawne me out of my mothers wombe: thou gauest me hope whilest I sucked my mothers breasts. I was cast vpon thee euen from the wombe: thou art my God from my mothers belly: Psal.

Regeneratio,

22.9.10. But our Prophet speaks not heere of that generall fauour which is common to all men as soone as they are come into the world; but he magnifies that *comenans* whereby God had adopted the posterity of *Abraham*, euen to a thousand generations: for doubtlesse he which hath begun so good a worke, would finish the same vnto the end.

In the next place follows the titles concerning his power; to wit, that it is he which of his owne good pleasure did spread out both the heauens and the earth. By the word *spreading out*, his meaning is, that the absolute gouernment of the whole world is in his hands, and that all creatures are subiect vnto him: for Gods *uword* and *power* ought so to be ioined together, that they must neuer bee separated.

Verf. 25. *I destroy the tokens of the soothsaiers, and make them that coniecture fooles, and turne the wise men backward, and make their knowledge foolishnesse.*

The Prophet expressly addes this, because Babylon not onely surpassed all other nations in riches, men, and munitions: but also in a wonderfull measure of *uuisdome*, and that in such wise, as they seemed to pierce euen the very skies. For what inconuenience could befall them which foresaw things to come a farre off, and could prevent imminent dangers, as they imagined? Astrologers, which then were in great request among them, foretold of great matters, and thence came that bastard Astrologie which we forsooth call Iudiciall, wherewith many good and toward wits at this day are corrupted. They vsurp the name also of Mathematicians, that they may get them the more credit among the common people. But the Egyptians gloried as the only authors of this science, because they held themselves to be of greatest antiquitie, and were the instructors of others. But this contention we leaue to them. Sure it is, that the Chaldeans were practitioners of it from the beginning, and so highly esteemed of it, that both Greekes and Latins haue giuen the name of Chaldeans to the Astrologians. For as much then as they trusted very much in this science, the Lord auoucheth that *he will scatter all things belonging thereunto*.

Bastard
Astrologie,
which is cal-
led iudiciall,
Mathema-
ticians.

Now by the word *tokens*, or signs, he vnderstands the situation, concurrence, and diuers aspects of the starres, from whence the Astrologers draw their *coniectures*. In the next place he saith he will make them *fooles*. Some take the word *Baddim*, for lies: as if he should say, The diuinations of Astrologers are but impostures, and meere illusions: but I had rather take it for *soothsayers*, it being often elsewhere taken in this signification.

But it may be demanded whether he vtterly condemnes the Astrologie of the Chaldeans, or only the abuse and corruption of it.

I answer, he heere only condemnes the *signes* whereby the Chaldeans *coniectured*, as if they

Quest.

Ans.

Whether
Aſtrologie
be vterlic
condemned
or no.

they could iudge of things to come: for the Lord pronounceth that all ſuch things are necerely vaine. It is not without cauſe then that he forbids his people to aſke counſell of Aſtologers, ſoutherſers, Prognoficators, & ſuch like Magicians, and that no man ſhould haue to deale with men of ſuch profeſſions vnder paine of death, Deut. 18. 10. 11. But if any could haue gathered certaine coniectures from the ſituation and aſpect of the ſtarres, no doubt the Lord would neuer haue condemned ſuch ſciences. Seeing then without exception he forbids them, it clearly ſhewes they containe nothing but mere illuſions, and therefore that all his people ſhould eſteeme theſe as *abominations*. But thoſe that pleade for this vanitie, alledge, that the Lord hath giuen the planets and ſtarres for ſignes, Gen. 1. 14. Be it that I grant them this principle, yet we muſt conſider *vwhereof they be ſignes*. For we condemne not that Aſtologie which contemplates the courſe of the ſtarres, wherein Gods wonderfull Maieſtie is to be ſcene: but we reiect as vaine ſuch curious heads as will thence conclude *how long kingdomes and common-wealthis ſhal ſtand; vvhats accident ſhall befall this Citie, or nation: that man, or ſuch a woman*, for herein they paſſe their bounds, and abuſe theſe ſignes, which were neuer ordeined to foretell things to come. I confeſſe indeede that ſometimes we are admoniſhed by theſe celeftiall ſignes to behold Gods wrath, which we haue iuſtly enflamed, and alſo the plagues which hang ouer our heads, *but not to make vs ſo ſoole-hardie as thence to conclude of euery particular accident, much leſſe to ſearch out things hidden and vvreuealed*, which it is not lawfull for vs once to enquire after.

Obiect.

Anſ.

The courſe
of the ſtarres.

What is to be
condemned
in Aſtology.

Planets neuer ordeined
to tell things
to come.

Wherein the
myſterie of
this iniquite
conſiſts.

Fatall de-
ſtinie.

1
2
3

Wiſe men.

But about all things we are to ſinde out the cauſe and ſpring of this myſterie of iniquitie which is in it: for a man no ſooner receiues this error, to wit, that mans life is governed by the ſtarres, but Gods prouidence is by and by ouerthrowne, and he turned out of his iudgement ſeate: or thus, that they may take from him the authoritie of puniſhing the wicked any more, or, in his mercie to giue life to thoſe that were loſt. For ſuch as thinke that the ſtarres gouerne and rule mens liues by their irreuoicable mouings, doe forthwith harden their owne hearts with this imagination of fatall deſtinie, and ſo they leaue nothing at all vnto God: thus then his iudgements are concealed, piecie nipt in the head, and prayer vterly abolished.

He calles them *wiſe*, and attributes *knowledge* vnto them by way of granting them ſo much, for ſuch kind of men are wonr to glorie much in the titles of *wiſe men*, and in making ſhew what *knowledge* they haue in the ſtarres, as if God had called them to be of his priuie Counſell. Thus then in a word he concludes, that none of theſe vaine maſkes of *wiſdome*, nor *knowledge*, ſhall be able to hinder the Lord from ouerturning of their eſtate, becauſe he will bring all their juggling trieks to nothing.

* Or, raiſeth
vp.

Verſ. 26. He * confirmeth the word of his ſeruant, and performeth the counſell

of his meſſengers, ſaying to Ieruſalem, thou ſhalt be inhabited: and to the cities of Iudab, ye ſhall be built vp, and I will repaire the decayed places thereof.

Now the Prophet applies that which he ſaid before to his purpoſe: for albeit he hath ſpoken generallie, yet he reſpected a certaine end, that ſo he might fit his ſpeech to the purpoſe in hand, left the lewes ſhould be troubled with this fained *wiſdome* of the Chaldeans, and ſo be brought to doubt whether God would at any time deliuer them or no. He oppoſeth their vaine *preditions* then to Gods *promiſes*, that no man ſhould thinke this Monarchie was vterlic exempt frō danger. Now the promiſe was this, *Babylon ſhall fall*, Chap. 21. 9. *But my people ſhall be ſet at libertie*.

Gods promiſes, oppoſed to vaine preditions.

The Chaldeans derided theſe promiſes, as if they ſhould thus haue ſaid, Muſt wee needs fall? A ſort of wiſe men no doubt: as if we could not foreſee that by the ſtarres if any ſuch thing ſhould happen. The Lord therefore ſaith, that he will *raiſe vp*, that is to ſay, will accompliſh that which he hath promiſed, and will bring ſuch things to paſſe, as the wiſe men neither yet had, nor were able to coniecture. For the ſorners eſteemed no better of theſe propheſies then of an vprofitable found which ſhould forthwith vaniſh. Againſt ſuch an opinion hee oppoſeth the word *ſo raiſe*, thereby ſhewing that God would cauſe his word to be beleued.

The name *ſeruant*, may be vnderſtood of all the Prophets, vntleſſe we had rather ſay, that *Iſaiah* is chieſie heere ſpecified, as the moſt appatent witnes and *meſſenger* of this deliuerance. But there is no neede why we ſhould reſtraine this to one in particular, ſeeing it is a thing common to them all, being all called by one and the ſame name of Ambaſſadors or meſſengers of God: for he had ſent many vnto them, that by a mutuall conſent they might the better vphold the faith of the people.

Vnder the word *counſell*, he comprehends Gods decrees, but not all: for it is vnlawfull to ſound the depth of thoſe ſecrets which he hath not reuealed to his *ſeruants*: but when he diſcouers that which he hath purpoſed to doe, wee ought to receiue the ſame with as great reuerence as if God himſelfe had opened his moſt ſecret *counſels* from heauen. Let men beware then how they giue ſcope to their appetites, to enquire further of things then God hath reuealed by the mouth of his Prophets. To be ſhort, his meaning is to commend the authoritie of his word which is vtered by the miniſtrie of men, and that no leſſe then if they reuealed to vs the eternall counſels of God.

See Deut. 29. 29.

What authoritie God giues to his Miniſters.

[Which ſaith to Ieruſalem.] After the Prophet hath ſpoken generallie, he fits his ſpeech in as particular a ſort as he can to the preſent purpoſe touching Gods promiſes, for otherwiſe the people could haue reaped little fruit by them. He names *Ieruſalem* therefore expreſſie, to giue them to vnderſtand that it

should be restored. In this therefore we are especially to obſerue Gods power, in that he is able as oft as need is, miraculoſly to defend, yea and raiſe vp his Church euen from the gates of death. Doe we beleue that he is true and almightie? Then may we be aſſured that there ſhall alwaies bee a Church: and when ſorrowfull times approach towards vs, let vs hope that hee will ſpeedily redreſſe all diſorders; for that which is heere ſaid to *Ieruſalem*, appertaines to the whole Church. If we be inforced at this day then to ſee her lie in the duſt, and her towers caſt to the ground, ſo as nothing but pitifull deſolations euerie where appeare; let vs build vpon this promiſe, that God in his time will *build* and *repaire* the *decayed places* thereof, and bring her to her perfect hue.

Verſ. 27. He ſaith to the deepe, Be dry, and I will dry vp thy floods.

Some thinke the Prophet deſcribes Babylon here vnder a figure; neither doe I denie but it may be heere comprehended: yet I cannot allow that it ſhould be onely reſtrained to her. For I had rather take it for ſome vnexpected mutation; becauſe hee ſhewes there will be a neceſſitie of ſuch a rare change, as if the people were to be drawne out of the *boſtome of the ſea*: but he reſolues them, that God will be omniſufficient to ouercome all lets and impediments. As I thinke therefore, *Iſaiah* rather alludes to that firſt deliuerance, at what time God brought the people out of *Egypt through the midſt of the ſea*: as if he ſhould ſay; I haue done this for your fathers, hope for the like at my hands now, and thinke not that the waies through which you are to paſſe homeward, ſhall be ſtopped vp againſt you.

Verſ. 28. He ſaith to Cyrus, Thou art my ſhepherd: and hee ſhall performe all my deſire: ſaying alſo to Ieruſalem; Thou ſhalt bee built; and to the Temple, Thy foundations ſhall ſurely bee laid.

This is an excellent place. In which wee may conſider, not onely the admirable prouidence of God, but alſo a worthy teſtimonic of the truth and authoritie of his promiſes: for *Cyrus* was named here a long time before he was borne. How may that be proued? There was betwene the death of *Manaſſes*, who put *Iſaiah* to death, and the birth of *Cyrus*, more then an hundred yeeres. But ſay he had now been borne, who could haue foretold that hee ſhould haue come to Babylon, frō the furtheſt mountaines in *Perſia*? Theſe things are worthy our obſeruation then; for they ſhew that *Iſaiah* ſpake not by the will of man: for who would euer haue thought that one called *Cyrus*, ſhould come with maruellous

ſwiftnesse from the remotest and moſt barbarous parts of the world, to deliuer Gods people? Whereas ſcoffers obiect, that the Iewes might forge this after all was come to paſſe: it is ſo forth and aſturd a cauill, that it needes no reſutation. For during the captiuitie, the Iewes turned out theſe bookes, to conſirme their hope touching their deliuerance: who doubtleſſe had been put cleane out of heart, if the Lord had not comforted them by theſe & ſuch liuely promiſes, which were as goodly monuments left to ſtrengthen the minds of the faithfull in faith and hope. Neither doe I doubt but *Cyrus* himſelfe was much amazed, when he vnderſtood that God had appointed him to be the *ſhepherd* and leader of his people *Iſrael*: yea, it is verie likely alſo that it greatly inflamed his heart with ſuch a loue towards the Iewes, that it framed him with readineſſe of mind to furniſh the Iewes with victuals and other neceſſaries for their journey. Thus the Lord points him out with his finger, by whoſe hand he determined to redeeme his people; that ſo they might not gaze here and there for help in their perplexities.

[*And ſaith to Ieruſalem.*] This is the concluſion which conſirme the former things; and all to aſſure them that *Ieruſalem* ſhould vn doubtedly be *built* againe. As alſo, that hereby they might conceiue in what deare and precious account God had them, when they ſhould ſee the Monarchy of the Eaſt giuen vp to the *Perſians*. And therewithall he ſhewes for what cauſe *Ieruſalem* ſhall be reſtored: euen that Gods pure *worſhip* and ſeruiſe might be there againe *erected*. For hee promiſeth not this reſtauration to the end men ſhould ſecke their owne eaſe or preferment, but that the Lord may be called vpon of his ſeruants, in peace, and in ſinceritie of heart: which it ſtands vs in hand to obſerue diligently, becauſe many prefer their temporary pleaſures and profits, before the honour and worſhippe of God. In regard whereof, *Haggai* takes vp a bitter complaint againſt thoſe of his time; *Is it time for your ſelues to dwell in your ſield houſes, & this houſe to lie waſte?* Againc, *You ſuffer this houſe to lie waſte, and yee runne euery man vnto his owne houſe:* *Haggai* 1.4.9. and yet it was the Lords pleaſure they ſhould chiefly haue regarded *his houſe*. To this appertaines that which the Prophet addes, *And to the Temple; Thy foundations ſhall be laid.* Indeed we at this day haue no *Temple* of wood and ſtone which we are commanded to build, but the liuing *Temples* of the holy Ghoſt: 1. *Cor.* 6. to wit, our ſelues, becauſe he hath choſen vs for his habitation. Theſe are the *Temples* which wee muſt build vp by the whoſome doctrine of Gods word, that we may be framed to an holy and an vpright conuerſation, and to render him the ſeruiſe due vnto him. For this is the very cauſe why God will haue a Church in the world; namely, left the memory of his bleſſed name ſhould bee cleane aboliſhed from among vs.

The Church ſhall alwaies continue.

Experience ſhould breed hope in vs.

The certaintie of the prophecies.

Cyrus.

2. *Pet.* 1. 21.

Obiect.

Ans.

What Temples God would haue built him now.

Why God will haue a Church ſtill in the world.

THE XLV. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. Thus saith the Lord vnto *Cyrus* his anointed, whose right hand I haue holden to subdue nations before him: therefore will I weaken the loines of Kings, and open the doores before him, and the gates shall not be shut.

Or, vngird.



*I*saiah continues forth the matter which he beganne to handle in the latter end of the former Chapter. For hee shewes that God hath not promised deliuerance to his people in vaine; because

hee had before ordained and decreed the meanes how to bring it to passe, according to his owne purpose. When there is question made touching our deliuerance out of anie danger, we forthwith inquire by what meanes it may be effected; and also the reason of it. Now albeit God had rather hold vs in suspense, and so to coneele from vs the meanes he hath already in his hand: notwithstanding in this place he applies himselfe to the weaknesse of their mindes, and is contented to name the partie vnder whose conduct he purposeth to bring them home into their Country. For in regard their faith was to be sharpe assailed by diuers temptations of other kindes; hee was willing heere to preuent this particular doubt, that so other troubles which befell them, might not vtterly crush them. To giue the more efficacie then vnto his word, he turnes him to *Cyrus*, saying, *I haue chosen thee to be my King, I will take thee by the hand, and will subdue nations before thee; so as they shall make passage for thee, and shall willingly yeeld themselves vassals vnto thee.* For this turning of his speech to *Cyrus*, was much more effectually, then if the Lord had spoken onely to his people.

When God is determined to redeme his Church, no impediments can hinder the effecting of it.

Obiect.

But some may thinke it strange that hee calles him his anointed, seeing this title onely appertained to the Kings of Iudah and Israel, in regard that they represented Christs person. For to speake properly there is but one anointed of the Lord: according to which *Habacuc* saith, Thou wentest forth with thine anointed, for the saluation of thy people: *Hab.* 3.13. For the kingdome was set vp in the person of *Dauid*, which was the image of Christ; who for this cause among the Prophets, is called *Dauid*; & the son of *Dauid*, in many places: *Ezech.* 37.24. *Hose.* 3.5. I grant that the anointing which distinguished this priestlie kingdome from other profane gouernements was the speciall: seeing then that this title appertaines onely to the Kings of Iudea, it might seeme strange that it should beere be attributed to an idolatrous Pagan. For

though *Cyrus* was instructed by *Daniel*, yet we reade not that he changed his religion: hee reuerenced indeede the God of Israel, and held him the soueraigne God aboute all creatures; but he was neuer drawne by this meane to serue him in any sinceritie, neither was he cuer brought to forsake his idolatries and superstitions. God honours him thus far then, as to call him his anointed; not with a perpetuall stile, but during the time he held the office of a deliuerer, and in respect he sustained the person of God, both to reuenge the cause of the Church, and to redeme the same out of the Assyrians hands: which office indeed, properly appertained to Iesus Christ. This ordinary title then giuen vnto Kings, must be restrained to this circumstance, to wit, as he was the redeemer of Gods chosen in setting them at libertie. Whence we may see how greatly God esteemes the saluation of his Church, when in regard of one particular benefite, *Cyrus* an idolater is called his anointed.

Why *Cyrus* is called Gods anointed.

Ans.

I haue holden thy right hand] By this phrase of speech he signifies that *Cyrus* shall prosper in all his enterprises; because hee shall fight vnder God as his Generall. *Isaiah* affirms then that *Cyrus* shall haue good successe for the Churches sake, that he may be fit to deliuer her. And in this he againe magnifies Gods providence, who in the midst of such troubles, assured the Iewes that he would so dispose of things from heauen, that all should worke together for the saluation of his elect. Now in respect that *Cyrus* could not well goe into Babylon, because al Asia bent their force to disappoint him of his purpose; the Prophet in these words shewes, that God will ouerthrow all contrary power, that shall set it selfe against him. And because mans chiefe strength consists in his loines, or reines, the Hebrewes take the *weakening of the loines*, for the dissolving or weakening of the strength. We may also expound it a little otherwise, to wit, that the Lord will spoile or vngird them; according to the common phrase of the Scripture: for Kings at their coronation, are girt wit a girdle, it being a part of their royall furniture: *Iob* 12.18. In which sense God saith in the fifth verse following, that he would gird *Cyrus*. I therefore rest my selfe rather in this latter exposition, that so the opposition may suite the better. Hence it appears the that Kings haue no more power then the Lord giues them, neither can they v̄e it in the defence either of themselves, or their people, but by his commission. For if he be pleased to dispoile them of their principalities, they cannot defend the same against him, neither by force, nor by any meanes else whatsoever.

Kings haue no more power then God giues them.

And I will open the doores before him.] By this phrase, the Prophet meanes, that *foriuestes* cannot resist God, which (in generall termes)

The strongest Fortifications too weak, when the strong God minds to redeeme his chosen.

all will confesse: but yet they cease not for all that to trust in their towers of defence. For when Cities are enuironed with thick walles, and that the gates are fast shut, every one thinks himselfe in safetie: contrarywise the Prophet shewes, that all fortifications are vnprofitable, and that the *stopping up of passages* are but in vaine when the Lord will *open the way* to their enemies. Now howsoeuer it is not to be doubted but the gates were shut and surcly barred: yet because *Cyrus* marched with an incredible swiftnesse through all places where he came, as if all Cities had giuen him way, the Prophet rightly affirms, that all impediments shall be removed.

Verf. 2. *I will goe before thee and make the crooked straight: I will breake the brasen doores, and burst the yron barres.*

3. *And I will giue thee the treasures of darknes, and the things hid in secret places, that thou mayst know that I am the Lord which call thee by name, and name thee, though thou hast not knowne mee.*

These two verses depend on the former.

THESE two verses depend vpon the former: but in a word they shew, that *Cyrus* shall easily overcome, and that in short time, because the Lord shall *prepare the way* for him; for this cause he promiseth that the *crooked way* shall be made *straight*, in respect that God will take away all obstacles. Now because *money* is the sinew of warre, and that *Cyrus* was to passe ouer the poore & barren mountaines of Persia, *Isaiah* tels him, that the *treasures* which before were *hid*, should fall into his hands, that being enriched with *ys* spoile, he might furnish himselfe with all necessaries, for by *treasures of darknes*, he means treasures hidden and buried deeply in the earth. Now it appeares plainly by the histories how these things came to passe: for after *Cresus* king of Lydia was taken, who was the richest king in the world, *Cyrus* recouered great treasures. A man would neuer haue supposed then that he could haue made such a generall Conquest, had not the cause of so good successe been heere expressed: to wit, that the Lord *called* him forth, and *guided* him in his iourney, that in him he might manifest a notable signe of his power: for so much, *that thou mayst know*, imports.

Money the sinew of warre.

Cresus king of Lydia.

Cyrus no true conuert.

I grant that *Cyrus knew* (as we haue said) that God was *ys* God of Israel, and did greatly reuerence him: yet he became no true Conuert for all that, neither did he embrace the true worship according to the ordinances of Gods law. This therefore was a *particular knowledge*, to wit, so farre forth as he assisted the Church, for whose deliuerance he was ordeined. It was needfull then that he should be in some measure touched with this *knowledge*, in regard of this worke of God which he had to performe. He speaks not of that *knowledge* then by which we are enlightened; or of the spirit of regeneration, but of a par-

Cyrus was not indued with a sauing knowledge.

ticular knowledge, such as the prophane and vnbeleeuers haue.

[Which call thee by thy name.] Some barely expound this phrase of speech, that *Cyrus* was thus called of God before he was borne. But we haue said heretofore, Chap. 43. 1. that by these words *ys* Prophet meant another thing, namely, that God calles those *by name* whom he chuseth and ordeineth to execute some special worke, in which respect he separates them from the common multitude, for this signifies a neerer and a more familiar calling. And in this sense it is said, that the good shepherd *calles* his sheepe *by name*, Iohn 10. 3. because he knowes them distinctlie. But aboue all, this agrees to the faithfull, whom God accounts his flock, and of his familie, which grace he neuer vouchsafed to *Cyrus*. But in as much as he appointed him to be a special Leader in such a special seruice, he stamped him as it were with rare and singular notes of his power. And thus much touching the cause why this title of *calling* is giuen vnto him.

These words, *The God of Israel*, must be well obserued, because the superstitious are wont to attribute their victories to their Idols. And in that sense *Abacuk* saith, That euery one sacrificed to his god, *Abac. 1. 16*. They runne riot then in their talke, and forge such a diuinitie as it pleaseth them to conceiue of, in stead of acknowledging the only and true God. Now all that which is heere said of *Cyrus*, may be applied vnto vs in a farre better sense, to wit, that we frame not to our selues such a knowledge of God as fits our owne appetites, but that we separate him so from Idols, that he may only be reuerenced and acknowledged of vs in one Iesus Christ, out of whom we can worship nought but an Idoll, nay the very Diuell himselfe. In this respect then let our *knowledge* surpasse that which *Cyrus* had, to wit, let vs reiect all superstitions and idolatries, that we may serue him in holines and righteousnes (all the dayes of our life.)

Out of Christ we can worship nothing but an Idoll, nay, the Deuill himselfe.

Verf. 4. *For Iacob my seruants sake and Israel mine elect, I will euen call thee by thy name, though thou knowest not mee.*

HE shewes the reason why *Cyrus* shall prosper thus happily in all his enterprises, euen for the conservation of Gods people. As if the Lord should haue said, Thou shalt obtaine a glorious victorie, but it shall be more in respect of mine *elect*, then of thee: for, for their sakes it is that I haue subdued kings and nations vnder thine obedience. By these prophecies then the Prophet meant to comfort the Iewes, lest they should despaire in the middes of so many calamities: and yet no doubt he also meant to teach *Cyrus* that hee was beholding to the Iewes for all his conquests, that by means hereof he might be inclined to vse them with the better respect.

In the second part of the verse there is a repetition which amplifies the reason very much:

much: and on the other ſide the Prophet ſhewes by what right the Iſraelites came to be Gods ſervants, euen becauſe it pleaſed him freely to *eleſt* them. For it is not in the power of man to make himſelfe the ſervant of God, or to obtaine ſuch an honour by his owne free will. This word *eleſt* therefore is added as an expoſition of the former member, and yet the end of our election is therewith ſet downe. For God finding vs the very bondſlaves of Satan by nature, *calls* vs by his free grace, that we being ſet at libertie, ſhould become his ſervants: notwithstanding he ſhewes, that no man is worthin in himſelfe of this favour, but he which is *eleſt*. For who dares brag that he hath merited ſo great a benefit? Or what can we doe, or offer vnto God? We are not ſufficient of our ſelues, but the Lord makes vs ſufficient, as *S. Paul* ſaith, *2. Cor. 3. 5.* His free election therefore is free, and is the very foundation of our ſaluation: and the ſervice is but the end, which we of dutie owe vnto him.

Now, howſoever this be reſtrained to the hiftorie of *Cyrus*, yet thence we may gather a generall doctrine. For when God cauſeth ſuch diuerſities of changes in the world, he thereby procures the ſaluation of his Church, and wonderfullie conſerues it, euen in the middeſt of the tempeſts. We (for the moſt part) are as blind as beetles in viewing the works of God: but yet wee muſt hold it for a ſure principle, that he neuer forgets his Church, no not then when a man would thinke heauen and earth would goe together: nay then by ſecret meanes he brings forth her light as the noone day, that all in conſeſſion may indeed confeſſe that himſelfe is the protector and defender of the ſame.

Ioſephus recites a memorable hiftorie of *Alexander the Great*, who hauing beſieged *Tyre*, ſent Ambaſſadors to *Ieruſalem* to aſke the tribute which the *Iewes* payed to *Darius*. *Jaddus* the high *Prieſt* who had ſworne to pay this tribute, would in no wiſe obey *Alexander*, but reſuſed to pay it him: this tyrant ſcornin ſuch a reſuſall, and in a manner being readie to burſt with pride, determined the deſtruction of *Ieruſalem*; and indeed hauing overcome *Darius*, he fits himſelfe for the execution of his deliberation. The high *Prieſt Jaddus* comes forth clothed with the *Prieſtly* robes, and with other *Prieſts* met *Alexander*, *Alexander* no ſooner beheld them, but he alights from his horſe, and fell downe at the high *Prieſts* feet in ſigne of reuerence. As all ſtood amazed at this, as at a thing extraordinary, and cleane contrarie to his purpoſe, thinking he had bin beſides himſelfe; *Alexander* answered *Parmenion*, (who only amongſt the reſt asked him what he meant) that he worſhipped not this man, but God, whoſe office *Jaddus* ſuſtained. As alſo, that whileſt he remained at *Dion* a Citie of *Macedonia*, he had ſcene in a dreame a man ſo appa-
 ralled, which preſented himſelfe vnto him in the perſon of God, willing him to take *Aſia*: alſo, promiſing to be the conductor of his armie, that he might not doubt of the vi-

ſtorie, and for this cauſe he ſaid he could not content himſelfe with ſufficient admirations in beholding this high *Prieſt*. Thus *Ieruſalem* was deliuered, the mouth of the *Lyon* ſtopped, who thought of nothing but gorging himiſſe with the pray; nay, the gat greater libertie of him then the inioyed before, beſides great gifts and large priuiledges.

Now I haue alledged this hiftorie to ſhew that the Church of God is preferred in the middes of all dangers by ſtrange and vnex-
 pected meanes, for the times were then very troubleſome, and no one corner in the world almoſt remained in quiet. But aboue all, *Iuda* ſeemed to be appointed vnto robberies and ſpoilings; and yet behold the Church deliuered as it were by a miracle, whileſt other countries were waſted, and the forme of them vtterlie changed.

That which is added in the end of the verſe, though thou haſt not knowne me, ſerues for the greater amplification, not only to teach *Cyrus* that theſe his endowments were no parts of his merits, but that he ſhould not deſpiſe the God of *Iſrael*, albeit he knew him not. The Lord often aduerteth vs that he prevents mens induſtries, that he might vtterlie caſt downe all high conceits of fleſh and blood. But he had another end in preventing of *Cyrus*, for if he had thought that God had giuen theſe victories vnto him for his owne ſake, then would he like enough haue ſcorned the *Iewes*, yea and would haue vſed them but as his vaſſals and ſlaues. The Prophet ſhewes therefore that *Cyrus* his deſerts were no cauſe of this, but that he deliuered the people out of their enemies hands, becauſe God fauored them: for this poore blind *Inſidell* would haue bin readie to haue transported that o-
 uer vnto his *Idols*, which was due to the li-
 uing God; becauſe being beſotted in his ſu-
 perſtitious, he would neuer haue giuen obedi-
 ence to that God willinglie who was a ſtran-
 ger and vnknowne vnto him, vnleſſe he had
 firſt of all bin inſtructed by this propheſie.

Verſ. 5. *I am the Lord and there is none other: there is no God beſides me: I* girded thee though thou haſt not knowne me.*

Why this hiftorie is alledged.

* Or, appar-
 ralled.

HE confirms the former ſentence: for it is no ſuperfluous repetition. Truly it was neceſſarie that *Cyrus* ſhould be often irged with this point, that there was but one God, vnder whoſe power all potentates and nations are tributaries, that being rid by this meanes from all impoſtures, he might be whollie turned to the God of *Iſrael*. Moreover, the Prophet more expreſſie ſhewes, that no diuinitie is to be ſought out of him: as if he ſhould ſay, Looke that thou attributeſt not this victory to thine *Idols*, neither conceiue thou any conſuſed god in thine owne braine, as fooliſh men are wont ro doe: but be thou aduerted that it is the God of *Iſrael* only that is the author of this conqueſt. It is like enough that *Cyrus* made no great vſe of this ſennon, neither that he forſooke his *Idols* to cleaue

A confirma-
 tion of the
 former ſen-
 tence.

No diuinitie
 to be ſought
 out of God.

It is not in
 the power of
 man to make
 himſelfe
 Gods ſer-
 uant.

The end of
 election.

Gods free
 election the
 foundation
 of our ſal-
 uation.

A ſure
 principle:
 God neuer
 forgets his
 Church.

Lib. 11.
 Chap. 8.
 Ioſephus.
 Alexander
 the Great.
 Jaddus the
 high Prieſt.

Parmenion.

Dion, a Citie
 in Macedo-
 nia.

cleaue to *this true God*; yet no doubt he had many flashings in his mind, which made him after a sort to acknowledge a Godhead, and that this God had the whole world at his becke. But howsoever *Cyrus* neglected this doctrine, yet the members of the Church ought to embrace it, that they may boldly reject all false gods.

I haue apparelled, or girded thee. This apprelling answers to the nakednesse whereof he spake before, saying; The loines of Kings shall be vngirt: for he is said to apprell such as he furnisheth with strength to the battell: 1 Ps. 18. 32. to make them conquerors. Whence we may gather, first that men haue no more courage then that which God inspired them withall by the power of his Spirit. Secondly, that neither armor nor armes serues to any purpose, if God be not for vs. Thirdly, that it is he onely who gouernes all hurly butties, and giues the victory to whom it pleaseth him, lest any should thinke that things fall out by chance.

Hee repeats againe, though thou hast not knowne me, to confirme this point the better; to wit, that *Cyrus* obtained nothing of God, but for *Iacobs sake*: vers. 4. first; that he might thankfully acknowledge so great a benefit: and as a testimonie of his thankfulness, hee might indeuor to shew kindnes to the people of God.

Verf. 6. That they may know from the rising of the Sunne, and from the West, that there is none besides me. I am the Lord, and there is none other.

God would haue the memory of his mercies retained in his Church.

THE Prophets meaning is, that this worke should bee so excellent, that all nations should extol and magnifie Gods name therein; yet was it not forthwith accomplished. For albeit the fame of this victory was spread far and neere, yet few perceived that the God of Israel was the author of it. But after it was manifested to those that dwelt neere, it was divulged also to others, till at last the newes thereof came to the whole world. Neither doth hee foretell what should by and by fall out; but that which was afterwards to be accomplished, notwithstanding these things were a long time concealed. The Lord then would not suffer the remembrance of such a deliuerance to vanish, but would haue the same to be called to mind by continuall admonitions, to the end the nations furthest remote, might celebrate the memorie of this deliuerance from generation to generation, euen to the worlds end.

Wee ought likewise to obserue that which I haue touched before, to wit, that the Prophet ioines the first prophecies with the last, because the returne of the people was as a beginning and forerunner of the generall deliuerance to come. And thus he speaks of the true and perfect restauration of the Church. Adde also, that although men by their malice and vnthankfulness should burie these glorious works in obliuion: yet it followes not thereupon, that the same should

not cleerely shine in the view of the whole world; for they cease not to retain their glorie still, though the blind (worldlings) haue no eyes to behold them.

verse, for the further exposition of this first verse.

Verf. 7. I forme the light, and create darknesse: I make peace, and create enill: I the Lord doe all these things.

AS if he should say; Those who were wont to attribute all things to fortune, or to Idols, shall now know the true God: so as they shall attribute all power and glory, yea and the administration of all things to him onely. He speaks not of a perfect knowledge; albeit the same be required to attaine vnto the vnderstanding of former things. Now seeing the Prophet affirms, that the very Pagans shall vnderstand, that this whole action is ordered and gouerned by the prouidence of God; it ought to make those that beare the name of Christians to blush, when they rob him of his power, to giue it to diuers sorts of gouernours, forged in the shop of their owne braines; as they doe in the Papacie. For what an acknowledging of God call you that, to giue him onely bare and naked titles? For as he is the true and onely God, so must wee ascribe vnto him his absolute and full authority, which hee hath in ordering & disposing of all things at his pleasure, both in heauen and in earth.

As I thinke, this whole section belongs to the sixth verse.

By these words of *light* and *darknes*, vnder a figure he vnderstands as well peace and war, as prosperite and aduersitie. Afterwards, according to the phrase of the Hebrewes, he extends the word *peace*, to all good success; which plainly appears by the opposition: for he not onely opposeth peace to war, but to all other mishaps. Some giddy heads wrest this word *enill*, as if God were the author of it: but it is euident enough to him that hath eyes to see, how shamefully they abuse our Prophets testimony. For that which is plainly opposed, expounds the signification of the word: adde if you will, that the members ought to be referred one to another: for he opposeth *peace* to *euill*; that is to say, to wars, calamities, and other aduersities. If he had opposed *righteousnesse* to *enill*, they might haue had some pretext: but this opposition of things so directly contrary, is easie vnderstood. And yet the common distinction is not to be rectified; to wit, that God is the author of the euill of punishment, but not of the fault. But the Sophisters doe expound it amisse: for although they confesse that famine, plague, warre, vnfruitfull seasons, and such like scourges doe come of God, yet they denie him to be the author thereof when they befall vs, by reason of men. Which is a false doctrine, and vtterly croseth the Prophets words: for the Lord often raisth vp the wicked to correct vs by their hands; as it appears by many testimonies of the Scripture. I grant the Lord inspires not euill into them, but he vseth it as a meanes to chastise vs, and therein performs the office of a iust Iudge. Did he not so serue himselfe of *Pharaohs* hardnesse

Light and darknesse taken for prosperite and aduersitie. Obiect. Anſ.

God is not the author of euill, as some would haue him. A common distinction. God the author of the euill of punishment, not of the fault. A false doctrine of the Sophisters. 1. King. 11. 14 23.

See the first section after the fourth

of

Exod. 2. 23.
E 1. 11.

of heart, and others, to afflict his people? Let vs therefore hold fast this doctrine, to wit, that God onely is the author of all things: that is to say, he sends aduersitie and prosperitie, howsoeuer hee vseth mens industriest therein; that so nothing may bee attributed to fortune, or to any other cause whatsoever.

God the author of all things, and how.

Verf. 8. *The heauens send downe dew from above, and let the cloudes droppe downe righteousness: let the earth open, and let saluation and iustice grow forth; let it bring them forth together: I the Lord haue created him.*

The doctrine of this verse was very effectuall to confirme the faithfull in the expectation of their deliuerance to come.

Some thinke this should be a forme of praier, which the faithfull were to vse in waiting for that deliuerance whereof the Prophet speakes. And thus they ioine this verse to the former; The Lord will not deliuer you by and by, it shall be your duties therefore to sollicit him by your praiers. But I expound it otherwise, to wit, that the Prophet speakes still in the name of the Lord, who in regard of his absolute power, hath *heauen* and *earth* at his becke; and heere commands them in his name to apply themselues to further the restauration of the Church. This verse therefore hath great force in it to confirme the faithfull in the hope of their redemption to come: for which way soeuer the Iewes turned their eyes, they saw nothing but matter of despaire. If they looked towards *heauen*, behold God an angry Iudge: if they looked towards the *earth*, they saw nothing but tokens of his wrath to present themselues about them on euerie side, so as they could hope for nothing that was good. *Iffaiah* therefore confirms their faith, and commands *heauen* and *earth*, which promised nothing but threats and terrors, to bring forth *iustice* and *saluation*: which kind of speech hath greater weight in it, then if God himselfe had promised that this should haue come to passe. For the elements, who are ready prest at Gods commandement, are in this sence said to receiue and vnderstand the charge inioined them of God. Thus then the sentence runnes all with a breath, which would be but abrupt, if this verse were to be vnderstood of praier.

Now this phrase of speech is vsuall in the holy Scripture: as in the *Psalmes*; The *mountaints* shall bring peace to the people by iustice: *Psal.* 72. 3. Truth shall bud out of the *earth*, and righteousnesse hath looked downe from *heauen*. *Psal.* 85. 11. *Mercy* and *truth* are met together, *righteousnesse* and *peace*, *mercy* and *truth*, shall raigne therein together. And the very same thing the Prophet toucheth in this place.

Now he alludes to those meanes that serue for our ordinarie food; for our naturall life is sustained and maintained by bread, and

the fruits of the earth, in regard we stand in need of such helps. But the earth will not be fit to bring forth these fruits, vntill the heauens doe refresh the same by often raining downe vpon it out of the cloudes, that afterwards it may become fertile, and bring forth fit nourishment both for man and beast.

By the word *iustice*, he meanes nothing else but the faithfullnesse of the Lord, whereby he defends and conserues his Church, in as much as he causeth *iustice* to distill from the heauens; that is to say, a right order of gouernment, the fruit whereof is *saluation*. For he speakes heere of the deliuerance of the people out of *Babylon*; in which deliuerance the Lord shewed himselfe to be the protector of his Church. Now hauing attained the naturall meaning of the words, we must thence descend to Christs kingdome, wherunto these words ought indeed to be referred: for God hath not limited these promises within the compasse of a few yeeres; but continued on his benefites euen to the very coming of Christ, in whom all these things were absolutely fulfilled: no doubt then but the eternal *iustice* and *saluation* brought by Christ, is heere set before vs: but wee must first restrain this exposition, to the returne of the people out of captiuitie.

Iustice.

Saluation a fruit of iustice.

The Kingdome of Christ.

Or, let the pot contend against the pots.

Verf. 9. *Woe bee to him that strieth with his maker, * the potshard with the potshardes of the earth: shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy worke, it hath none hands?*

10. *Woe vnto him that saith to his father, What hast thou begotten? or to his mother; What hast thou brought forth?*

This place is diuersly expounded: for some vnderstand it of *Balthazar*, who (as we see in *Daniel*) lifted vp himselfe proudly against God, in prophaning the holie vessels of the Temple: but this is too constrained an exposition. The second may seeme more probable; to wit, that the Lord giues and grants more to his choson, then a father will doe to his children, or a workman to his worke: for those who expound the words thus, thinke that the Prophet speakes heere by way of comparison in this sence: If a *sonne* should rise vp against his father, and contend with him, should hee ger any audience? No: for a *father* will keepe and retaine his owne authoritie, and in this behalfe would iustly reiect his *sonne*. The like would also fall out, if the *clay* should rise vp against the *potter*. Yet God permits vs to contend with him, and offers himselfe freely to satisfie any of our demands: and thus they ioine the tenth and cleuenth verse together, thinking that the patience of God appears, in that he deales thus fauourably with vs, and humbles himselfe more then mortall men are commonly wont to doe towards their children. I grant that this

The first exposition of this place.

The second exposition.

exposition

exposition hath more colour then the former, but both of them are farre wide from the Prophets intention.

The third and most naturall exposition.

The simple and plaine meaning of the Prophet therefore as I thinke is this, that *Isaiah* here represseth mens complaints, who murmure and pleade against God in the time of aduersitie. This admonition therefore came in due place, to teach the Iewes willinglie to receiue the consolation offered, that they might be fitted to beare the crosse patientlie and with a settled mind: for as oft as God holds vs in suspence, the flesh solicits vs to grudge on this manner: Wherefore doth he not rather that which we would haue him to do? What meanes he to vex vs thus in deferring his help so long? Now, that the Lord might beate back such a presumption, he saith, *Shall the pot contend with the potter? Shall a sonne pleade with his father? And shall not I then much more deale with you as it pleaseth me? What remains then but to beare his stripes patientlie? For it is our duties to let him freely execute his office, and by no meanes to withstand his soueraigne power and authoritie. As touching the word Wo, I take it for a particule of expressing him that rebukes and corrects.*

Murmurings arising from flesh and blood.

Let the pot strive with the potter. That is to say, let euery one striue with his equall, as we vse to say in our common proverb, *Let the pot cleaue the pot of the earth.* For in sending men to their like, he taxeth their boldnes and presumption, for not considering that *in contending with God,* they fought nothing else but how to plunge themselves into their owne ruin. As if he should say, Doe yee know with whom yee haue to doe? Let them know that God will euer be stronger then man, and they shall be constrained in the end to giue place. But if they so farre forget their owne brittleenes, that like Giants they dare scale the heauens, then shall they proue by experience (it may be when it is too late) that they medled with their match, and that they haue contended with their *Maker*, who can easily dash his vessels in pieces one against another, yea and beate them to powder, as the potter doth the vessels which he hath formed.

Proverb.

Some expound the word *Kerasm* workemen, or potters, and vnderstand it thus, Shall the pot rise vp against the potter? But they take one letter for another, to wit, *shin* for *sin*, which they might easily doe. I had rather therefore follow the common reading, and content my selfe with this sense, *Shall the clay say to him that formed it? The Potter as we know hath power to make what vessell he will: the Father hath authoritie to command his children; and shall God haue lesse power and authoritie? The Prophet therefore reproues those which contend with God in aduersitie, in that they can not beare their afflictions patientlie. Such must learne to giue eare to the admonition of S. Peter; Submit yourselves vnder God, faith he; and humble your yokes vnder his hand: Bow your necks to his yoke, 1. Pet. 5. 6. Striue not with him that is stronger then thy selfe, if he exercise thee*

with diuers calamities, for power belongs vnto him to gouerne vs according to his good pleasure. If we stand to dispute with him, he wil vse such inuincible arguments against vs, that being conuincd, we shall be enforced to giue place. But if it fo fall out that he doth not by and by repress our pride, it is not because he is destitute of reason, but because in equitie we should leaue vnto him the right to dispose of vs after his will: an honor, which he iustlie referes to himselfe, that his creatures presume not in the pride of their hearts to aske a reason of his doings. Is there any thing more dishonorable then to reiect his iudgements, when we list not to approve of them?

No disputing with God.

S. Paul vseth the same similitude, but it is in a matter of an higher nature, for he disputes about the point of Gods eternall predestination, and manifest mens blind conceits, who reason with God why he hath chosen some, and reiected others. Then he shewes, that men at the least should giue God as much priuiledge as to a *Potter* or workeman, and cries out, O man, who art thou that pleadest with God! *Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter power ouer the clay? &c. Rom. 9. 20. 21.* Who shall dare to oppose himselfe against God? The Apostle then accords with our Prophet, though S. Paul vseth the similitude in a different matter and of greater consequence: and yet both affirme that God hath an absolute power ouer men, to the end they should suffer themselves to be ordered and governed by him, patientlie bearing all his corrections: the only difference is, that *Isaiah* speaks of things which concerne this present life; and *Paul*, of those that concerne life euerlasting.

Iob. 9. 4.

S. Paul and Isaiah accords together though with some difference.

Or thy worke it hath no hands.] The Prophet obserues mens vsuall formes of speaking, as when we say, Set to the last hand, when a piece of worke is vpon finishing, and that mens hands waxe feeble whilest the work is rough and vnpolished. So, as oft as men murmure against God for not applying himselfe to their desires, they therein accuse him either of sloth, or of ignorance.

Mestre la dernier main.

Verf. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, the holy one of Israel, and his maker, Aske me of things to come concerning my sonnes, and concerning the works of mine hands: command you me.*

I Haue told you already that I like not of their iudgements who knit this verfe so with the former, as if God giuing ouer his right, should giue the Iewes free leaue to enquire more of him then a child of his father. The other exposition differs not much from this, to wit, that the Israelites are miserable in that they vnderstood not Gods will; yea, in that they refused to know it, and would not seeke for comfort, but reiected it when it was offered: in a word, that their owne follie was the cause why their afflictions ouercharged them, and that they could finde no consolation

lation

lation vnder them; becauſe they would not enquire at the mouth of the Lord. If we receive this expoſition, we muſt preſuppoſe that he ſpeakes of an other kinde of inquiſition. For though it be a thing vnlawfull to enter into Gods ſecrets, yet of his goodneſſe hee vouchſafes to diſcouer to his Children ſo much thereof as is expedient for them to know. And, it is alſo good reaſon that as oft as he opens his ſacred mouth; we ſhould carefully lend our eare to all that which he manifeſts vnto vs. Now we may alſo ſee the ſelfe ſame fault at this day in our ſelues; where with *Iſaiah* reprocheth the auncient people the Lewes.

But it is more likely this ſentence depends vpon the former, ſo as it is an application of the ſimilitude, in this ſenſe; It is not lawfull for the ſonne to conteſt with his father, nor the clay to ſtrive with the Potter; how much leſſe ſupportable is that libertie, which mortall men take vnto themſelues, when they will preſcribe rules vnto God, how hee is to order his children? for otherwiſe the ſentence ſhould be both doubtfull and diſmembred. But theſe two members ſute very well together; the pot ſuffers his Potter to doe what him liſteth; and he which is begotten of a mortall man, dares not contend with his father: ſhall not I then, who am the Creator and ſoueraigne Father of all, haue as much power ouer my creatures & children? If any like the fiſt expoſition better, then *Iſaiah* blames mens folly, in that they neglect to aſke of God, or to learne from his mouth, the things that may comfort them: for they might eaſily haue perceived by the prophecies, what care God had of them, and thereby might haue comie to the knowledge of the end of their miſeries.

And queſtionleſſe the onely remedie in aduerſitie is, to goe and aſke counſell at the mouth of the Lord, and not to fix our eies vpon the outward eſtate of things preſent; but in our ſpirits to comprehend the ſaluation to come, which the Lord hath promiſed vs. For he is faithfull (as the Apoſtle ſaith) and will not ſuffer vs to be tempted about that we be able to beare, but will giue an happy iſſue with the temptation, and will augment his graces in vs: 1. Cor. 10. 13.

As touching that which is by and by added, *command you me*: it is not to be taken by way of an imperious authority; for what haue we to *command* God, or vrge him contrary to his will? No, we are to be commanded and vrged by him: for none can profit in Gods word, vnleſſe hee bring a modeſt and meeke ſpirit. In theſe words the Lord offers himſelfe ready to teach vs, to the end we might be bold to aſke of him concerning ſuch things as are expedient for vs to know. As if he ſhould ſay; *Aſke of mee*, I am ready to inſtruct you in things needfull for your comfort. And yet becauſe this manner of ſpeech ſhould be ſomewhat improper, he thinks that the complaint whereof I ſpake before, is the fitteſt, to wit, that God is ſtripped as it were of his fatherly authoritie, if he be denied liberty to hold his Church vnder a profitable diſcipline.

And thus this word *Command*, is to be taken in euill part, when men hauing ſhaken off all modeſtie, ſhall make no bones to ſummon God before them; and to *queſtion* with him of whatſoever comes in their braine, as if he were their ſeruant. Which yet appears better by the word *aſke*: as if he ſhould ſay; *You ſhall doe well to teach mee how to forme and frame my worke*. In a word, the Prophets meaning is, to exhort men to modeſtie and patience: for they no ſooner begin to fall a diſputing with God, but it is all one as if they went about to pull him out of his high and heavenly throne. Now in this, he ſpeakes not enely to the Lewes; but as was alſo needfull to repreſſe the blaſphemies which then walked apace through the mouthes of prophane Idolaters. It is as much to ſay theſe, as if God in theſe words meaning to maintaine his owne right, ſhould reſuſe the murmuring and reſpinings of all the world: and that in this manner, *Whither will your pride and preſumption ſtretch at laſt, ſeeing you will not ſuffer me to be maſter in mine owne workehouſe, and to gouerne my familie as I thinke good?*

Verſ. 12. *I haue made the earth, and created man vpon it: I, whoſe hands haue ſpread out the heauens, I haue euen commanded all their armie.*

IT ſeemes as if the Prophet meant ſimply to defend and maintaine the power of the true God againſt the false, as hee hath done before: ſo as this ſentence ſhould containe in it a ſecret oppoſition betweene the true God, and the Idols whom the ſuperſtitious adore. Fooles are wont to inquire at their Idols, as if the world were by them ruled and gouerned. But God on the contrary calles vs to himſelfe, telling vs that it is hee onely who hath created heauen and earth, and hath placed man vpon it, and that he hath ſpread out the heauens, &c. Gen. 1. 1. 7. and 2. 15. But, as I thinke, it is better to apply this whole ſpeech to the circumſtance of this place. For can any thing be more prepoſterous, then to leaue men vniimpeached, whileſt they preſume to call Gods authority into queſtion, whoſe maieſtie ſurpaſſeth the very heauens? He courteth ſurely then the rage of men, which dare inſolently aduance themſelues euen aboue the heauens themſelues: but therewithall he aduerteth them, that if God ſhould be brought to make his iuſt defence, that hee would find ſufficient reaſons to maintaine his owne cauſe. For if he gouerne the whole world in generall, then muſt he needs haue a ſpeciall care of his choſen: neither reſpects he ſtrangers ſo farre, as to forget his owne houſhold ſeruants, now ſcattered here and there, and wandring to and fro. Thus I expound this verſe then, Muſt I, whoſe infinite and incomprehenſible wiſdome and power, ſhines in the creation & gouernment of heauen & earth, not only be tied to mens lawes, but be abaſed beneath their condition? But if any miſdoubt of mine equitie here in, if I gouerne and order

This verſe contains an argument taken from the liſte to the greater.

The beſt remedie wee can vſe for our ſuccour in aduerſities.

der all things by my power; shall I not much more be carefull of those, whom I haue adopted for my children? shall I not watch for their saluation? And thus it is an argument taken from the lesse to the greater: in which sense it agrees very well with the Scripture.

We know wee are adopted of God, vpon condition that being receiued into his protection, he should keepe vs by his power, so as none can hurt vs without his leaue. If a poore sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his will (as Iesus Christ saith) Mat. 10. 29. will he vnadvisedly expose vs to the rage and cruelty of our enemies? vs (I say) whom he priseti aboute many sparrows? Seeing God then nourisheth and vpholds all creatures by his prouidence, hee cannot forsake his Church, which hee prefers aboue the whole world. To this prouidence of God ought we, to runne then, as oft as things are in a desperate estate; that so wee may not sinke vnder the temptations, by which Satan seekes to asfaile vs on euery side.

Verf. 13. I haue raised him vp in righteousness, and I will direct all his waies: hee shall build my Citie, and hee shall let goe my captiues, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hostes.

A profecutio of that argument the Prophet began to handle in the beginning of this Chapter.

THE Prophet profecutes that argument now, which he fell in hand withall in the beginning of the Chapter: for intending to aswage their afflictions, which were verie sharpe and tedious, he giues the Iewes hope of deliuerance, and beckening vnto them with his hand (as it were) wiseth them to wait for an assured redemption. As if hee should say; Albeit it seemes you be now forlorne, yet the Lord will deliuer you from death. From the very matter it selfe then, it is easie to collect for what cause *Isaiab* intermingled the former reprehension: for had he not broken off his speech, to fall into this digression, the Iewes might haue been driuen into despaire through impacience.

In righteousness, signifies iustly and truly, and is taken relatively; because he renders a reason why God was determined to raise vp *Cyrus*, to wit, in regard that himselfe is that faithfull guardian of his Church, who neuer failes those that stee him. Some expound; *In righteousness*: that is to say, that hee may punish the Chaldeans: others, that the iust may raigne more iustly. But the Prophet respected none of these things.

Iustice is often in the holy Scriptures taken for faithfulness; for Gods righteousness shines especially in defending of his Saints: in which hee shewes a singular token of his soueraigne and vnspotted vprightnesse: *Psal.* 5. 9. and 7. 18. and 22. 32. For though there be not so much as one of Gods workes, in which there is not ingrauen a marke of his righteousness; yet the most ample and excellent testimonie thereof, appears in the saluation of the Church. His meaning is then, that he raised vp *Cyrus* to manifest his righteousness, in

that hee was ordained the Captaine to conduct the people home out of captiuitie.

By these wordes, *my Citie*, hee means Ierusalem, which he calles *his*, because hee would haue his name there to be praised, and to be particularly consecrated vnto his honour; as himselfe declares, *Exod.* 20. 24. where he saith, In all places where I shall put the remembrance of my name, there will I come vnto thee and blesse thee. Now there was none other *Citie* appointed for sacrifices, voves, and prayer but this: which is the reason why it is called the *Citie of God*; The dwelling of the most high; because God is in the midst of it. And in another place; This is my rest for euer. But *Cyrus built* not this *Citie* with his owne hand: but only, by his decree forbad, that any should hinder the reedifying of it. Besides, he gaue to the people all things needfull for their returne.

Not for price: that is to say, for nothing. It is no ordinarie matter for a Conqueror to let loose his prisoners: For hee either puts them to their *Ransome*, or impofeth vpon them some very hard conditions. But *Cyrus* did none of these things: Whence it followed, that such a deliuerance happened not by the will of man, but by the speciall decree of God. The word *Captiuitie*, is heere taken for *Captiues*: because it is a nounce Collectiue.

Verf. 14. Thus saith the Lord; The labour of Egypt, and the merchandise of Ethiopia, and of the Sebeans, men of stature shall come vnto thee, and they shall beethine: they shall follow thee, and shall goe in chains: they shall fall downe before thee, and make supplication vnto thee, saying; Surely God is in thee, and there is none other God besides.

HEE speaks againe of the restauration, which was afterwards effected by the permission of *Cyrus*: but wee must remember what I haue said often before; to wit, that these promises doe stretch themselues further off: for they comprehend vnder them, all the time which ranne out betwene the returne, vntill Christs appearing. And if the readers doe ponder this well, and shall seriously weigh the Prophets forme of speaking, heere will be found nothing superfluous nor excessiue. Now *Isaiab* alludes to that cost and charges which *Cyrus* was at, in furnishing the Iewes with necessaries to rebuild and adorne the Temple withall. For then was fulfilled that which hee saith touching the *labour of Egypt, and the merchandise of Ethiopia, which should come vnto the Iewes*: for these two Countreies were tributaries and subiect to the kings of Persia. Of these tributes, the Temple of Ierusalem was restored: which restauration was but a beginning of that which was accomplished by Christ. Neither was this seruice of strange nations to Gods people ought else, but a torerunner of that obedienc which diuers Countreies were afterward to yeeld to, the Church of God, after Christ was manifested

Psal. 46. 4. 5. & 13. 2. 14.

Reade *Ezra* 6. from verse 3. to 15.

*Or, onely.

A note of true conversion, when we worship that God which is acknowledged in the Church.

Gods iustice especially shines in the saluation of his Church.

sted to the world. Moreover, vnder the name of *Egypt*, and *Ethiopia*, and the *Sabeans* which now flourish, he also compriseth all other nations: as if he should say, You are now oppressed vnder the tyranny of strangers, but the time shall come that they shall serue you. This promise was not fulfilled the first day it was made, but then only when Christ came into the world to subdue haucie and stubborn hearts vnder his obedience, which were incorrigible before, for afterwards they meekly gaue their necks to beare his sweet yoke, and yet the Lord deliuered his people out of Babylon, that he might preferue a Church vnto himselfe till Christes coming, vnder whose dominion all nations were to be subdued. It is no maruell then if the Prophet speaking of the returne of the Iewes, bends his speech towards the marke of the Lords decree, so making but one deliuerance (as it were) of both.

The Text.

They shall
goe in chains
and shall fall
downe be-
fore thee.

The Church
gouerns not
to darken
the glorie of
her head by
an haucie
superioritie.

Where he saith, that the Israelites shall get the conquest over all nations, it depends vpon that mutuall coniunction which is betweene the head and the members: for in regard the only Sonne of God hath so vnited the faithfull vnto himselfe that they and he make but one, therefore often that which belongs to him is attributed vnto the Church which is his body and his fulnes, Ephes. 1.23. In this sense it is said that the Church gouerns: not to darken the glorie of her head by an ambitious superioritie: or to attribute vnto her selfe a proper empire, as if she had something separate from her head: but in regard the preaching of the Gospell which is committed vnto her, is the spirituall scepter by which Christ manifesteth his power. And in this sort, none can humble himselfe, nor fall downe before Christ, but he submits himselfe also to the Church, because the obedience of faith, and the doctrine of the Church are things vnited, and yet so, that Christ notwithstanding which is her head may reigne alone; and may exercise his power without the help of a second.

See 1. Cor. 14.
25.

Surely God is in thee.] The Prophet shewes what they shall say which by way of honor shall make supplication to the Church, to wit, they shall confesse that God is in her of a truth. Some translate the word *At*, Only, which I reiect not, but confesse that it stilie expresth the Prophets meaning: yet it wil not agree amisse to expound it affirmatiuely, Surely God is in thee. Now hee shewes, how strange Nations shall be subiected to the Iewes, to wit, in acknowledging that there is no other God but him, whom the Iewes worship.

Obiect.

Anf.

John 4.22.

If it be objected that this appertaines not at all to the Iewes, who are now cut off from the Church: I answere, The Gospell notwithstanding came from them into all the world: and thus we acknowledge Ierusalem to be the fountaine from whence this pure doctrine of life issued. In old time the Iewes only knew the true God, and none had the true worship but they: others being giuen to impostures worshipped their owne inuentions: in which respect Christ speaking to

the woman of Samaria, said, We know what we worship, John 4. 22. It is rightly said here then, that God is in thee, because other nations knew not God. But because there is here a close opposition, I willingly receiue the particle Only, so as it setues as a testimonie of the sound conuersion of the Gentiles, who contenting themselves with one only God, shall vtterlic forsake their Idols.

The summe is, that those who swelled with pride before, and despised the Church with a scornfull eie, should now subiect themselves vnto her after they were taught what Gods true sanctuarie was, yet so (as hath bin said) that God shall not therefore giue ouer his principallitie though he thus aduanceth his Church. And here we may behold a signe of true conuersion, to wit, when we worship not a god of our owne forging, but such a one as is acknowledged in the Church. This excellent title also which is giuen to the Church is not to be omitted, God is in thee, for God is in the middes of it, because he hath chosen his dwelling there, as in Psal. 46. If we bee Gods people and do submit our selues to that doctrine of saluation which he sets before vs, then may we resolute vpon it that he will assist vs, because he neuer failes those that seeke him. This therefore is a perpetuall promise, and ought not to be restrained only to those times.

The summe
of this verse.

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2

Verf. 15. Verily thou, O God, hidest thy selfe: O God, the saviour of Israel.

Now Iſaiah breaks forth into an exclamation, shewing, that they must wait long for the inioying of Gods promises, for the people were in danger of declining, seeing the wicked had the world at will, and that all things went crosse with them. I know well that many expound this place otherwise, for the Hebrews for the most part interpret it thus, That the Lord will lude himselfe from the Gentiles, but will manifest himselfe to his people. The Christian Doctōrs bring another exposition, but as far from the purpose. I grant that which they say sauiors of wit, whē they affirme that Christ is an hidden God, because his diuinitie was hidden vnder the infirmities of his flesh. But this hath no affinity with the Prophets intention, who saith, God is hid, because he seemed as it were to estrange himselfe for a time, whilst he suffered his Church to languish vnder diuers oppressions and calamities, they were therefore to build vp one another by hope, which as Paul saith, is not of things seene, but of things hidden, Rom. 8. 24. And in this sense Iſaiah saith that God was hid, because they saw not the promises by & by performed: thus he meant to draw their minds from the consideration of things present, and to rauish them about the heauens.

God will for
a time hide
himselfe, be-
fore he man-
ifests his
glorie for his
Churches
deliuerance,
thereby to
make triall
of her faith
and patience.

So also must we doe, if we meane to apprehend and imbrace his help. Wee haue neede of patience then you see, that when the promises are deferred, wee may also be able to hold our desires in suspense. He said ere while that the heathen should seele Gods

Wee haue
neede of
patience

T t 2

presence,

presence, notwithstanding they were then blind and sottish: but because the time of the manifestation hereof was not yet come, it is not without cause that this exclamation is intermingled, to wit, that before God will manifest his glorie, he will hide his power for the triall of his seruants.

Besides, from the epithite which is by and by added, where God is called the *saviour*, the Prophet speaks not of the essence, but of the want of his succor: for he shewes, that God hid himselfe from minding the deliuerance of his Church, in regard he withdrew his hand for a time, as if he had purposed whollie to forsake the same. Our God will haue our *saluation lie hidden* then as it were in darknes, to the end that if we wil haue any part therein, we may make our accounts to goe out of this world, because this benefit will not by and by appeare vnto vs: we must therefore wait for this *saluation* with an inuincible constancie, for it is expedient, and for our great good, that God by this meanes should examine and proue our faith, that so when afflictions do diuerslie press vs, we yet cease not to rest our selues vpon him, and vpon his promises.

Vers. 16. *All they shall be ashamed and also confounded: they shall goe to confusion together that are the makers of Images.*

17. *But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an euerlasting saluation: yee shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end.*

The Prophet heere compares the Iewes with the Gentiles, to preuent a difficult and dangerous temptation wherewith they might be shaken, by seeing the Gentiles to haue all things according to their wish. For they might well thinke in such streights that either God fauored the Gentiles, or, that he neglected his Church, or, that all things were huddled vp together at aduenture. The Prophet therefore aduertiseth them, that howsoeuer the prophane nations florished for a time, and seemed to be aduanced about the clouds, yet their *perdition* was decreed as well as the *saluation* of Israel. In a word, he admoniseth them not to iudge of Gods power by the estate of things present, lest they should fix their thoughts vpon things of no continuance, but that they should rather lift them vp to the eternal saluation, and in the meane while being stricken with Gods hand, patiently to beare their condition, without grudging at the prosperitie of the wicked, who were shortly to haue a *shamefull fall*, P^{sa}. 37. This sentence then is knit to the former: for whosoever shall be well instructed that God *hides* himselfe whilest he is a *saviour*, will not much be moued at the prosperitie of the wicked, nor at the miserie of the faithfull that are despised, and exercised with sundrie afflictions, because the end of the one is *shame*, and the end of the other *glorie*.

Thus you see how the Lord prooues our faith and patience, and yet, that nothing of our eternal saluation which is prepared for vs shall fall to the ground: and that such who seemed the only happie men, shall in the end perish. All the good they now enioy shall turne to their extreme ruine, because they abused the gifts of God, and like theetues, vsurp vpo that which is none of theirs, though they seeme to be the iust possessors of all things. As oft then as these thoughts shall trouble vs, to wit, that the wicked prosper, that God fauors them, and that the promises vpon which we rest are vaine, let vs haue our recourse to this sentence of our Prophet, as to a safe citie of refuge, and let vs thus fortifie our selues; God will not disappoint vs of our hope: in the end we shall be deliuered, though wee bee now exposed to the reproches, iniuries, outrages, and cruelties of our enemies.

Vers. 18. *For thus saith the Lord (that created heauen, God himselfe that formed the earth, and made it: he that prepared it, he created it not in vaine: he formed it to be inhabited) I am the Lord, and there is none other.*

This verse serues to confirme that which was said before, for the Prophet would haue the Iewes fullie resolu'd, that the Lord at last would worke their deliuerance, albeit they were a long while oppressed vnder a miserable seruitude; and therefore some by the *earth*, vnderstand the land of Iudeah: but I rather take it to be an argument take from the lesse to the greater, as we said before in the 12. verse; to wit, That seeing Gods prouidence reacheth generallie ouer all his creatures, by so much the more doth it extend it selfe to those whom he hath adopted for his children, in regard he hath a speciall care ouer them. Thus stands the Prophets argument then, Seeing *God hath created the earth that men should inhabit it*, much more hath he made it a place of abode for his Church; which he esteemeth more then of all creatures besides: If he hath *seled the earth vpon her foundations*, in giuing it a certaine forme, and in ordeining it to a certaine vse and end, *shas men might be nourished and sustined with the fruites it bringeth forth*; no doubt but he hath giue it to his childre *in the first place*, and that in a soueraigne degree of honor about others. I grant wee fee not this come alwaies thus to passe, and therefore our minds must be framed to be vpheld by hope, that so wee may stand firme and inuincible against all sorts of temptations. In a word, the Church of God shall stand as long as the foundations of the earth remaine, for it shall be established before God, as the Sunne and Moone in the firmament, P^{sa}. 89. 36. 37.

In Chap. 54. 9. he will vse an argument of greater force, to wit, If the couenant which was made with *Noah* touching the constant estate of the world, be firme, much more shall his promise made to his Church be sure and perma-

We must be content: to suffer our saluation to lie hid for a time, See Col 3. 3. 4.

Yet we must wait for it with an inuincible constancie.

As God in the former verses tooke order for the saluation of his Church, so here he decrees the destruction of his enemies.

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3

An argument taken againe from the lesse to the greater, as in verse 12.

The prophets Argument.

Gods children haue or ought to haue the first place in the earth. Our minds must be vpheld by hope, by which we may manfully resist temptations.

Gen. 9. 9.

permanent: for the world is corruptible and perſhable, but the Church, which is Christs kingdom, ſhall remaine for euer. The promiſes therefore which are made concerning her, muſt needs be more ſure and ſtable then any thing beſides. Now becauſe the earths principall ornament ſtands in her being inhabited, the Prophet addes, that it was not created to lie vvaſte, but for men to conuerſe in.

The Church remains for euer.

If any ſhall obieſt on the contrary, that the earth was without forme, and void euen after it was created, as it appears in Gen. 1. 2. where Moſes ſeeth the ſame word *Tobu*, that the Prophet heere doth, which ſignifies, without forme, and emptie; the ſolution is eaſie: for the Prophet ſpeakes not of the beginning of the creatiō, but of Gods purpoſe: by which hee ordained the earth for mens vſe and abode. The Prophet then contradicts not Moſes at all, ſeeing he hath reſpect to the vſe and end.

Obiect,

Anſ.

As touching that which followes, *to be inhabited*; it extends it ſelfe to all mankind in general; to wit, the earth is ordained for all men to dwell vpon. For whence comes it to paſſe that the Lord nourisheth vs, prouides all neceſſaries for vs; yea and ſuſtains the very wicked? Is it not that his decree might continue ſtedfaſt, becauſe hee hath appointed men to haue their dwelling in it? Otherwiſe, it were impoſſible that hee ſhould indure ſo many vices & wickedneſſes to raigne, and not vterly to deſtroy man from off the ſame: but hee reſpects his owne holy ordinance, and not our deſerts. Heere is the reaſon then why ſtates and kingdomes continue ſo long in the middeſt of Barbarians and Infidels; *The Lord will haue the earth inhabited*. And howſoever for the ſinnes of men, the Lord oftentimes brings ſome Countries into deſolation, and ſowes it as it were with ſalt, in regard they become barren, and are notable to ſuſtaine their inhabitants: yet, he euer ſo mitigates his ſtroke, that the earth is inhabited by ſome, becauſe God will haue his decree to ſtand inuioable.

The reaſon why God continues ſinfull man vpon the earth.

God will alwaies haue a remnant to call vpon his name.

But we muſt remember what I ſaid before, to wit, whileſt there is a world to bee inhabited of men, that God will haue a remnant reſerued, which ſhall call vpon his name. From hence then may all the faithfull gather great conſolation: for albeit the world contemnes them, and that they be few in number; and on the contrary, that the wicked ſurpaſſe them in multitude, riches, power, and authority; yet how little account ſoever bee made of them, and that they be eſteemed no better then abiects, and the of-ſcouring of al things, yet are they precious in the eyes of the Lord, becauſe he acknowledgeth them for his children; and therefore will neuer ſuffer them to periſh.

In that he repeats it againe, *I am the Lord*; it is not onely to juſtifie his eternal eſſence; but to put a difference betweene his Maieſtie and Idols, that he might ſtill retaine the Iewes within the bounds of his pure worſhippe and ſeruiſe. The ſuperſtitious ſort will confeſſe indeed that there is one God, but they forge

that one God in their owne braine: we muſt therefore know and acknowledge that God, which manifested himſelfe to the Patriarks and Prophets. Neither ſpeakes he heere of Gods eternal eſſence onely, as many thinke, but likewiſe of all the offices which peculiarly belong vnto him, to the end none may dare to transfer that which is onely proper vnto him, and not vnto creatures.

Vcrſ. 19. *I haue not ſpoken in ſecret, neither in a place of darkneſſe in the earth: I ſaid not in vaine vnto the ſeede of Iakob, Seeke you mee. I the Lord doe ſpeake in righteouſneſſe, and declare righteous things.*

Now he brings the people to the doctrine of the Law, becauſe God cannot be comprehended by the ſenſe of fleſh and blood. Howſoever then he be hid from carnall reaſon, yet he fully manifolds himſelfe, and giues a remedy in his word, which ſupplies our want, to the end we ſhould ſecke no further then it: were it not ſo, we ſhould be left as men without any hope at all, and ſhould vterly quaile. He therefore proteſts, that hee called vs not vnto him in vaine, albeit his helpe be deferred; becauſe that which hee hath promiſed, is moſt ſure.

As hee hath ſhewed vs clearly then whether we ought to flee, and vpon what to reſt, ſo will he let it be ſeene by the effects, that the hope of ſuch as haue ſtaied vpon his word, ſhall not be fruitleſſe. Hence wee may ſee how abominable their ſpeeches are, who affirme that a man can gather no particular aſſurance of his ſalutation from the word of God: they alſo make it no better then a noſe of wax, that they might diſcouraige Gods people from meddling with it. For theſe maſtiues barke thus, in regard they ſee it diſcouers their errors, and that the whole foundation of their rotten building, is ouerthrowne by the doctrine contained in that little volume.

An horrible blaſphemie to affirme that a man can gather no particular aſſurance to himſelfe of his owne ſalutation out of the Scriptures.

But with *Dauid* we anſwere; *Thy word, O Lord, is a lantern to my feete, and a light vnto my path*: *Psal. 119. 105.* With *Iſaiah* and the reſt of the holy Prophets we anſwer; that the Lord hath deliuered nothing that is obſcure, doubtfull, or deceiuing: and with *Saint Peter* we confeſſe, that *the word of the Prophets is moſt ſtable and ſure; ſo which, as he ſaith, we do well in gining heede, as to a light that ſhines in a darke place, vntill the day dawne, and the day ſtarre ariſe in our hearts*: *2. Pet. 1. 19.* And if this were ſaid of the Law, and of the Prophets, *vnto what ſhall we ſay of the Goſpell*, by which this light is openly reuealed vnto vs? Shall we not affirme with *Saint Paul*; *If the Goſpell be yes hid, it is hid in them that are loſt, whom (Satan) the God of this world hath blinded*? *2. Cor. 4. 3.* Let the blind world then accuſe it ſelfe, when it cannot indure the brightneſſe of this word: and as for vs, let vs ſtand faſt and abide by this heavenly light, which the faithleſſe labour to dimme and darken with

their mists and fogs of errors.

Moreouer, it seemes the Prophet alludes to the Oracles which were giuen out of caues and the three footed stoole of their Idols; for they were things vncertaine, and full of illusions. But Gods answers are free from such things: for he speaks not in *darknesse*, but in the highest places of the Citie; neither vtters he ought that can deceiue, or be turned too maner of waies.

Proh 9.3.

Obiect.
Ans.

Simile.

But will some say, experience teacheth that the Scripture is both hard and obscure. It is very true; but this is to be attributed to the dulnesse & slownesse of our vnderstandings, and not to the Scriptures. For the blind, or such as are weake sighted, cannot accuse the Sunne, in that they are not able to behold it. The fault is in themselves. And yet this remains sure, that as many as are teachable; and yeeld obedience vnto Gods ordinances, shall not lose their labour, because the Lord will shew himselfe a faithfull teacher towards the humble and mecke.

Psal. 125.9.

The Scriptures easie to them that will vnderstand: 1. Prou. 8.9.

Howsoeuer then all attaine not to a perfection of knowledge, yet the study of such as seeke vnto God vnfeinedly, shall neuer returne without fruit. In this clause also the Prophet shewes, that the end and vse of the Law, serues to bring men to God: for it is the onely true happinesse of man, to be knit againe to his Sauour: and the sacred bond of this coniunction, consists in faith and in true pietie.

The steadfastnesse and certaintie of Gods word.

Now in the second member hee not onely protests that he spake distinctly, and without ambiguitie; but also sets forth the steadfastnesse and certaintie of his word: as if he should say; I make not these large promises to circumuent or beguile poore captiues withall, as if I meant to feed you onely with faire words; but I will also surely performe whatsoeuer I haue promised. And thus he conuinceth their ingratitude, who being called, answered not: for Gods meaning is to make vs partakers of all the good things which hee offers vs, whereof otherwise wee are vtterlie destitute.

Gods word neuer yet found deceitfull to any that rested vpon the truth of it.

Where it followes, that God *speakes in righteousness*, it serues as an exposition: as if hee should say; My word by which I seeke to draw the Saints vnto mee, was neuer yet tainted with any vntruth, but contains things that are altogether *righteous*: Psal. 19.9. The words of the Lord, saith David, are pure words, as the silver tried in a furnace of earth, fined (seuenfold): Psal. 12.6. In Gods word then wee haue a cleere *righteousnesse* shining out vnto vs; which hauing scattered all our darknesse, will forthwith enlighten our mindes and vnderstandings.

*Or, those which carry the wood of their Idol, and which pray vnto a God that cannot saue them, haue no knowledge.

Verf. 20. *Assemble your selues and come: draw neere together, yee abiects of the Gentiles: * they haue no knowledge that set up the wood of their Idol, and pray to a god that cannot saue them.*

HE bids defiance to all Idolaters, and summons them to appeare, that they might

haue the matter taken vp, vpon some reasonable conditions; as we haue seene before in other places. But the issue will goe wrong on their sides, because all their reasons will be easilie ouerthrowne. As if he should say; They now please themselves in their superstitions, but when their cause comes once to the trial, all pretexs shall by & by vanish like smoke; so as it will be no masterie to put them all to silence. Let them assemble then if they will by troopes, let them consult, conspire, and doe their vtmost by threats, fraudes, and terrors, yet must the truth needs preuaile at length against them.

All Idolaters summoned to appeare.

The Lewes had great neede of this confirmation, in regard they saw idolatries and superstitions to haue the full swing on euerie side, and the true seruice of God vtterly to be extinct.

To this fortresse also must wee flee at this day, when wee consider our feeblenesse and weakenesse. The Turkes possesse a great part of the world. The Papists aduance themselves with their crosses set vp on high in euerie place: and we in the meane while, which are but an handful, are esteemed no better then the wormes of the earth: but yet in the end, truth which is great, will preuaile, and as a conquerresse, will pull downe all that state and pompe which now dazles our eyes.

The truth will at length preuaile.

Some translate the word *Pelete*, Reiected: others, Fugitiue, or, escaped; and thinke it is directed to the Lewes which were returned home. But this sense is too far fetched: it rather seemes that the Prophet vnderstands thereby, the reiected of the Gentiles; because the verbe *Palat*, signifies to reiect. And yet the Prophet speaks not heere of the common nor worst sort, but directs his speech to those that were the learnedst, richest, and of greatest renowne among the Gentiles. For he calles them *reiected*, in respect that they are nothing in the sight of the Lord. And yet if any had rather expound the word; a farre off; I hinder him not: for it is as if hee had said, Assemble you selues from all parts of the earth.

In adding, *those which carry the wood*: hee shewes with what furie Idolaters are carried away, who worshippe the Idols which themselves carry vpon their shoulders in processions: or, we may (if you will) take this word, *To beare, To lift, or, set up* in some high place: for it is the policie of Satan, to erect and set vp Images vpon pillars and in high rood lofts, to strike men with an admiration of them, and to draw them by the onely view to proferre them some signe of reuerence and honour. And yet we may take it simply for the whole seruice which is performed to the Idols, that he might plainly shew how there was nothing but vanitie and folly in all that they did. For the superstitions sort cannot be ignorant, that their Idols haue more need of mens helpe, then men haue of theirs, that can neither goe, nor stand an end, vnlesse men lend them their hands. And to this appertaines that which is added, that they pray vnto a God which cannot saue them. For what

Idols haue more neede of mens helpe then, they haue of theirs.

follic

follic is it to pray and make vowes to a ſenſleſſe ſtocke or ſtone, that neither heares nor ſees? And yet the vnbelecuers ride poſt (as it were) to dumbe and dead Idols for helpe.

Verſ. 21. *Tell yee and bring them, and let them take counſell together, who hath declared this ſiõ the beginning? or, hath told it of old: Haue noi I, the Lord? and there is none other God beſides mee, a iuſt God, a Saviour: there is none beſides me.*

A comparifon betweene Gods predictions, and thole of the Idols.

A Gaine hee proteſts againſt all ſuch as might trouble the Iewes or weaken their faith by their ſcornings. For the Prophet aimes alwaies at this marke; to wit, that hee may fortifie the peoples faith againſt the aſſaults of the Gentiles; becauſe the poore Iewes, who were ſo extreemly handled, were in danger of ſtaggering in the miſt of ſo many great and violent temptations, had they not had ſome pregnant arguments ſet before them to hold them in their faith and obedience towards the true God. Thus then hee permits the prophane to bring in whatſoever they can for the maintenance of their cauſe.

Where he ſaith, *let them conſult together*: it is added in token of the greater boldneſſe and confidence: for the Prophets meaning is, that they ſhall gaine nothing (as wee haue ſaid before) albeit they conſpire neuer ſo much together. It may be alſo, hee meant to ſhew how there was nought elſe but vanitie and deceit, in all that which the Idolaters dreame of, touching the excuſing of their errors. Make what pretences you will then, faith he, to colour your inuentions, yet ſhall Gods word be ſtrong enough to ſuſtaine the faith of his ſeruants. Hee calles them therefore to a right examination of things, that they may compare all the brags of the Infidels, touching the *predictions* of their Idols, with the Law and the prophecies.

I willingly receiue that which is affirmed by all; to wit, that the Prophet ſpeakes of the deliuerance of the people. But in regard the ouertrow of the Babylonian Monarchy was ioined therewithall, therefore I thinke one of theſe things is compared with the other. And becauſe one ſentence is repeated twice, theſe two words, *Mikedelem*, and *Mean*, are as much in effect as if he had ſaid; *From the beginning, and from the times paſt*: for this prophecie was publiſhed long time before the things (propheciã) were accompliſhed: whereby the faithfull might evidently perceiue, that it was God which ſpoke.

To preſcience he adds his power, as we haue often ſaid: and yet withall he ſhewes to what end God is powerfull; euen to ſaue his people.

Verſ. 22. *Looke vnto mee, and yee ſhall bee ſaued: all the ends of the*

earth ſhall be ſaued; for I am God, and there is none other.

Hitherunto hee hath ſpoken onely to the Iewes, as if ſaluation appertained to none but them. Now he extends his ſpeech further off: for hee calls a great audience to him, euen the whole world, to partake of the hope of ſaluation: and therewithall condemnes all nations of vnthankfulnes, if in giuing themſelues ſhall be ſeduced with Perſors, which obſtinately ſlunned the cleere light which was offered. For can a man commit a greater ſinne, then direclly to reiect his owne ſaluation?

New the Prophet turnes his ſpeech from the Iewes to the Gentiles.

God commands all then to looke vnto him: to which Commandement he adds a Promiſe: for this hath greater weight in it, and confirms the matter much more, then if he had ſet it downe ſimply by way of a command. We haue in this text therefore an excellent teſtimony touching the vocation of the Gentiles: wherein wee ſee how the Lord indifferently calles all ſorts of men vnto him, the partition wall being broken downe, which ſeparated betweene the Iewes and the Gentiles.

Eph. 2. 14.

Moreouer, wee are heere taught the true meanes how to obtaine ſaluation; euen to looke vnto God, and to turne vnto him with our whole heart. But we muſt looke vnto him with the eye of faith, that we may embrace the ſaluation promiſed to all, in Ieſus Chriſt. For God ſo loued the world, that he gaue his onely begotten Sonne, that vwhoſoever beleeueth in him, might not periſh, but haue euerlaſting life: Iohn 3. 16.

Now when hee exhorts all the ends of the earth, he ſhewes that all men haue hitherunto erred out of the right way, & haue had no reſpect vnto the true God: for where infidelitie raignes, there God cannot be diſcerned from Idols. In a word, he ſhewes that the condemnation of the whole world, ariſeth from dotting vpon their owne inuentions, whereby they forſake the living God: for from the knowledge of him, flowes eternall and aſſured ſaluation. The Lord then reacheth out his hand to ſaue all nations, and ſhewes them what way they ſhould take to obtaine it. And thus it appears it ſel not out by chance, that the Golpell was generally preached vnto all nations vnder heauen: but that it proceeded from Gods decree, who had ordained it ſo to come to paſſe long before. Yet hee accuſeth the Gentiles of blindneſſe, as I haue ſaid ere while, in that they turned their eyes after vanities, and ranne which way ſoever their giddie ſpirits led them. For how ſoever by nature they could not find out the true God, hauing from their infancy been trained vp in ſuperſtitions, and were bewitched with them; yet God had iuſt cauſe norwithſtanding to blame them for the prophane contempt of his grace.

All haue erred.

The way to ſaluation deſcribed.

Hypocriſie, you know, is alwaies wrapped in ignorance, ſo as men had rather bee deceiued through vaine deceits, then to be led the ſtraight way vnto God.

Hypocriſie alwaies mixed with ignorance.

Verſ. 23. *I haue ſworne by my ſelfe: T 4 the*

*Or, that is,
every knee,
&c.

the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not returne, that euerie knee shall bow vnto mee, and euerie tongue shall sweare by me.

A confirmation
of the
former
sentence.

HE adds a more manifest confirmation to the former sentence: for because this *calling* was extraordinary and vheard of, hee therefore adds *an oath*, as men are wont to doe in things that are strange and hard to be credited. The Iewes might haue made replies, in regard they were then reputed the onely elect people. But in that he confirms it with an *oath*, all contention is taken away. I grant the Prophet aimes againe at the same marke that he did in *verf. 6.* to wit, that Gods glory shall so shine in the reformation of the Church, that all the world, from the rising of the Sunne, to the West, shall admire the same: or, to tell it you in a word, that the signes of Gods power shall so shine in this deliuerance, that all nations shall be confounded with feare and astonishment. In the meane while hence wee may gather that which I touched before; namely, the *Gentiles* are heere equalled with the *Iewes*, so as God shall be the *common father of all*, and his name called vpon in all places.

Now God *sweares by himselfe*, because there is none more sufficient to be a witness of his truth: for he is the truth it selfe. Men sweare by greater then themselves, as the Apostle saith, *Heb. 6. 16.* but God hauing no superior, sweares heere by himselfe.

The cause of
Gods oath.

We must note the cause of this oath. It is euen to sustaine the infirmities of the Saints, lest they should float vp and downe in vncertainties. What a wonderful goodnes of God is this, who to remedy our diffidence, disdains not to vse his owne name, as if hee laid it to pawne: On the other side, how grosse and vile is our incredulity, if this *oath* doe not satisfie and content vs?

Now seeing God referes to himselfe the confirmation of all truth, we must take good heed when we are constrained to call him for a witness in othes, that we miugle not his name with Saints, or any other creatures whatsoever: but ying it with such reuerence as is meete, let vs referre his honour full and whole vnto himselfe.

Gods name
not to be
mingled with
creatures
in our othes.

The word is gone forth.] The meaning is, that whatsoever the Prophet hath published at Gods commandement, is firme and sure. As if hee should say; This commandement passed not from me vnawares. In this sense the word *righteousnesse*, is often taken for a true speech, and such as shall alwaies be found so: and therefore he saith, that his word *cannot be called backe.*

To this appertaines the other member, *shall not returne*: that is to say, it shall still grow to perfection, vntill it appears by the effects, that it came from a God most iust, true, and almightie: for man a will call backe his word when he meetes with any difficultie that may hinder him from keeping the same. But because nothing can let God from executing his determinations, the Prophet rightly con-

Men inconstant.

God vnchangeable.

cludes, that the course of this word cannot be stopped, nor broken off by any inconuenience at all. The particle, *That is*, must serue heere for an exposition; to wit, *Behold vnto this word.*

Every knee shall bow vnto mee.] By this hee means that all nations shall bow before God; because the deliuerance of the Church shall terrifie the whole world. Yet withall it followes from hence, that his true worshipp shall also be received among all nations. For we cannot truly *bow the knee* before God, till he hath manifested himselfe vnto vs. Men may indeede present a kind of seruice to the one God, whom yet they know not: there is nothing but vanitie and illusions in all this. He speaks heere then of that true religious seruice, which proceeds from such a knowledge of God, as is rooted in the depth of the heart: for where no faith is, there can bee no sincere worshipp. True faith, as wee know, staies not her selfe vpon any vncertaine or vnkowne thing.

What it is
to bow the
knee to God.

He sets forth the thing signified therefore, by the signe, as the Scriptures are often wont to doe. Whence we gather, that God requireth *the outward seruice of the body*: for the Prophet separates not *the externall profession of religion*, from *the internall affection of the heart*. It is in vaine then for such inconstant spirits to brag, that they can honour and worshipp God in their hearts, though they *bow their knees* before Idols. It is in vaine for them (I say) to make so friuolous an excuse, seeing *the inward beliefe of the heart* cannot be diuided from *the outward confession of the mouth*. For with the heart, man beleeuces vnto righteousness, and with the mouth he confesseth vnto saluation: *Rom. 10. 10.* For this cause the Lord approoues of their integritie and vprightnesse in his seruice, that had not so much as bowed a knee to Baal: *King. 19. 18.*

The thing
signified set
forth by the
signe.

A friuolous
excuse of
temporities.

Saint Paul applies this text to the last iudgement, where he saith, that all shall be constrained to appeare before the iudgement seat of Christ. Although it is applied heere to the peoples deliuerance out of Babylon, to the spreading abroad of the Gospell, and to the establishing of the kingdome of Christ. But the Apostle holds it for granted, (which we also are not to bee ignorant of) that that which appertaines to Christs kingdome, ought not to be restrained to some parts of it onely, but to stretch it selfe throughout the whole course thereof, euen till the full and perfect accomplishment of the whole appeare. What is it then to bow the knee vnto Christ? It is *when his doctrine is obeyed, and the preaching of the Gospell receiued.*

What is
meant by
bowing of
the knee to
Christ,

But many still resist it, and boldly contemne it: Satan plots sundry mischiefs, and with open mouth rageth against it continually; so as the accomplishment of this propheticke seemes yet to be very far off. The knee shall then truly be bowed to Christ, when he shall triumph, and hath pur downe and destroyed all his enemies, and when he shall appear in maiestic and in glory to all, which Satan and his supports doe now seeke to abolish. And therefore

therefore S. Paul teacheth, that when Chriſt ſhall aſcend vp into his Throne to iudge the world, then ſhall that be accompliſhed which began to take effect from the beginning of the Goſpell, which we alſo ſee to draw neere from day to day.

The verb *to ſeare* is put for ſeruiſe, reuerence, or ſubiectiōn, by the figure called Synecdoche, whic a part is taken for the whole. An oth alſo is part of the honor which is due vnto God, for by it we confeſſe and acknowledge that he is the author, father, and lawfull protector of all truth, and that all things are naked and bare before his eyes, Heb. 4. 13. When this honor therefore is giuen to Idols, Gods Maieſtie is thereby violated with an execrable ſacrilege: thus then, thoſe which ſerue him purely, ſwear only by his name, and by nothing elſe. But we haue ſpoken of this matter in another place.

Verſ. 24. *Surely he ſhall ſay, In the Lord haue I righteousnes and ſtrength: he ſhall come vnto him, and all that prouoke him ſhall be aſhamed.*

HE ſhewes what true faith is, and what worſhip God approves of, to wit, when we haue not only a bare knowledge of him, or thinke in our hearts that there is one God, but when we alſo feele what a one he is to vs. Whoſoeuer he be then that contents himſelfe with a naked apprehenſion of God; is farre off from that faith which ſo knits vs vnto him, that we feele him dwelling in vs, according as S. Paul would haue vs not only to know Chriſt, but that he alſo ſhould dwell in our hearts by faith, Ephel. 3. 17. For be that contemplates of an idle god in the heauens ſiting at his eaſe, will neuer bow his knees before him with a ſincere heart; neither will he euer make a franck and willing confeſſion vnto him.

Now becauſe *righteousnes and ſtrength* are the two maine points of our ſaluation, the faithfull acknowledge God to be the author of both in them, and thus they whollie attribute the glorie of their happines vnto him: and in confeſſing that it proceeds from his free grace, it is to reſtue to all that by nature they are deſtroyed of ſuch gifts. They therefore confeſſe that they can finde neither *ſtrength* nor *righteousnes* in themſelues, but do ſeek the ſame only in God, that he may not be defrauded of his proper right.

He ſhall come vnto him.] The expoſitors agree not touching the interpretation of theſe words: for mine owne part, I vnderſtand this place only of the faithfull, who ſubmit themſelues vnto God, that ſo wee might ſee the reaſon of the oppoſition which is betweene them, and thoſe rebels which ceaſe not obſtinately to reſiſt God. Thus I expound it then, *Thoſe who confeſſe their righteousnes and ſtrength to be from God, ſhall come to him.* For his meaning is, that we haue acceſſe vnto God by faith, ſo as all thoſe which confeſſe that their ſaluation conſiſts in him, ſhall alſo come vnto him, and ſeele him preſent vwith them.

Truely, a man can neuer voluntarily draw neere vnto God, till he be reconciled with him: for the more we feele the terror of his Maieſtie, the further off wee flee from him. The Prophet in this place then magnifies this ioyfull fruit of Gods fauor, by means whereof, thoſe that were ſtrangers farre off before, ſhall now come and be made neere vnto him. To this agrees that in the 65. Pſal. Becauſe thou art a God that heareſt prayer, therefore ſhall all ſiſtch come vnto thee.

Now Iſaiah hauing ſhewed that God will gather in ſtrangers from their diſperſions, and entertaine them in his owne houſe, he denounceth an horrible iudgement againſt contemners and deſpiſers, who giue themſelues the raiſes, as if there were no God at all; and ſcorning all pietie: wallow themſelues in worldlie delights. For as faith only brings forth obedience, ſo the Prophet ſhews that it is infidelitie only which prouokes God to wrath and diſpleaſure. When he brands the vnbelecuers with this marke, that they are rebels to God; yea, that they prouoke him to the combat: therewithall hee pronounceth that they ſhall be covered with ſhame, howſoever they make their triumphs in the ſight of the world.

Verſ. 25. *The Whole ſeed of Iſrael ſhall bee iuſtified, and glorie in the Lord.*

HE now preuents an obiection which might be made againſt this doctrine, to wit, it ſeemes ſtrange that the Lord ſhould call thoſe nations vnto him which were farre off before: as if they ſhould ſay, Hath God then choſen the poſteritie of Abraham in vaine? Shall his promiſes ſo often repeated Gen. 15. 5. and 17. 7. vaniſh into the aire? To this he answers, that the Lord will not ceaſe to be true in his promiſes ſtill, ſo that howſoever God hath made choiſe of the Gentiles, yet notwithstanding the couenant contracted and made with their fathers ſhall ſtand ſtill inuolable, becauſe the elect Iewes ſhall hold their ſoueraigne prerogatiue. For hee ſpeakes not heere of their reſiectiō as in many other places, but the Prophet only deliuers this point, that Gods grace which ſhall now be extended to all nations, ſhall ſtill flow from this fountaine, I am thy God, and the God of thy ſeed after thee, Gen. 17. 7. whereas the moſt part of the Iewes then were reiectēd; this ouerthrew not Gods couenant, becauſe the remnant that were adopted alwaies remained the true and lawfull ſeed: and albeit they were few in number, yet were they the firſt borne in the Church.

Moreouer, all thoſe among the Gentiles which were graſted into this body, began now to be the children of Abraham as in Chap. 44. 5. one ſhall ſay, I belong to Iacob, another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand, and ſay, I am begotten of Iſrael. From this tide it is that we at this day are reputed by good right the Iſrael of God, though Iacob begat vs not. The Prophet addes this then, that they ſhould not thinke the couenant of God was aboliſhed:

None comes willingly to God, till they feele their reconciliatiō with him.

Col. 1. 21.
Eph. 2. 13.

Faith, the mother of obedience.

Infidelitie, the mother of rebellion.

The preuention of an obiection.

An oth, part of Gods honor.

See Chap. 19. 18.

We muſt proceed from faith to feeling.

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God the author both of righteousnes and ſtrength.

shed: as also, that they were not so to glorie in their race and stock, that they should therefore vtterly despise the Gentiles.

The whole seed of Israel.] He stretcheth this seed further off, lest they should imagin it to be vnhollie restrained to the posteritie of *Abraham*. For the Lord gathers his people indifferentlie both out of *Iewes* and *Gentiles*. In this place then he speakes in generall of all mankind.

We haue further to obserue, that the Prophet saith, we are *iustified*, and shall glorie in

the Lord, for we must neither seeke *righteousnes*, nor glorie out of him. Now glorie is added, because it depends vpon righteousness, and follows it. For which cause *S. Paul* saith, Where is thy reioicing? It is excluded. By what law? of works? nay, but by the law of faith, Rom. 3.27. Also, if *Abraham* were *iustified* by works, he had wherein to glorie, but not with God, Rom. 4.2. It followes then, that those shall iustly glorie, who seeke their *iustification* in God only, acknowledging that in themselves there is no matter at all of reioicing.

Those iustly glorie that seeke their iustice in God only.

Neither righteousness nor glorie out of God.

THE XLVI. CHAPTER.

* Or, quite ouerthrow.

* Or, Mares.

* Or, throwne downe.

Verf. 1. *Bel* is bowed downe: Nebo is fallen: their Idols were vpon the beasts, and vpon the * Cattell: they which did beare you were * laden with a wearie burden.*

The coherence of the sentences rather to be considered now and then in this prophesie, then the diuision of the Chapters.



Leah continues forth his former argument; for we must not stande ouer-stricke vpon the diuiding of the Chapters, in regard they were not alwaies aptly obserued: but we are rather to consider of the sentences which cohere very well, as I haue said; notwithstanding, if any had rather haue it the beginning of a new Sermon, in regard that he forthwith speaks of the ruine of *Babylon*, I do not much contradict him. *Bel* and *Nebo*, were Idols which the *Chaldeans* worshipped, and it is very likely they were their chiefe patrons,

Idolaters will alwaies make choice of some principall patrons.

for *Idolaters* alwaies make choice of some principall gods, vnder whose protection they thinke to be safe. Wee may also coniecture that this *Nebo* was an inferior god, added to the great god *Bel*, as *Mercurie* was to *Iupiter*. And vnder the names of these two the Prophet also comprehends all other Idols, foretelling by the spirit of prophesie that all the abominable Idolatries and superstitions of the *Gentiles* should be abolished, when God (hauing subdued y^e *Idolaters* vnder his feet) shall in triumph leade them captiues, for then it should be manifest to all that he was the iust auenger of his Church. The *Chaldeans* proudly boasted of the protection they had vnder their false gods; but the Prophet refutes this vaine confidence, saying, that the God of *Israel* will not content himselfe only to roote out the prophane people, but will also ouerthrow all their gods to their vtter shame and disgrace.

And therefore he saith, that they shall be borne vpon mares, in regard they should be throwne into some cart, or other to be transported and tumbled vpon heapes together as it pleased the carters to dispose of them: that is it which he signifies by the word *pus downe*, because the souldiers should lay all the

gods on heapes which were so highly aduanced before. And no doubt but this was accomplished when the *Medes* and *Persians* tooke *Babylon*: for the Monarchie being translated to them, these Idols also were taken away as part of the spoile. Now howsoeuer *Isaiah* prophesied these things in respect of the *Babylonians*, yet doubtles he specially aimed at the coming of *Christ* in the flesh, at whose appearance all Idolatries and superstitions should be abolished. For when his kingdome is once established, all Idols forthwith fall to the ground, for it is not possible that false religion and superstitions can stand with his true knowledge: he expels all darknes with his brightnes, so as he leaues no roome neither for the false gods, nor anie of their seruices: for what communion hath light with darknes, or *Christ* with *Belial*? as *S. Paul* saith, 2. Cor. 6.15.

But withall we must obserue that the Prophet respected the time in which the *Jewes* were held prisoners: for they saw the *Chaldeans* perfume their Idols, and attributed vnto them a soueraigne power, as if the issue of all things had bin at the beck of these puppets, and in the meane while they scorned the God of the *Jewes*, as if he had bin insufficient to defend his people, (or if he were) yet that he did not much regard them. He shewes then that there shall be such a change, that the gods of the *Chaldeans* which were highly exalted should fall, and that the true God who seemed to be throwne to the earth shall be exalted, and shall reuenge the outrages done vnto his seruants.

Verf. 2. *They are bowed downe, and fallen together, for they could not rid them of the burden, and their soule is gone into captiuitie.*

The Prophet derides the vanitie of these goodly gods, who had neither strength nor motion, neither were they able to stand vpon their feet, nor to defend themselves, seeing the poore beasts were faine to carrie them. Heere is a close opposition then betweene their Idols, and the true God, who stands in no need of any help at all. But the Prophet to their further disgrace adds, that

Where *Christes* kingdom is established, there all Idols fall to the ground. See 1. Sam. 5.4.

A close opposition betweene the true God, and Idols.

the *mares* (where of hee ſpeakes in this verſe) were *hewed downe* with the burden, of which they would gladly haue *rid themſelues*. And thus theſe falſe gods, after they ſuffered their worſhippers to bee deprived of them, were now become troubleſome to the poore brut beaſts.

Their ſoule.] It is an Hebrew phraſe; by which the Prophet mocks theſe Gods who had neither ſenſe, nor any vnderſtanding at all. He ſpeakes it then by way of contempt againſt the vaine and dumbe Idols; to wit, that *they and their ſoule* were led into captiuitie.

But let vs ſee if this may not as well be re-torted vpon the true God, whoſe Arke was raken by the Philiftims, 1.Sam.4.11. which was the *ſigne of his preſence*: for thus it ſeemed, that *the Lord himſeife* was in a maner led priſoner.

The answer to this obiection is eaſie. For howſoeuer the Lord meant that the Arke ſhould be a teſtimonie of his preſence, yet he forbade the Iewes to reſt in it, but commanded them to liſt vp their eies to heauen, and there to ſeek and adore him: for as hee is a ſpirit, ſo meant hee alwaies to be ſerued ſpiritually. The Arke then was not worſhipped in Gods ſtead, but was a *ſigne* by which the people were led as by the hand, to ſet their affection on things aboue, euen vpon the Lord himſeife: contrariwiſe, the Gentiles doted onelic vpon their puppets, and attributed vnto them a diuine power. Wee may alſo affirme, that the Philiftims were at laſt well ſcourged for their preſumption; ſo as they felt how they had to deale with the true God: 1.Sam. 5.7.

But this answer may ſeeme inſufficient; becauſe the Lord ſuffered his Arke to be in contempt for a time, as it plainly appears by the courſe of the hiſtory: 1.Sam. 5. 6. Thus then the true ſolution is; that *howſoeuer the Lord communicates himſeife vnto vs by ſignes and ſacraments, yet hee vrill be ſought of vs in heauen*. Moreover, himſeife had foretold by memorable prophecies, that the Philiftims in their conqueſt led him not priſoner, but that hee willingly expoſed his Arke as a pray to his enemies, to auenge him of the wickedneſſes of the people. Alſo when the Temple was deſtroied and burnt, and the veſſels carried into Babylon, the Iewes could not be ignorant but the ſame God which they had worſhipped in Ieruſalem, was the authour of this chaſtiſement, in regard hee had ſo often foretold that by his Prophets, which then came to paſſe.

Verſ. 3. Heare yee mee, O houſe of Iacob, and all that remaine of the houſe of Iſrael, which are borne of mee from the wombe, and brought vp of mee from the birrh.

The Prophet heere elegantly ſhewes what great difference there is betwene the true God and Idols: for hee ſaid before, that the gods of the Babylonians ſhould be carried

upon carts, and drawne by beaſts, becauſe they were dead ſtockes: heere hee attributes a far higher prerogatiue vnto the God of Iſrael; to wit, that *he carried his people, as the mother carries the child in the wombe; which being borne, ſhee alwaies carries in her boſome*. Now hee calles the Iewes to giue care, that they might make answer from their owne experience; for they ought to be the more affected, in regard they had ſele by the effects, that God had continually ſupported both *them and their burdens*. He ſerch a very fit oppoſition then, and from the former words thus concludes; Acknowledge and confeſſe indeed that I am the true God, and in nothing like vnto Idols, which are vaine things, and dead burthens: adde alſo, that in regard of my continuall benefites, which I haue neuer ceaſed to powre vpon you from *your birrh*, you cannot be ignorant, but muſt needs know the greatneſſe of my power. For the Lord is not onely powerfull for himſeife, but extends it to all his creatures, that we might truly feele the efficacy thereof.

Which are borne of mee from the wombe.] This ſimilitude, by which God compares himſeife to a mother that leaues her child in her wombe, is very fitting for his purpoſe. Now he ſpeaks of the time paſt, in which hee began to giue vnto his people teſtimonies of his grace: vntleſſe any had rather expound theſe wordes more ſtriſtly, to wit, that God hath in mercie advanced them, and borne them in his armes as a child borne of his mother: Pſal. 22.9, 10. But becauſe God began not onely to be a nurſing father to this people from their naturall birrh, but alſo begat them ſpiritually; it is not amiſſe to extend his ſpeech euen to that, to wit, that they iſued as it were out of Gods wombe, into *newneſſe of liſe*, and to the hope of the eternall inheritance.

If any obiect that God is euery where called a Father: Ier. 31.9. Mal. 1.6. and that this title properly belongs vnto him: I answer, that Gods loue is ſo incomprehenſible vnto his Church, that all the ſimilitudes in the world are inſufficient to expreſſe the ſame. For it is a thing that hath many branches, yea infinite and vnmeaſurable; ſo as if all the benefites that witneſſe true friendſhip, were gathered into one, yet exceeds all that can be thought or ſpoken of: there is no ſimilitude therefore that can expreſſe his ineffable loue.

If we onely vnderſtand it, that from the time God begat them, hee hath borne and tenderly nourished them in his boſome: this will well ſute with that which is written in the ſong of Moſes, *Hee nourished and carried them, as the Eagle doth her litle ones vpon her wings*: Deut 32.11. To be ſhort, the Prophets meaning is, that vnleſſe the Iewes forget their originall, they muſt of neceſſitie conclude, that they were not begotten in vaine, but that God, who hath performed vnto them the office of a *louing father and mother*, will neuer leaue them, but alwaies will aſſiſt them. And beſides, that by continuall ſucceſſion of time, they ſo felt his power, that they were at

Wee may iuſtifie God to be the true God by our owne experience.

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Obiect.

Anſ.

No ſimilitude or borrowed ſpeech ſufficient to expreſſe Gods infinite loue to his children.

See verſe 1.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Iohn 4. 23.

Col. 3. 1.

Obiect.

Anſ.

1. Sam. 3. 11.

A concluſion vpon theſe premiſes.

no hand to doe any homage to Idols.

Chap. 10. 21. When hee mentions the *remainder*, it is to shew, as wee noted before, that the greater part by their rebellion, made a defectio from the Church: and thus the hope of the redemption, appertained but to a small handfull. For this cause he craues *audience*, because the vnbelleuours were become no lesse deafe at his voice, then the prophane nations. Now howsoeuer the estate of the people at that time was far from perfection, and that the *remnants* of this dispersed people, was exceeding small, yet the Lord commands them to consider how miraculously they were persecuted and kept vnto that instant; that so they should not doubt but hee would continue a louing father and mother vnto them in like manner for the time to come. And in that he requires them to *hearken* to his speech, hee shewes that the true and onely remedie of all our miseries consists in depending vpon Gods mouth, and in hearkening to the promises of his grace: for then we shall haue strength enough to beare all our afflictions. As on the contrary, there is a wide gate set open to rush vs into despaire: yea, and to expect nothing but ruine and destruction, when we stop our eares, and will not heare his voice.

The true and onely way to redresse our miseries.

Verf. 4. *Therefore vnto old age I am the same, euen I will beare you vntill the hoare haues: I haue made you, I will also beare you, and I will carry you, and I will deliuer you.*

God not onely begins, but perfects the worke of his grace in vs.

I Expound this particle *Van*, *Wherefore*: which wee are diligently to obserue. For thus he concludes; I haue begotten you and brought you forth; yea I haue borne you in mine armes, whilest you were yet in your swaddling clouts: and therefore I will be the protector of your life euen vnto the end. And thus *Dauid* reasons; Thou, O Lord, diddest draw me out of the wombe, thou gauest me hope euen at my mothers breasts. I was cast vpon thee euen from the wombe: thou art my God from my mothers belly: Psal. 22. 9, 10. God promiseth the Iewes then, that hee will alwaies be a father vnto them. The Lord, saith *Dauid*, will finish the good worke he hath begun in me: thy mercies, O Lord, indure for euer; therefore thou wilt not forsake the worke of thine owne hands: Psal. 138. 8.

This word, *I*, (six times repeated) is of great weight in my judgement, although the interpreters expound it simply as a pronoun demonstratiue. But it signifies heere not onely Gods eternall essence, and that he will euer be like himselfe; but it is also spoken in regard of vs, shewing that wee shall alwaies find him one and the same.

Where hee saith vnto *old age*: this might seeme a strange speech, seeing we grow to be perfect men, after God hath once drawne vs out of our childhood. But let every one examine his owne strength as he ought, and we shall easilie perceiue, that none of vs haue so profited, but we shall still feele that God had need to vphold vs daily by his power: for o-

therwise the most perfect would fall downe flat at euery turne. Which *Dauid* also expresseth in Psal. 71. Cast me not off O Lord in the time of mine old age, forsake me not when my strength faileth.

I haue made you, I will also beare you. He reuencs the same argument againe: as if he should say; God will not looke to your deserts, but to his owne worke: and therefore will continue forth his grace towards you. Hence we may thus conclude; Seeing thou hast not onely created vs to be men, but also *to be thy children*, thou wilt doubtlesse continue to beare *that affection to vs*, which fathers and mothers doe towards their children, and wilt alwaies haue care ouer vs.

Verf. 5. *To Whom will yee make mee like, or make me equall, or compare mee, that I should be like him?*

The Prophet brings in the Lord here complaining of the Iewes, for distrusting his power and goodnesse; as also for comparing him with Idols: nay, for abasing him beneath the. For in seeing the Chaldeans to haue the world at will, they iudged themselues hopelesse, and that the memorie of the covenant was so abolished, as if there had been no God left in heauen to haue taken care of them. The Lord takes vp a complaint therefore against them, in that hee perceiued they attributed some power to the Idols, and in so doing, obscured his regall authoritic. He handled the same argument in the 42. & 43. Chapters, and in those that follow: and therefore we haue the lesse need now to insist any longer vpon euery word. That they should not measure Gods power then, by the view of things present, hee commands them to raise vp their mindes higher. The like aduertisement were fit to be made to vs at this day, if in beholding the prosperitie of the Papiists, we should therefore imagiue that they had the true religion on their side: for otherwise, what were it but to compare the liuing God with Idols? This circumstance is diligently to be noted, because many expositors baulking, and neglecting it, doe lessen the weight of this sentence: for they thinke the Prophet cries out onely against the superstitious, who attribute some diuinitie to wood and stone, because Gods glory is defamed, when hee is compared to dead Images. I nothing doubt therefore but hee taxeth their peruerse judgement, and crooked conceits, wherewith the people were transported and carried away in aduersitie, to thinke that God respected the Babylonians about them. For, if God had fauoured the Babylonians, it would thereupon haue followed, that hee had also approoued of their idolatry: and thus his glory should haue been giuen from him, vnto senselesse creatures. To conclude, hence we may gather a general doctrine (as *S. Paul* fitly applies it, Act. 17. 25.) that God is robbed of his honor, when we liken him to dumbe and vaine Idols.

We must not thinke the better of Idolaters because they seeme to prosper in their sinne.

A generall doctrine.

Verf. 6. *They draw gold out of the b.se,*

bag, weigh silver in the ballance, and hire a Goldsmith to make a god of, and they bow downe and worship it.

7. They beare it upon the shoulders; they carry him and set him in his place: so doth he stand, and cannot remove from his place. Though one cry unto him, yet he cannot answer, nor deliuer him out of his tribulation.

The Prophet told vs the same thing before, which he now repeates againe, that hee might ingraue this doctrine the more deepele in our mindes: for superstition hath taken such rooting in our hearts, that it cannot bee plucked vp, valesse God wholly alter and change our nature. All that we haue heard against the folly of Idolaters, will by and by slip out of our memories, because we alwayes retaine in vs some seedes of superstition; there being nothing to which we are more inclined, then to file ourselues in this dunghill. Hee saith then that to forge Idols, one prouides stufte, another imployes his art and skill to fashion it: & thus there must be two fathers of whom these Idols are begotten: first, the rich churle, who *disburseth the gold, or silver*: secondly, the Goldsmith, who giues a forme vnto them. And now behold a new forged god.

Wherin he plainly taxeth the senselesnesse of those that secke a godhead in their purses, and in the hands of the artificer. For who would imagine that from so sudden a change, men would prostitute themselues before a piece of metall, hauing put some shape vnto it, according to their owne fantasies? For it is such a god, as stands them in so much the stufte, and so much the fashioning.

The particule *Apb*, put before the verbe *To worship*, sets out this their madnesse: for there might be some excuse which deserued to be pardoned, it being suddenly overtaken with this error, they should fall downe and worship some false god: but these persisted obstinately in their frensie.

This bowing and *worshipping* being added after the former circumstances, doth much aggravate the obstinacie, and shewes that they were vterly bewitched. This blockishnesse then, as I haue said, is too grosse, when men will worshipping a god forged with their owne hands.

The same amplification is added in the verse following; *They beare it upon the shoulders, &c.* For being deprived of all common sense, they runne and cry for helpe to such gods: and must they not needs be starke bedlems then?

Verf. 8. Remember this, and be ashamed: bring it againe to mind, O ye transgressors.

This verse is expounded two waies; to wit, that God speaks both to the Iews & Gentiles. For such as are but meanly instructed in

the Law, are easilie deceiued, in y they quench the knowledge of God hath kindled in their vnderstandings. Again, there is no man but hath some seedes of religion sown in his heart by the very light of nature: but he either choketh it by his infidelitie, or corrupts and marres the same by his own inuentions. In this sense then we may refer it to all mankind in generall. But I had rather retaine the other sense, and the very scope of the text requires it. For by and by after, he addes such things as appertaines to none but to y Iewes, whom he here calles *transgressors*. For they were throwne down with a very little blast of temptation, and were euolted from the true God: as if their seuentie yeeres captiuitie must needs haue blotted all the benefits of so many hundred yeeres out of their hearts. In regard then that they had troden vnder foote all right ascription of pietie, he sharply taxeth their ingratitude, in that they were to easilie slid into superstitions.

When hee commands them to *returne into their hearts*, it is to shew that they were not well in their wits before. Others translate, Bring backe; which is nothing at all to the purpose, because euen now he commanded them to *remember*, and wil repeat it by and by in the verse following. He brings them now then to their *owne hearts*, in regard the forgetfulness of Gods former benefits proceeded from a kind of follie.

Be ashamed. Others translate, Be strong, or of good courage: and thus they drawing it from the word *Isb*, which signifies to behaue a mans selfe valiantly. Others, from *Ashish*: which is as much to say, as foundatio. As if he should say; Bee of good courage; thinke not that I will destitute you of conuenient succour. But I rather agree with Saint *Jerom*, who draws it from the word *Esh*, which signifies fire: for it better suites after their shame is discouered, that they should *blush* as red as fire, then to be valiant or of good courage. And yet I giue euery one leaue to chuse which of the readings he likes best. He would they should *blush* for shame then, in regard of their carelesnesse, vnthankfulnesse, and wickednes, that afterwards they might *runne vnto God*.

Verf. 9. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is nothing like me.

This is the exposition of the former sentence, for hee shewes more fully that which he was speaking of before; to wit, that God hath shewed sufficient testimonies of his power and maiestie; not onely for two or three yeeres past, but of old. For he had continued his benefits, & had made them to feele the tokens of his fauour in a constant course continually. Thence hee gathers that the signes of his Deitie were sufficient to hold them from turning out of the right way. We haue also to obserue that hee contents not himselfe to be called *God*, but to be acknowledged the *only God*, as we haue said before,

uolued for to light an

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S. Ierom;

An expositio of the former sentence.

God the only God.

Two fathers of whom Idols are begotten.

A goodly God, that stands men in, so much the stufte, & so much the forming.

* Or, returne into your heart.

The Iewes reproued for hauing re-

He will therefore be separated from all gods that men forge, that we may whollie rest our felicitie in him: for he no sooner receiues any to be a companion with him, but his throne will be made either to totter, or to fall quicke downe: for there must be one only God, or none at all.

Verf. 10. Which declare the last things from the beginning, and from of old the things that were not done, saying, My counsell shall stand, and I will do what soeuer I will.

An amplification.

Now he shewes more at large after what manner he would haue y^e Lewes to thinke of the time past, to wit, because they were dayly instructed by continuall prophesies so farre forth as was expedient. But hauing made this preface, he comes in the next place to mention the hope of their deliuerance. Neither are we to wonder that he repeats one thing so oft, because it was a matter whereof they could hardly be perswaded, for the people were not only slow to believe, but with their infidelitie they joined rebellion. He admonisheth them then that they had bin often saughes for a long time together, how safe a thing it is to trust in God, who doth not so much commend his foreknowledge vnto them, as to shew what he had ordeined to fall out by the ministrie of his Prophets. Neither had there bin any truth nor steadfastnes at all in the prophesies, vnlesse the same God which had foreordeined this or that to come to passe, had not also the euents thereof in his owne power. And withall he aduertiseth them that in all prophesies he spake nothing but the truth: for he published his decrees, to the end they should not doubt to rest boldly therein as soone as the Prophets had spoken. But because I haue handled these things largely before, therefore I touch them the more briefly for the present.

Verf. 11. I call* a bird from the East, and the man of my counsell from farre; as I haue spoken, so will I bring it to passe: I haue purposed it, and I will do it.

Or, the thought.

An application of the generall doctrine to a particular vs.

Cyrus.

The Prophet hauing spoken of the presence and power of God, now applies his generall speech to a particular vs, for he meanes to comfort the Lewes: to wit, that they were not in such perpetuall slaueerie vnder y^e Babylonians, as that no hope were left them touching their deliuerance. He now comes to a specialtie then, and promisseth that Cyrus shall come with haste, howsoeuer ic seeme impossible in the eyes of flesh and blood. Where I haue translated the word *Aais*, thoughts, almost all the Interpreters translate *Bird*, which is the true signification of the word: but because we may gather out of the second of *Daniel*, verse 14. that it is sometimes taken for counsell, or thought, I had rather follow this interpretation, which is also ap-

proved by certaine Hebrues: yet it may be, the Prophet therein alludes to a *bird*; as if he should say, It shall be a swift thought or counsell; neither do I denie but he notes the swiftnes of Cyrus his voyage.

Where he calles *Cyrus*, the man of his counsell, it is a repetition much vsed amongst the Hebrues, whereby also it appeares, that the word *Aais* is put in y^e first member for thoughts, or decree. Now he calles him a man of his counsell, because he shal be the executioner of this iudgement. Notwithstanding if any had rather retaine the word *Bird*, I will not gainsay him, in regard of the neere affinity that is betwene the similitudes: for *Cyrus* his coming was so sudden and vnexpected, as that he seemed to come flying as a *bird*. He besieged and tooke Babylon whilest the Chaldeans thought all passages were shut against him. Also, if this interpretation be better liked, we may say that *Isaiah* alludes to those diuinations which they made from the flying of Birds, whereunto the Chaldeans were exceedingly giuen: for as they practised iudiciall Astronomie, so obserued they the flying & chirping of Birds; thinking that herein consisted a certaine knowledge of things to come, but the Lord tells them he will send a bird which they could not foresee. Notwithstanding, the first exposition contents me best, to wit, that he hath respect to the swift passage of *Cyrus*, signifying, that the waies can not be so shut vp, nor the fortresses so strong, that they should hinder him fro approaching suddenly vnto Babylon.

Iudiciall Astronomie.

Where he addes from the East, it serues not only to make the promise certaine, but also to assure the Lewes that no distance of way should be able to let or foreflow this worke of God, and therefore by way of exposition he addes in the second member, from farre. Hence let vs learne to what end we ought to referre all that which we read of Gods presence or power in the holy scriptures, for these things are not said to hold vs in suspence, but to the end we might the better applye them to our vs.

He also closely opposeth Gods counsell to our thoughts. Why so? Because he will so deliuer his Church, that men shall not be able to conceiue the reason thereof in their minds. Howsoeuer then that which God promisseth seemes incredible, yet he shewes that he will easily open himselfe a way, to the end wee should not measure his incomprehensible counsels within the narrow scantling of our reason.

I haue thought it. Others translate, I haue formed it: but I thinke the verb *Ias* agrees best, being taken here for *to thinke*. He therefore confirms that which he said before, to wit, that this was thus ordeined of him before, and therefore should remaine steadfast and inuolable. And whereas he addes, *As I haue spoken, so will I bring it to passe*, it is as much as if he had said, that he foretold nothing in vaine, and that this prophesie which was published at his commandement, ought to be accounted of, as if it were alreadie accomplished. He hath put this first member

then to gaine credit to his words : and then hee addes in the second, *but I say*, with his word preached : which we are diligently to observe, because we are tolled with diuers distractions, doubting whether God hath spoken in good earnest or no; because we imagine him to be such a one as our selues; that is to say, (in plaine English) an hypocrite, or a dissembler. But he protests that nothing proceeds from him, but that which hath issued from his mature deliberations: so as the preaching of the word, is no other thing but an assured testimonie of his secret counsels, which he hath purposed to manifest vnto vs. As oft then as the Lord vtters his voyce, wee ought to build vpon the assured accomplishment of it.

Verf. 12. *Heare yee mee, yee stubborn hearted that are farre from iustice.*

HE sharply rebukes the Iewes againe, who would neither giue credence vnto God, nor receive any consolations at all in their aduersities. This was a galling reprehension, which no doubt went very neere the quicke : but they well deserved it, in regard neither threatning, nor promise of God, were it neerer so sweete and amiable, was auailable to tame them. These two epithetes which he heere vseth, are to be noted: whereby hee giues vs to vnderstand, that the afflicted and miserable, shut vp the passage of Gods helpe from them by their owne rebellion. For by their murmurings and grudgings, they shake off the feare of God, and in thus doing, ruth themselves headlong into such desperate courses, that they make open war vpon him. Now he speaks to the Iewes, who were ready to burst with malice and pride : notwithstanding afflictions oppressed them to the utmost. And thus hauing shaken off the feare of God, they fell into open raging, which [I would to God] many among vs were not guiltie of, who wax worse by their calamities. Thus then they would accept of no remedie nor medicine at all to cure their euils, if any would haue the word *iustice* to bee taken heere for Gods succor, as in the verse following; I leaue it free for them so to doe : for it is no strange thing to see the *obstinat*, who repell Gods, and reiect his grace, to bee vnable to rest vpon his sweete promises, or not to suffer that any should doe them good, albeit helpe bee offered them.

Verf. 13. *I will bring neere my iustice : it shall not be farre off, and my saluation shall not tarry : for I will giue saluation in Zion, and my glorie vnto Israel.*

IF any had rather retaine that which I was saying; to wit, that such as are farre from iustice, and vncapable of Gods grace, are here

called to repentance, the sense will bee all one : but if wee say that the Iewes were *farre from iustice*, in regard they were giuen vp to a dissolute behauiour as men past grace, then there is an apt opposition betwene the *iustice* of God, and the *iustice* of men. Although the Iewes there were farre from iustice, and had cast off all studie of pietie; yet God affirms, that his *iustices* neere. As if he should say; I must confesse incredulitie is a maine let and hinderance, yet shall it not hinder me in the end from manifesting the force of my truth. What though some did not beleue, saith *Paul* ? shall their vnbeliefs make the truth of God without effect ? God forbid. Rom. 3.3. Yea, let God bee true, and euerie man a lier. And to say the truth, if he did not overcome mens stubbornnesse by his goodness, wee should incontinently perish. For which of vs receiues the bounty of God, or his grace when hee offers the same, as wee ought? Doth hee withdraw his mercy or his truth from vs? It is for no other cause, but for that we be *farre from iustice*. Contrariwise, though we resist him, yet he drawes neere vnto vs, that he may manifest his *iustice*, albeit we be vtterly vnworthy of it. Yet he doth this in such wise, as the wicked receiue no fruit at all by it. For the Prophet comprehends not those cursed apostataes, as if this saluation promised belonged vnto them; but only affirms, that God hath meanes ready to make his iustice appeare.

But heere it is needfull for vs to consider in what state this people stood, to whom this speech was directed. They were all in a manner tainted with the sinne of infidelitie, and those that rested vpon the promises were but very few : euen the elect sometimes shewed themselves but too *obstinat*; so as they seemed to be no lesse infected with this contagion then the rest. He raxeth them all in generall then, as well to conuince the reprobates, as to galle the elect, and to bring them into the right way. But he chiefly sets himselfe against the rebels, as I haue said, who obstinately and *stubbornly* reiect all hope of grace.

And my saluation.] Heereby it appeares what he meant by the word *iustice*; to wit, the help and succour of God promised in sic and due season to his people. He takes *iustice* and *saluation* then, for one and the same thing, because it is an excellent testimony of Gods iustice, when he conserues and protects his distressed ones. It is not added superfluously, that it shall not be far off, and shall not tarry : for heerein he expresseth Gods exceeding great mercie, in that he will finish the course of his *iustice*, albeit the people should resist the same.

And vwill put.] The letter *Vau*, is heere put for a particule of rendering the cause, thus; For I will put. Now this is a confirmation of the former sentence : as if hee should say; Seeing the Lord hath once determined to saue Ierusalem, shee cannot be disappointed of such a benefit. He ioines his *glorie* with the *saluation* of the faithfull : as also *Saint Paul* takes the

Gods promise and the performance goe together.

The rebellious nature of the Iewes described.

man, and the iustice of God.

Why God with drawes his fauour from vs for a time.

All are gone out of the way.

Note Gods great clemency.

An opposition betwene the iustice of

Gods glory
and our sal-
uation lincked
together.

word *glory*, for mercy: Eph. 1.6, and 3.16. For then Gods *glory* shines fully, when he draws his children out of the bands of death, and

sets them at libertie, because hee will haue the *saluation* of his Church and his *justice*, to be conioyned with an indissoluble knot.

THE XLVII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Come downe and sit in the dust, O Virgin, daughter Babel, sit on the ground: there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou shalt no more be called Tender and delicate.*

Gods decre
put in exe-
cution.



Ow *Isaiah* sets that downe at large, which hee mentioned before touching Gods counsell, and the execution thereof. For hee speaks here in plaine termes of *Babylons fall*, be-

Babylons
fall.

I
2

cause there was little or no hope that the people should euer returne, as long as the Babylonical Monarchie flourished. He therefore conioined these two things together; to wit, the ouerthrow of this Monarchie, and the peoples deluerance which should insue. For the statelesse of this Citie was vnto the poore Iewes as a deepe graue, in which they were buried: but when the Lord opened it, then the peoples first life was as it were restored to them afresh. In that hee commands her to *come downe*: it hath greater weight in it then if he had directly threatened the should come downe: for thus he speaks with authoritie, as if he were already set in a throne of iudgement: for he spake nothing but what he had warrant from God to deliuer; and therefore hee boldly pronounceth what should happen. And this commission wee see the Lord gaue to *Ieremias*; Behold, I haue set thee this day ouer kingdoms and nations, that thou shouldest plucke vp and destroy, and pull downe and plant: *Ier. 1. 10*. For there is no power at all that is not vnder the checke of Gods word.

No power is
high, but it is
subiect to the
authoritie of
Gods word.

Lastly, his meaning is to bring the Iewes as it were, to view the thing done, for they could not without much difficultie conceiue how this change should happen, vnlesse God should destroy their enemies with thunder & lightning from heauen. Touching this word *daughter* of Babylon; it is a figure much vsed among the Hebrewes, when they speake of Cities and nations. He calles her *virgin*, not in regard of her chastitie or shamefastnesse, but because shee was tenderly and delicately entertained, as *virgins* be, and was not as yet forced nor rauished by the enimie, as it was said of *Zidon* in *Chap. 23. 12*. The like may be said at this day of Venice, and of other Cities flowing and abounding in riches and pleasures: in which regard, they seeme most

happy in the cies of the world. But they haue no lesse cause to feare the change of their estate, then the Babylonians, howsoeuer they seeme now to be far off from danger. For thou shalt be no more: that is to say, those that esteemed thee happy, shall reioice no more with thee for thy prosperitie.

Verf. 2. *Take the millstones, and grindmeale: lose thy lockes, make bare the feete, vncover the leg, and passe throw the floods.*

ALL this description tends to this end, namely, that Chaldea shall taste of a wonderfull change. For this Citie which before was in great honour, shall bee brought into extreme dishonour, and euery way put to such *drudgerie*, that all shall perceiue euident and apparant signes of Gods wrath therein. Behold then the marks of a most seruile bondage, *Take the millstones, and grindmeale*. For they were wont in ancient time, to put slaues of the basest and abiectest condition to the mill. Their condition then must needs bee miserable, when they were held no better then *horses*: for in warre, those that got the conquest, handled some of their prisoners with much better respect. But heere the Prophet propounds nothing before the Chaldeans, but a wofull condition in all points, to the end the faithfull might assure themselues that they should goe forth freely; when the Chaldeans, who held them captiues, should themselues be captiuated. Now howsoeuer we reade not that the great states of the land were thus dishonourably vsed, yet it sufficed for the accomplishment of the prophecie; that *Cyru* suffering them to inioy some base offices, made them vncapeable of any rule or authority, by constraining them to cease from all honest exercises, and liberall sciences.

Notes of
extreme
slauerie.

The righteous
escape out of trouble,
and the wicked shall
come in his stead: *Prou.
11. 8*.

And because they ouerflowed in voluptuousnesse, by the *lockes* hee alludes to the trimmings of virgins. We know they are but too curious in trieking and setting out their haire. *Isaiah* therefore on the contrarie describes here a *dressing* far discrepant from the former; to wit, that from the head downe to the feete, they should be couered with ignominie, with filth and mire, in stead of that braue and costly attire they were wont to weare. Maidens and virgins will scarcely bee seene to passe through the streets, much lesse through high waies: but the Chaldeans must passe throw the floods, and that with the thigh or leg vncovered.

Virgins be
too curious in
setting forth
their haire.

Venice.

Verf. 3.

Verſ. 3. *Thy ſilthines ſhall be diſcovered, and thy ſhame ſhall be ſeene: I will take vengeance, and I will not meet thee as a man.*

The con-
cluſion.

THis is the concluſion of the former ſentence, as if he ſhould ſay, As long as Babylon flouriſhed ſhe kept her reputation, and was greatly eſteemed: for oftentimes vnder riches and authoritie there lie many vices, as vnder vailles, which being taken away, the ſilth is diſcovered to the great ſhame of the parties, as Demosthenes ſpeaking of Philip king of Macedon ſaith,

Whileſt mens bodies are in good plight, the weaknes which is hidden in ſome of the members is not eſpied, but if the body fall into any dangerous ſicknes, then all is out of order, heere is a breach felt, there is a ſinew periſhed, or ſomewhat elſe out of ſure.

A ſaying of Demothe-
mes, ſpeaking of the eſtate of Philip king of Ma-
cedonia.

The ſame we ſee to happen in kingdomes, Common-wealths, and Cities ill governed; for the ſilth and corruption which before was covered vnder the glorie of their eſtates, being now a little troubled, are diſcovered; when their pomp and riches are taken from them, then their cruelties, treaſons, robberies, periuries, vniuſt taxes, and other impieties, by which they purchaſed to themſelues honour in time of proſperitie, begin to turne to their diſhonour in the time of aduerſitie.

A Simile.

I will take vengeance, and will not meet thee as a man.] It is as much as if he ſhould ſay, Think not thou haſt to do in this caſe with a mortall man, whoſe violence thou mayſt reſiſt: for in other places, where mention is made of *mans hand*, it ſignifies a kinde of moderation. But here the Prophet ſhewes that the Chaldeans ſhall find no reliefe at all, becauſe God will vtterlie roote them out. Others tranſlate, *I will not meet a man*, that is to ſay, I will accept of no man that ſhall in-treat for them: Let who will come forth and intercede for theſe, yet I will not remit their fault, neither leſſen nor adſwage the puniſhment one whit. This ſenſe agrees well, but it is a little conſtrained, in regard of the diſpoſition of the words: for thus, the verb *Paga*, which ſignifies to goe before, muſt be taken in the paſſiue ſignification, which cannot be. Moreouer, the Prophet ſaith not ſimply that God will not be intreated, but that he will not be appeaſed. Thus the firſt expoſition ſutes beſt, if we conſider rightlie of the order of the words: yet euery one may follow whether of the ſenſes he will, for take which you liſt, the ſumme will be, that the Lord will ree them out without pittie or mercie; only this I ſay, the firſt expoſition likes me well, becauſe it agrees beſt with the text.

Verſ. 4. *Our redeemer, the Lord of hoſts is his name, the holy one of Iſrael.*

The end of Gods iudge-
ment is to ma-
niſeſt himſelfe the
redeemer of
his Church.

THE Prophet ſhewes to what end God would take vengeance vpon the Chaldeans, euen in regard of the peoples ſalutation, as he ſaid in Chap. 45. 4. But this ſentence hath much greater force in it, in regard it

comes abruptly, and as one wakening himſelfe out of a dreame when he ſaw Babylon ruined, which before made it her trade to ſubdue and treade other nations vnder her feet. And he ſhewes that this ſhall come to paſſe for none other cauſe, but to the end the Lord may manifeſt himſelfe to be the redeemer and auenger of his people.

The holy one of Iſrael.] As if he ſhould ſay, This people was not elect, nor ſeparated from other nations in vaine: his meaning is then to ſet forth a teſtimonic of his power in this particular, and that is the reaſon why he ioines this title *holy* vnto it.

Verſ. 5. *Sit ſtill and get thee into darknes, o daughter of the Chaldeans; for thou ſhalt no more be called, The Lady of kingdomes.*

HE continues on the ſame argument ſtill, and ſhewes, that the end of the Chaldean Monarchy draws neere. But becauſe this ſeemed ſomewhat incredible, hee repeats the ſame thing in many words, which he might haue diſpatched in one ſentence. He vſeth theſe deſcriptions then to ſet the thing done (as it were) before them. Where he bids them *ſit ſtill* and be quiet, it is in ſigne of ſhame and contempt. And yet this ſilence may be oppoſed to her firſt eſtate, wherein ſhe reigned as a Lady: for then ſhe not only liſted vp her voice with authoritie like a Miſtris, but ſhe cauſed her words to giue ſuch a ſound, that the noiſe thereof terrified all the Eaſt. Now the Prophet commands her to ſit ſtill and leaue her cackquet, in regard her condition is ſo changed, that where ſhe was wont to ſpeake ſo loude before, ſhe ſhall not dare now to mutter one word diſtinctlie from betwene her teeth.

By how much the more the peoples deli-
uerance ſeemed incre-
dible, by ſo much the more is the Prophet forced to ſet it forth by ſundry deſcriptions.

Now in that he bids her *enter into darknes*, I willinglie receiue the firſt expoſition: for thoſe who are fallen from a proſperous eſtate into aduerſitie, ſit downe and put their mouthes in the duſt with ſhame, and dare ſcarce ſo much as gasp. *For thou ſhalt no more be called.* We know that this Monarchy had a large extent, and was Lady ouer many great kingdomes, for ſhe was the head of all dominions, it was needfull then that theſe poore captiues ſhould be fortified with theſe promiſes, and aduertised of Babylons ruine, that they might be put in hope of their deliuerance.

Verſ. 6. *I was wroth with my people: I haue polluted mine inheritance, and giuen them into thine hand: thou diſt ſhew them no mercy, but thou diſt lay the very heauie yoke vpon the ancient.*

THIS is a preuention, whereby he admoniſheth the Iewes (as he often hath done heretofore) that their captiuitie was a ſcurge inflicted vpon them by God: for if the ſtroke had come from the hand of another, then the remedie had not bin in him. That they might

A preuen-
tion.

be perswaded then that he which had smitten them was able to heale them, he wills them to impute it to the desert of their owne finnes that they were so hardly dealt withall; yet he exhorts them to hope well, in regard God was minded to keepe a measure in chastising of them; and withall toucheth the *cause* why the Chaldeans should be ouerthrowne, namely, that God, who is the iust reuenger of wrongs and iniuries, hath much more iust cause to reuenge the outrages done to his people. Besides, in the first member he calles the Iewes to repentance, in regard they had drawne all these euils vpon their heads by their owne offences. Next, he accuseth the Chaldeans, for taking vp this occasion to exercise their crueltie, as if one should steale a child whom the father had ouly commanded to be whipt with a rod. Whence it folloves that the Chaldeans insulted without cause, as if by their owne power they had subdued and led the Iewes captiue, for they should be iustly punished, in that they *cruelly misused the prisoners* whom they had vanquished.

Now whereas he saith that he was *wroth*, and therefore *polluted* his heritage, let vs not thinke that hauing changed his mind he was so farre offended as vtterly to neglect the care of his people, so as to thinke no more vpon his couenant: no, the contrarie plainly appears as well by the euent, as in that he vouchsafeth to call them *his people*, notwithstanding the greater part became Apostataes from him, and were iustly reiected of him as prophane. But in speaking thus, he had respect to his couenant, for he had ancie to the foundation and original whence they issued: so as those who came of *Abraham* according to y^e flesh, are reckoned for the people of God, albeit there were very few which were his children by the right of adoption, for all in a manner falsly challenged to themselves the title of *Abrahams* offspring. Thus the word *wroth* in scripture is not to be attributed to any passion in God, who euer desires the saluation of his people, but vnto vs, who prouoke him by our wickednesses. For he hath iust cause to be angrie, albeit he ceaseth not still to loue vs. He so *prophanes* his Church then, that is to say, prostitutes it, and giues it vp as a pray into the enemies hands, that neither do his elect thereby perish, nor yet is his eternall couenant violated. Nay, in the midst of his wrath he remembers mercie, Haba. 3. 2. and mitigates his blowes where-with he smites his people, and in the end will seuerely punish those that vexed them.

If the Lord *pollute* his Church then for a time: if tyrants cruellie oppresse her, let vs not be out of heart, but let vs flee to this promise, to wit, that he who *auenged himselfe* vpon the insolencie of the Chaldeans, will not let the rage of our enemies goe vnrecompenced. Morcouer we are diligentlie to obserue, that men ought not to abuse their victories, to handle their prisoners hardly, as often it falles out, for when they cast off all humanitie, they become like wild beasts, and spare neither *old nor young*, men nor women, when

they haue gotten the masterie: in a word, they vtterlie forget their condition. Now howsoeuer they abuse their power, yet wee may resolute vpon it, that God will meet with them in the end, for such shall haue iudgement mercilesse, as will shew no mercie, Iam. 2. 13.

But it may be demanded how the Chaldeans could exceed the bounds which God had prescribed them; was not God able to haue suppressed their rage? And if he were not, where is the truth of that sentence, An haire of your heads shall not fall to the ground without the will of your heavenly father? Luke 12. 7. The answer to this is easie, for howsoeuer it was not in the power of y^e Chaldeans to passe their bounds indeed, yet may we perceiue a more then brutish crueltie in them, in that they indeuored vtterly to roote out these poore helpless wretches who yeilded themselves to their mercie. The Lord complains by his Prophet *Zacharie* of the same vnruines of prophane nations, who violentlie rushed vpon his people to destroy them, though his wrath was not much moued against them. I am greatly angrie, saith he, against the carelesse heathen, for I was angrie but a little, and they helped forwards the affliction, Zach. 1. 15. Here then he amplifies their fault, in that they spared not *the ancient*, whose age naturallie procures more reuerence. Whence we may gather how insupportable their wrath was against those which resisted them.

Verf. 7. *And thou saydst, I shall be a Lady for euer, so that thou didst not see thy minde to these things, neither didst thou remember the latter end.*

HERE he taxeth the pride of the Babylonians, who promised vnto themselves a perpetuall domination, and neuer thought of any falling from their greatnes by any inconuenience that might happen. See how the childre of this world are bewitched with their prosperitie, contemning all others in respect of themselves. But *Isaiah* scores such pride, and shewes, that there is nothing more abominable in the sight of God. *To say*, is taken heere to conclude in a mans selfe of a thing: which will better appeare anon. For the proud are not wont to vtter such words in publique before euery one, but these high conceits are boiling euermore within them, although they make no shew thereof outwardly. Now this is a follie insupportable, that men will so farre forget their owne fragilitie as thus to exempt themselves from the common ranke of others, for in so doing they thinke not of what mould themselves bee made of, to wit, dust and ashes. I grant the faithfull may be secure, in regard they are prepared with patience to expect and looke for the worst that may befall them, because they are couered vnder the wings of Gods protection, and yet they are not free from feares, in regard that there is no estate

The faithfull secure, and yet not free from feares.

Wrath, not any passion in God.

God may iustly be angrie with vs, and yet loue vs.

A consolati-on of great vse.

Shew no cruelties vpon the vanquished.

permanent in this world. The prophane then lift vp their crests against God, as oft as by their fond innaginations, they promise to themselves some rest in the midst of the continuall tempests wherewith this world is tossed.

Now to set forth the Babylonians furie, he adds that the *length of time* made them neuer the more moderate. It was no great wonder if vpon hot bloud they plaid the bedlens: but to exercise their crueltie from day to day, hauing got the conquest, and to insult ouer poore captiues without ceasing, was a thing vtterly insupportable, and more then barbarous. But all this flowed from pride (as *Psal.* 55. 19. I haue said:) for they *thought of no changes*: they imagined their mountaine stood so strong, as there was no remouing or altering of their firme estate. Heere is the second reason then wherefore the Lord brought Babylons Monarchy to the ground.

Neither dost thou remember the latter end thereof. Some thinke there is a change of the person heere, but without any good ground. For mine owne part, I take it he speaks of the end of Ierusalem: and this is the most receiued opinion. For the Lord often speaks of his Church, without mentioning her name, by way of excellencie: as wee also doe, when wee would expresse the vehement affection wee beare to some that wee loue dearly. But the wicked are ignorant of the end of the Church; neither doe they know wherefore the Lord corrects her: they make themselves merry with her mournings, because they would gladly behold her vtter subuersion; neuer thinking that God cares for her.

If any obiect that the Babylonians could not know it: yet that could not excuse thē. For they could not be ignorant what God it was whom the Israelites worshipped. Whilest they thus advanced themselves then aboue the poore Iewes, and handled them so cruelie, they therein persecuted God himselfe: euen as if of set purpose, they had determined to trample both him, and the couenant which hee had made with his pebble, vnder their feete.

Verf. 8. Therefore now heare thou that art giuen to pleasures, and dwellest carelesse: seee saith in her heart; I am, and none else: I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the losse of children.

Babels intolerable pride.

HERE the Prophet threatens the Babylonians their ruin againe: wherein he vttereth very fit words to confirme the peoples hearts in good hope, lest being amazed at the prosperitie of the Chaldeans, they might happily faint, and be brought out of heart. And yet he speaks not to Babylon, as if he meant to forewarn her; but it is rather said for the consolation of the faithfull. Hee adds that she was drunken in pleasures: for howsoeuer prosperitie in it selfe is not to be condemned, in regard it is the good gift of God; yet wee are

Properitie in it selfe not to be condemned.

not ignorant how the children of this world are wont to abuse ic, by falling into riot and excess. Moreouer, hee now toucheth in a word, what it was which she said in her selfe in the former verse; to wit, a secret perswasion, whereby shee concluded that things should come thus and thus to passe. For so the proud are wont to doe, howsoeuer for modesties sake they dissemble and couer ic, because they would not that euery one should be priuie thereto.

I am, and there is none but I. What an insupportable insolencie call you this? she prefers her selfe aboue all the world. First, she thinks she stands by her owne power: secondly, she makes her selfe belecue, that the rest of the world are not worthy to be compared vwith her: thirdly, she promiseth her selfe a rest vchangeable. For the first, none can say truly *I am*, but God only, to whom it belongs properly to say, *I am* that *I am*: *Exod.* 3. 14. For by this tide he distinguisheth himselfe from all creatures. Thus then Babylon tooke from God the honour due vnto him, when shee imagined that shee stood by her owne power: and in aduancing her selfe thus, shee bid battell vnto Iehouah. Moreouer, she wronged the whole world, in abasing them thus vnder her feete. But these haughtie mindes first indeouour to begin with God, that so they may make him their enemy: and then they set themselves against men, that so they may leaue none exempt either in heauen nor earth, against whom they make not warre by their ouerweening. The third member, which contains the height of her pride, consists, in that she resolues vpon a state that cannot be moued; neuer thinking what little hold worldlings haue of things present: for often times, the higher men are aduanced, the lower is their fall.

None can say truly, *I am*, but God only.

Verf. 9. But these two things shall come to thee suddenly on a day, the losse of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy dininations, and for the great abundance of thine inchanters.

WHEREAS Babel thought her selfe exempt fro feare of al dangers, the Prophet here denounceth an extreme calamitie to befall her. She promised her selfe that she should neuer feele losse neither of husband nor children: on the contrary he shewes, that both these evils shall ouertake her: so as she shall be made a wofull spectacle for all to behold with contempt, in regard of her desolatensse. Hee adds that it shall come upon her in perfection: that is to say, there shall not one iot or tittle thereof faile: for she shall know the miserie of widowhood, with a witchesse; as they say. And thus there is a close opposition betwene the moderate corrections, in which some mitigation may be expected, and that horrible vengeance of God, which brings forth no other issue but a final desolation: for the more the wicked exalt themselves in

Babels fall.

The higher the proud exalt themselves, the lower the Lord will abase them.

their pride, the lower will the Lord abase them in his indignation and wrath.

Because of the multitude, &c.] Others translate; Of thy soothsayers. But mee thinks the word should rather note out the vice, then the persons. Some take the letter *Beth*, for a participle of rendring the cause, and expound it, *Because*: in which sense it is often found in the Scriptures: albeit wee may expound, that the Chaldeans shall finde no helpe nor succour in their deceivable diuinations, in which they gloried so much: and so it may be translated, *Notwithstanding*.

As if hee should say; *Notwithstanding* the multitude of thy diuiners and coniecturers, these things must needs befall Babylon. For he derides the confidence which they put in these fond prognosticators, through whom they thought to *foresee things to come*. But in regard he will insit longer upon this point in the 12. and 13. verses, therefore I willingly consent, that hee here recites one of the causes of their destruction; to wit, that they despised all dangers, upon the confidence they conceiued in these impostures and illusions.

Verf. 10. *For thou hast trusted in thy wickednesse: thou hast said; None seeth mee. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, they haue caused thee to rebell; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else.*

HE explains that which he said in the former verse, though we may extend it further; to wit, that he taxeth the Chaldeans for their fraud, oppression, outrages, and wicked practises, whereby they so highly magnified themselves. For all these great kingdoms lightly become great dens of theues, as an arch-theefe which once raigned among them said: because they can neuer enlarge their territories; but by plucking from others by force and violence; therefore they driue the lawfull possessors out of their houses, that they may be Lords and Kings within themselves. Now he calles that *wickednesse*; which hee adornes afterwards with these goodly titles of *wisdom and knowledge*. For thus tyrants are wont to compass their deuices: they forget all equitie and right, that they may make the poore to fall in their nets. But the Lord detects and discouers their trecheries, so as euery one may see they dance but in a net. After *Iob* hath said, that God catcheth the wise in their wisdom: to shew what this wisdom is, he calles it craftinesse: *Iob* 5.13.

As touching that which by and by follows; namely, that *Babylon* said *none saw her wickednesse*: this sets forth with what freedom she committed the same. For seeing reuerence or shame holds men in some awe, he that feares not God as a witness of his behauiour, and thinks men notes nothing hee doth; such a one will not stick to practise any villanie. I grant that the most wicked are sometimes stung with the worme of an euill

conscience: but they close vp their eyes, and plunge themselves into a benumbednes and deadnesse of conscience, as Moles within the ground. In a word, their consciences are seared vp with an hot yron. But about all we see how they scorne God with a desperate presumption, as if by their fetches they were able to dazzle his eyes. For when they purpose to beguile the simple, it sufficeth that they may doe it closely: as if belike, they could deceiue his eyes [who in all places beholds both the euill and the good: *Prov.* 15.3.] But they flatter themselves in their cunning in vaine; for the Lord will easilie plucke off their vizards. Let all men detest such *wisdom* then, by which men deceiue their owne soules, and pull inuicitable ruine upon their owne heads.

I am, and none else.] He againe repeats those blasphemies mentioned in the 9. verse: that all might know how much God abhors them; and how neere such are to endless perdition, that exalt themselves higher then is fit.

Verf. 11. *Therefore shall euill come upon thee, and thou shalt not know the morning thereof: destruction shall fall upon thee, which thou shalt not be able to put away: destruction shall come upon thee suddenly, ere thou bee aware.*

HE continues stil to scorne the vaine confidence of the Babylonians, who thought all things safe, by reason of the foresight they had touching the situation of the starres. He therefore denounceth against them, that which the Scriptures asseme to hang ouer the heads of all contemners of God. *When they shall say, Peace and safetie, then shall sudden destruction come upon them: 1. Thef. 5.3.* So as they shall not know in the morning, what shall befall them ere night. Now it appears sufficiently out of *Dan.* 5.30. how certainly these things came to passe.

Babels sudden downefall.

Verf. 12. *Stand now among thine Inchanters, and in the multitude of thy Soothsayers (with whom thou hast wearied thy selfe from thy youth) if so bee thou maiest haue profit, or if so be thou maiest haue strength.*

THE Prophet speaks to the Chaldeans, as we are wont to speake to common ruffians or harlots, who will receiue no admonitions. Hold on your course still; you shall see in the end how the world will goe with you. So he saith; *Thou shalt tell me one day what good thou hast gotten by thy soothsayers and coniecturers.* By the word *Stand*, hee alludes to the gesture of diuiners, who stand still in a place, til some bird flie that way. Also, the Astrologers stand obseruing the course of the heauens, and will not misse the least point. If any had rather expound it Diuinenes, then Diuinations; I

Babels confusion remedie.

doe not much contradict him, becauſe the word *Kabarim* is ambiguous.

If thou mayſt be ſtrengthened:] As if he ſhould ſay, Thy diuiners can not turne away that deſtruction which is ready to fall vpon thine head, for he inſults ouer their peruerſe confidence: foretelling, that after they ſhall haue vſed all ſtrifts they can, yet they ſhall proue fruitleſſe and boodeſſe.

Verſ. 13. *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counſels: let now the ^{*}Aſtroglogers, the ſtarre-gazers, and Prognosticators ^{*} ſtand vp, and ſaue thee from theſe things that ſhall come vpon thee.*

* Or, binders of the heauiſt.

* Or, come forth.

A plainer deſcription of ſt. which before was deliuered obſcurely.

Now hee deſcribes that more plainly which he ſaid a little before ſomewhat obſcurely, to wit, that all the counſels which Babel tooke in times paſt ſhall turne to her deſtruction, in regard ſhe nourished within her a vaine hope wrought in her heart, from the perſwaſion of her wiſdome and power, as if nothing had bin able to haue done her hurt. He ſpeakes not of counſell in the ſingular number, but of counſels, and, of multitudes of them, to ſhew, that they boated and bragged in vaine, though they were neuer to witty and cunning to deceiue; for the fuller their counſels were of fine conſciences, and the more they were in number, the more ſhould they be vexed that were the deuifers of theſe.

This is a generall ſentence therefore againſt all ſuch, as truſting in the excellencie of their wit, build Caſtles in the aire, reſting vpon their owne providence, and inucent by all meanes how they may circumuent and catch the ſimple in their ginnes, for God will ſcatter all their plots, and ouerthrow their counſels, as he threatened before in Chap. 30. 1. Wo to them (ſaith he) that take counſell, but not of me; that couer with a couering, but not by my ſpirit. What is the reaſon then that men prosper not in their counſels? Surely becauſe they ſecke not at all vnto God, from whoſe mouth we ought to looke for all wiſdome and counſels in aſking it at his hands. The more ſtrick kind of perſons conſult then, the more trouble they put themſelues vnto, and the leſſe fruit they gaine thereby, as *Salomon* well ſaith. They riſe vp early, and goe to bed late, and eate the bread of careſulnes, traouailing for nothing, *Pſal.* 127. 2. for he ſpeakes there of the vnbeleeuers, who haue not learned to caſt their care vpon the Lord, but truſting in their owne induſtrie, enterpriſe many things raſhly and vndoubtedly. The Lord derides ſuch confidence, and cauſing it to become fruſtrate, in the end they ſeele by experience how little good they get by their plots and inuentions, and thus they are conſected for their boldnes, whileſt Gods childre inioy his bleſſings with quiet ſleepe, as it is further added in that *Pſalm*: that they are vtterlie exempt from all troubles, but becauſe firſt of all they vex not themſelues: ſecondly, they commend the iſſues of all their affaires with quiet minds to the bleſſing of God.

Iam. 1. 5.

Come forth] Heere we ſee what theſe counſellers are of whom the Prophet ſpeakes, to wit, thoſe diuiners who gat themſelues much credit among the people vnder the vaine title of wiſe men, as if forſooth they had knowne all things by beholding the ſtarres: but wee haue ſpoken before Chap. 44. 25. of the vanie that is in this Iudiciall Altronomie. If any obiect, that it was not in theſe diuiners to turne away imminent dangers: I anſwere, The Babylonians would ſo haue taken it, if they hauing foreſeene this deſtruction had forewarned them of it; but ſeing they foreſaw it not, therefore it followed that their profeſſion was vtterlie vaine. Many repleie, that the Prophet ſpeakes heere againſt the ignorance of the Arte, and not againſt the Arte it ſelfe: but ſuch are deceiued, for he ſpeakes here of the Chaldeans, who were the fathers of this Arte.

Judiciall Altronomie. Obiect. Anſ.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Now he addes very pleaſantly, that they bind the heaue[n]s: in regard they ſteek not to auerre that their dreames are as certaine as if they had the world tied in a ſtring, or as if they had the ſtarres claspd in their armes. Yet if any had rather tranſlate *encharsters*, the ſenſe will not be amiſſe, for the Hebrew word ſignifies both the one and the other. Now howſoever it be not euill in it ſelfe to conſider of the ſituation of the ſtarres, yet the Prophet notwithstanding ſaith, that ſuch as will foretell things to come, do paſſe the bounds of this ſcience. It alſo ſeemes, that to make theſe ſpeculators the more odious (in regard they did diſcredit all diuine predictions) he cloſely oppoſeth them to the true Prophets, for when wee fixe a fatall neceſſitie to the ſtarres, Gods iudgements muſt needs be put out of mind.

To conſider of the ſituation of the ſtarres, allowed to foretell things to come, there by condemned.

Verſ. 14. *Behold, they ſhall be as ſtubble, the fire ſhall burne them, they ſhall not deliuer their owne liues from the power of the flame: there ſhall be no coales to warme at, nor light to ſit by.*

Hee here inueyes more ſharply againſt theſe *Aſtroglogians*, who aggravated Babels pride by their vaine brags: for ſuch deceiuers are wont to bereaue men of all feare of God, by attributing all things to the diſpoſition of the ſtarres, ſo as they leaue nothing to Gods providence. See from whence the contempt of God and of all his threatnings ſprings, namely, from not attributing the puniſhments which he ſends to his hand, but to deſtinie, and to a meeting of ſecond cauſes, which wizards fondlie imagin in their owne braine. This is the reaſon why he takes vp the Chaldeans in ſuch a rigorous ſort, reſembling them vnto *ſtubble ſeaſon fire*, which is conſumed in an inſtant; for hee compares them not to wood with which one may make a fire of ſome continuance to warme himſelfe by, but to ſtubble, or hemp-ſtalks, to ſhew, that there is nothing of ſo ſhort continuance as ſuch kind of men.

A terrible denunciation againſt theſe *Aſtroglogians*.

Whence the contempt of God and all his threatnings ſprings

Verſ. 15. *Thus ſhall they ſerue thee with*

* Or, and
with whom
thou hatt
traded.

with whom thou hast wearied thee, * euen
thy merchants from thy youth: eery one
shall wander to his owne quarters; none
shall saue thee.

He now di-
rects his de-
nunciation
against the
Babylonians.

HAVING denounced destruction against
these *Siar-gazers*, he returns to the Baby-
lonians; and telles them that they are not to
expect help from them, whence they thought
to haue it: for they should but lose their time
in resting vpon such counsels, after which
they had so long and so painfully trauelled.
Now in speaking of such as traded with her,
he meanes those whom wee commonly call
Pettifoggers: which is a similitude taken from
Merchants who haue infinit shifts to beguile:
for there is no kinde of subtilie fetches, but
they haue them at their fingers ends. Prin-
ces in regard of their greatnes traffique nor;
but they will vse such fellows to serue their
owne turnes, and to traffique for them. Now
howsoeuer this may bee vnderstood of all

those that were in league with the Chalde-
ans, and had succoured them, yet the Pro-
phet aimes specially at her Diuiners.

Where he addes, *from thy youth*: it is to ag-
grauate Babels iniquitie, who of old was poi-
soned with this fond opinion: so as it was be-
come another nature vnto her.

Every one shall wander to his quarter.] Some
thinke the Prophet speakes of the Astrolo-
gers flight, in regard eery one should bee
constrained to shift for his owne life: and I
will willingly agree to this exposition. But yet
I also thinke that he alludes to the regions of
heauen, which the Astrologers part and mea-
sure out, to draw their prognostications from
thence. He derides their vaine brags then: as
if he should say; They retire to their regions,
but they shall wander in their imaginations,
and shall find no place of refuge. If any had
rather vnderstand it of their reuolt, from
whom Babel looked for present helpe in time
of need, I gain say him not.

THE XLVIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. Heare ye this, O house of
Iakob, which are called by the name of
Israel, and are come out of the Waters of
Iudab: which sweare by the name of the
Lord, and make mention of the God of
Israel; but not in truth nor in righteous-
nesse.

then that *Isaiab* is so vehement: shewing that
they much dishonoured the Lord, in that
they would not rest vpon his truth.

He speakes to *Israel*; but so, as to *Israel*, de-
generate: *Israel* in name, and not *Israel* in
deed. Hee giues them not this title then, by
way of honour; but rather to conuince them
of their false confidence, in that they wrong-
fully vsurped this honourable title, and no-
thing at all answered the truth thereof in
their practise. For why did God dignifie his
seruant *Iakob* with this name, but because he
shewed himselfe valorous and invincible in
aduersitie? Which appears by that wrest-
ling he had with God, who pitcheth the field
as it were to make warre vpon vs, when hee
exerciseth vs with diuers tribulations: Gen.
32.28. How could this title agree then to his
successors, when they fainted and forsooke
their confidence in the day of aduersitie? He
afterwards reprocheth them, in that they
nothing at all resembled the holy fathers,
from whom they were descended.

By *waters*, vnder a figure, hee meanes the
fountaine and spring from whence the Iewes
issued: for I allow not of the Rabbines ridi-
culous glosse; who by the word waters, vnder-
stand that sperm whereof children are in-
gended, because it is moist and waterish: but
it is a similitude very fitly drawne from wa-
ters which flow from a spring. Now hauing
taxed them for bastard and degenerate chil-
dren, he addes that they falsly cover the sama
title vnder the cloke of pietie and religion;
from the truth whereof, they were also re-
uolted.

Now because an *oath* is a part of Gods wor-
ship, hee here puts it for the whole, vnder the
figure *synecdoche*. For as the Idolaters offer
God great wrong in swearing by their Idols;
so the true worshippers doe highly honour
him

Prou. 24.10.

Now the
Prophet di-
rects his
speech to the
Iewes.



OW hee directs his
speech to the Iewes,
whom hee chiefly re-
spected in the whole
chapter before going.
For he was not sent
to the Babylonians;
but so speakes to the,
that still his meaning

is, the Iewes should make their profit of it; for
whose good he was principally appointed, &
ordained to that high and excellent calling.
He hath foretold the ruine of Babel then, to
the end the Iewes might in patience and si-
lence wait for their deliuerance: and yet, that
the greatnesse and power of their enemies in
the meane while, might not daunt nor dis-
courage them. But resting securely vpon these
promises, they might stand with invincible
force against all temptations. Now in as much
as the Iewes were somewhat obstinate, and
would not easilie be brought to credit these
promises: as also that *Isaiab* by the spirit of
prophecie, wel foresaw how stiff necked and
rebellious they would proue, euen in their
captiuitie; he therefore reproues them thus
sharply. *Ezech.* in Chap. 33. 31. shewes at large
how great their incredulitie was, when they
murmured against God and fel off the hooks,
making no more account of these promises,
then of so many fables. It is not without cause

The drift of
Isaiab in this
Chapter.

him in ſwearing by his name, for thereby they proteſt to haue but one God, whoſe name they thus glorie in. But in this place the Prophet inueyes bitterly againſt the hypocrites, who had nothing in their mouths but the name of God, and toſſed it continually vpon the tip of their tongues, but in the meane while their hearts were farre off from him, as it is in Chap. 29. 13. for this cauſe he ſaith, But not in rightewiſneſſe, which word he takes heere for vprightneſſe and ſoundneſſe of heart, without which nothing we doe is acceptable before God. Or, *truth* and *rightewiſneſſe* may be taken for words of one ſignification, as if he ſhould ſay, There is nothing, but hypocriſie and vaine ſhewes in all your doings: you profeſſe your ſelues to be the ſeruants of the God of truth, and behold, you let all the world ſee that you are ſuſſed with diſloyaltie and lies.

Verſ. 2. *For they are called of the booke Citie, and ſtay themſelues vpon the God of Iſrael, whoſe name is the Lord of hoſts.*

HE holds himſelfe to the point ſtill, and in other words refutes their vaine ſhewes, for falſly they glorie to be citizens of the *holy Citie*, and yet they ſtuck not to pollute and deſile it with their leaud praſtiſes.

Ieruſalem was worthily reputed *holy*, in regard God had ſanctified it for the place of his abode, but it was prophaned with ſo many abuſes, that there was no holines at all in a manner left in it. In the 15, and 24. Pſalme we ſee who are worthe to be eſteemed the true citizens of Ieruſalem, but ſeeing the Iewes bluthed not to play faſt and looſe with God, they thought it enough to couer themſelues vnder this vaile, of the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord.

Where he ſaith, they *ſtayed vpon the God of Iſrael*: hee ſpeakes not of a true confidence, but of a malepart boldneſſe. For as the faithfull ſtay and reſt vpon the Lord with their whole hearts, ſo hypocrites doe falſly maſke themſelues with his name, and are beſorted with a vaine and fond perſwaſion: they contemne all things, yea, they feare not impudencie to diſgorge this brag; Tuſh, God will ſurely help vs, he will neuer forſake his people, as if God were a foſterer of ſuch a prophane crew. To be ſhort, they caſt his lawes behind their backs, and tread them vnder their feet, and yet proteſt with high termes that God is the *ſtay* of their ſaluation. But to the end they ſhould not thinke to eſcape unpuniſhed for ſuch dallying, the Prophet affirms, that Gods maieſtie and glorie ſhall not whit be impeached, though hypocrites indueur to tranſigure him at their pleaſures. For in calling him the *Lord of hoſts*, he adds it as a threatening, to the end they might know that the *God of Iſrael*, vnder which title they vainely couered themſelues, was alſo the *Lord of hoſts* to puniſh ſuch hypocrites, and that could not indure to be thus mocked and triſted withall,

Verſ. 3. *I haue declared the former things of old, and they went out of my mouth, and I ſwered them: I did them ſuddenly, and they came to paſſe.*

HE accuſeth the Iewes of ingratitude, in regard they diſtruſted GOD who had ſhewed them infinite teſtimonies of his goodneſſe to confirme them in a true and ſound faith, and thus he betraues them of all excuſe, in telling them that he hath *declared former things*. Now it ſeemes he ſpeakes not only of their redemption from their captiuitie, but of other benefiſts which the Lord had done for his people; as if he ſhould ſay, I began of old to tell you what ſhould enſue, neither haue I promiſed any thing which is not accompliſhed: but notwithstanding ſo many expetiences, you beleeue nothing that I ſay, no not the moſt certaine and the infallible truth.

Wee may alſo ſuppoſe, that the Prophet ſpake not only to thoſe which then liued, but likewiſe to ſuch as were afterwards to ſurniue them in the captiuitie, that when the calamitie ſhould befall them, they might call to minde what was foretold them, for God meant to haue this propheſie renowned, that during their exile, they might know how theſe things fell not out by chance, and therefore were to gather coſolation thence. *Iſaiab* reprehends them ſharply then, in regard that albeit they knew the truth of theſe propheſies by the *euent*, yet they would not acknowledge Gods hand in the, neither would they reſt vpon his promiſes. Had he not good cauſe then, thinke you, to rebuke them thus ſharply, and to condemne their obſtinacie? Yes, doubtleſſe. For they reſiſted that hand which offered them reliefe, and reſiſted his mercie: they limited the holy one of Iſrael, in that they would not beleeue that he ſhould euer be permitted them to returne home into Iuda. Nay, when the way was fo wide open before them, very few had any heart to returne into their countrie. Others ſuppoſed that *Cyrus* did but dallie with them, only permitting them to goe, that hauing gaged and ſounded the depth of their affections, he might take occaſion thereby to oppreſſe them, and deale the more ſeuereſly with them, nor conſidering that thoſe things which the Lord had foretold muſt of neceſſitie come to paſſe, though men and Angels ſhould withſtand the ſame.

I ſo vnderſtand theſe *prediction* then whereof the Prophet ſpeakes, that vnder them I alſo comprehend the ancient propheſies, in which the Lord had ſaid to *Abraham*, that his poſteritie ſhould be led captiue, and ſhould after be reſtored to their firſt libertie, Gen. 15. 13. And ſo we muſt come to other propheſies of this nature by degrees, which ſucceſſively followed one another, for each this propheſie was many times confirmed now in one age, and then in another. His meaning is then, that the Lord yet neuer foretold any thing, but the iſſue and euent answered vnto the beginning.

Before hee taxed their hypocriſie; they now their ingratitude.

And yet neuer foretold any thing, but the euent was agreeable to the beginning.

Hypocrites used.

An ſimplification of the Iewes hypocriſie.

Ier. 7.

Verf. 4. *Because I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy necke is an yron sinew, and thy brow brasse.*

The Jewes
obstinacie &
impudencie
discovered.

The Lord here protests by his Prophet, that he spake of things to come, because of the peoples obstinacie. As if the Prophet should say; I have done more for you then stood with my calling. Not that he only bent his speech this way, for wee know that the principall drift of his sermons appertaines to the godly, who quietly obey, and willingly giue care. But *Isaiah*, that had to deale with a troward people, rightly affirms, that God would have vied a most soueraigne remedie, in ratifying his law by many prophecies, and that successiue one after another. For as hee had foretold nothing but the truth to their fathers, so he shewes that he continues still so to doe, that hereby hee might batter downe the obstinacie and rebellion of this people.

Hee saith their necke was as an yron sinew; because it could not be bowed. I grant that sinewes are stiff, yet they are bowable. But heree he saith, nothing will bow them, because they are as vntamed heifers. Afterwards hee adds, *a brow of brasse*, to set forth their impudencie. Two things holds vs in awe: first, teachableness, if we willingly submit our selues to the wholesome admonitions and instructions, which shall be rendered to vs. Secondly, if being ouertaken with anie sinne, wee be so touched with true remorse and blushing, that wee condemne the euill committed: where these two graces, humilitie and shamefastnesse are wanting, it is a signe of a desperate obstinacie. By two arguments the Prophet shewes that this people was giuen vp to all iniquitie, in that hee affirms they were become *unteachable* and *shamelesse*. Notwithstanding when the Lord cannot otherwise remedie such a mischief, yet he so farre supports our rebellion, as to admonish vs of things to come. And thus, transforming himselfe as it were, he is readie to trie all the waies hee can, that hee might allure vs vnto him, and set vs againe in the right way.

Verf. 5. *Therefore I haue declared it vnto thee of old; before it came to passe I haue shewed it thee, lest thou shouldest say, Mine Idoll hath done them, and my earued Image and my molten Image hath commanded them.*

AGaine he propounds the same thing vnto them, that the people being deliuered out of Babylon, might acknowledge that God himselfe had done it, lest they should attribute this redemption either to their Idols, or to fortune. If it bee asked wherefore the Lord makes mention of *Idols*, seeing the Jewes professed to worship but one God: I answer, they were already so corrupted by ouer much familiaritie with the Gentiles, and had fo de-

filed themselves with superstitions, that God was in a manner vtterly forgotten. *Ezechiel* complains of this in his eight Chapter, verf. 3. For there being carried in a vision into Ierusalem, hee saw the Sanctuarie of the Lord polluted with diuers idolatries and abominations. It is no maruell then if our Prophet put them in mind of God, the only author of all benefits, to the end they might acknowledge their redemption to be his worke.

Lest thou shouldest say.] Hee means that the Jewes should be inexcusable, if they did not confesse this benefit of being set free from bondage, to proceede from Gods hand. For that which was foretolde so long before *came it came to passe*, could not fall out, neither fortune nor chance. Hee ioines Gods prescience then with his power, shewing that he hath not only foretold these things, but hath also performed them. Heere then we may behold as in a glasse, the frowardnesse of our owne hearts, which are alwaies plotting how to bereaue the Lord of his deserued praise, euen as oft as he sends vs any helpe, or bestowes any benefit vpon vs, whereby he stretcheth out his hand to becken vs to himselfe. But the world resists God in this behauiour, euen with an high hand, euermore attributing that to creatures, which proceeds from God: as in the Papacie, where wee see they ascribe the benefits of God, vnto the Saints departed; as if he fate idle in heauen, or were fallen into a dead sleepe. It is needfull therefore that the light of Gods word should alwaies shine before vs, for the rectifying of our iudgements: for wee shall alwaies misse the marke in considering of Gods workes, vnlesse he giue light vnto our steps, by the lanterne of his blessed truth.

The same thing often befallles many at this day, which *Isaiah* bewailes touching his nation; to wit, that notwithstanding all admonitions, yet they cease not to forge Idols, which they adorne with Gods spoiles as it were. The Apostles, *Peter* and *Iohn*, in their life time, Act. 3. 12. cried with a loud voice, that they did no miracles by their own power or godlinesse: and yet we see how the Papists, whether they will or no; yea as it were to vex them, will burthen them now they are dead with infinit miracles. Well, howsoeuer God at this day foretelles vs not of things to come, yet shall the Law and the Gospell be of no lesse force to condemne out vnthankfulnessse, then if wee had seene the wonders (whercof God shewed himselfe the author) contained in the prophecies.

Verf. 6. *Thou hast heard; * behold all this. And will not yee declare it? I haue shewed thee new things * euen now, * and hid things which thou knewest not.*

BY this wee may better discern that the Prophet speaks of the captiuitie to come, and of the redemption that was to insue. Wherein he as well prouided for the good of the people of his owne time, as for theirs that were to succcede: that so, albeit those

A looking
glasse wherein
we may take
a view of the
frowardnesse
of our na-
ture.

Peter and
Iohn made
to worke mi-
racles by the
Papists now
they are
dead, who
professed
they did no
thing by
their owne
power being
aliue.

*Or, see all,
*Or, from,

God spake
plainly, but
we are dull
of hearing.

Two things
keeps vs
in awe.

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which then liued, made no right uſe thereof, yet at leaſt thoſe that ſeruiued them, being heereby admoniſhed, might amend. For it often falls out that the word moues not ſuch as are preſent: nay, they hauing heard it, goe their waies and contemne it: but their ſucceſſors on the contrary, receiue it with more reuerence.

Where he bids them *behold*: ſome thinke the Prophet ſo propounds the euent of the thing, as if he ſhould ſay; God neuer ſaid any thing, but the truth thereof hath maniſteſted it ſelfe. But I expound this word *behold*, or See, thus; Seeing the Lord hath ſpoken: it is thy dutie to thinke well of that he hath vttered, and to giue diligent attention thereto. Whence we may gather, that our dullneſſe is the cauſe why we ſuffer that which proceeds out of Gods mouth, to fall to the ground; and that many doe therefore couer themſelues with the vaile of ignorance in vaine. For the Lord ſpeakes diſtinctly enough, vttering to euery mans capacitie, as much as is needfull for them to know; if the auditors were but as attentiu as they ought, and did aduifedly conſider what is ſaid.

But the Lord requires ſomewhat more of his people beſides *hearing* and *underſtanding* of his word; to wit, that they ſhould *publiſh* the wonders whereof they haue had experience. And thus vndoubtedly hee inſtructs his ſeruants, vpon this condition, that being taught themſelues, they ſhould labour in the next place, to bring others to confeſſion of the ſame faith with them.

From *now*, is as much as if he had ſaid; *Now* this day in which the Lord foretells thee by my mouth, that which thou *kneweſt* not: for it cannot be apprehended nor forceſene by any humane coniecture.

Verſ. 7. *They were created now, and not of old. And euer before this thou heardeſt them not, leſt thou ſhouldeſt ſay; Behold, I knew them.*

The Prophet ſhewes that hee diſputes not about things knowne, or vnderſtood, by long uſe: ſiſt, to correct the pride which is naturally grafted in all men, (for they vſurpe vpon that which belongs to God onely:) and ſecondly, that none ſhould attribute the leaſt iot thereof vnto fortune, or to any ſecond cauſes whatſoeuer. Men uſe many ſhifts to deſtroye God of his glory, applying all their wits, to ſee how they may part among the creatures, that which is his proper right, that they may leaue vnto him no more but his naked and bare titles. Leſt the people ſhould imagin then, that they were either ouercome by the power of the Chaldeans, or ſet at libertie by chance, therefore the Prophet ſo oft repeats, that all is Gods worke.

Where hee affirms, that they *heard* not: ſome expound, that the people reiected Gods admonitions, and would not obey the wholeſome counſels which were giuen them. But I thinke he meant another thing, to wit, that that which could not be knowne by humane

reaſon, of which alſo the Iewes were ignorant, was maniſteſted vnto them, that they could not well defraud the holy Ghoſt of his juſt praiſe. And this is euident enough by the ſcope of the text.

Verſ. 8. *Yet thou heardeſt them not, neither diddeſt thou know them; neither yet was thine eare opened of old: for I knew that thou wouldeſt grieuouſly tranſgreſſe; therefore haue I called thee a tranſgreſſor from the wombe.*

*Or, a rebell

The Prophets meaning is, that the Lord hath not inſiſted ſo long vpon this matter without cauſe, but hath been thus inſtant in exhorting the people, to the end they might acknowledge that they were chaſtiſed, and in the end deliuered from all their miſeries, by the immediate hand of God. For they (being of an obſtinate nature) might complaine, that it was needleſſe to trouble their heads with ſo many repetitions of one and the ſame thing. The Prophet answers, that it is no wonder, ſeeing he hath to deale with a ſort of *tranſgreſſors*: and thus in other words, he confirms that which he ſaid in the fourth verſe, touching the *iron ſinew*. The ſumme is, that God knowing the pueruertiſie of this people, omitted no good meanes to win them to his obedience: by how much the more then they haue been conuincid by ſufficient and infallible teſtimonies, ſo much the leſſe ſhall they be excuſable before him. Now hauing pulled off their vizard of holineſſe, to wit, their glorying in the name of *Iſrael*, (as in the firſt verſe) hee impoſeth vpon them a more proper name, and flatly calles them *rebels*.

A confirmation of that which they were taxed, verſe 4.

By the *wombe*, I vnderſtand not their firſt eſtate, by and by after they were ſeparated to be the Lords people; but from their deliuerance out of Egypt, which was as a birth of the Church: Exod. 12. 21. But how ſoever this people had had infinir experiences of Gods great goodneſſe towards them, yet they neuer ceaſed to behaue themſelues diſloyally againſt ſo good a benefactor; nor to wax more and more vntamed: ſo that hee had juſt cauſe to tax them with the titles of *rebels* and *traitors*.

Verſ. 9. *For my names ſake will I deferre my wrath, and for my praiſe will I reſtaine it from thee, that I cut thee not off.*

Hauing reproched the people touching the malice which flowed from the fathers to the children, and ſo to their nephewes: now hee ſhewes that they are ſtill vpheld by Gods mercy, whereas they were otherwiſe worthy to periſh an hundred times. The uſe of this admonition was double: for it was needfull that the faithfull ſhould be thus ſuſtained, leſt they ſhould haue fainted in their captiuitie, beſides, when they had leaue to returne,

The ſcope of the former reſpiciſſions maniſteſted in this verſe.

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Neither the peoples captiuitie nor deliniance happened by chance,

turne, it was fit they should be humbled to acknowledge that their deliuerance proceeded whollye from the meere grace and good will of God. And thus we see that the former reprehension tended to teach them, that it was the Lords hand that drew them out of Babylon as out of a graue, not for their deserts, for they were well worthie to haue bin vtterlie destroyed.

Vſe to vs.

In that God ſpares vs then at this day, and mittigates his corrections; in that he remits our offences, and hath any respect at all vnto vs, these things whollye proceed from his free grace. Why so? Because we should learne to attribute none of these benefits to the merits or satisfactions of men. Here then the distinction of ſophisters falles to the ground (as wee haue shewed in other places) touching the remitting of the punishment, which they affirme not to be free, because we must make satisfaction for the same vnto God. But our Prophet teacheth, that God freely remits it, and that only for his owne names sake. For he speakes here of the punishment which he might iustly inflict vpon the Iewes. He had very good cause then to haue consumed them, if he had not respected the maintenance of his owne glorie.

Distinction of the Sophisters.

Verſ. 10. Behold, I haue fined thee but not as silver: I haue chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

God so corrects his Church, that in the meane while he thereby procures her saluation.

THE Lord shewes, that he vsed such measure in correcting his Church, that therewithall he provided for their saluation. In the former verse he said that he spared, or would spare them, because he respected his glorie: now he shewes that he hath chastised them in deed, yet so, that he did it for their good; for he corrected them, to fine them, but we are not wont to trie and fine that which we mind to cast away: seeing then he had none other end, it follows that he did it to procure their benefit and saluation thereby. Besides, he mentions this *trially* by way of preuention, lest any should object, that Gods loue little appeared in so sharp afflictions. The Prophet, I say, doth in fit season preuent such a conceit, & tells them, that God hath skill enough to correct his Church in mercie, and yet not vtterly to forsake her.

Moreouer, he adds that he hath not fined vs as silver, for then we should haue bin vtterly consumed. There is some puritie to be found in silver, but in vs there is nothing but dross: and were it not that the Lord made vs silver, we should be burnt to ashes, yea to nothing, euen as tow or flax. Corrections would draw from vs no puritie at all. The Lord in trying of vs then hath respect to our abilitie, lest he should passe measure, as Psal. 103. 13. 14. then he makes our chastisements profitable vnto vs by the worke of his owne spirit, which would otherwise proue mortall and deadly vnto vs.

To chuse, is taken here to discern: for we ordinarily make choice of that which we desire to keepe, as wee haue said Chap. 7. 15. where it is said, that Christ should eate butter

and hony, till he had knowledge to chuse the good, and refuse the cuill. He shewes then by this word what difference there is betwene the stripes wherewith the faithfull are smitten, and those which the wicked are to sustaine, wherewith in deed they shall be overwhelmed. But howeouer the Lord tries and smites vs, yet are we acceptable in his sight, and he reserues still a fatherly affection towards vs, euen in the midst of our afflictions, and in the end he brings vs forth bright as silver, and so makes our sufferings to become a sacrifice of a sweet smelling fatour in his nostrils. To conclude, his meaning is, that God ceaseth not euen then to be good to his Church, whilest he seemes to consume her to nothing.

Verſ. 11. For mine owne sake, for mine owne sake will I do it: for how should my name be polluted? surely I will not giue my glorie vnto another.

HE repeats that which he said before, but he adds an interrogation, which the Hebrewes are wont to vs when they speake of absurdities, as heere, Can it be that my name should be prophaned? The second member, *I will not giue my glorie &c.* serues for an exposition of this interrogation. *Isaiah* then amplifies that which he spake before in few words, and flies an higher pitch in his stile; for it is not only a bare amplification of the former sentence, but rather a beautifying and adorning of it for ſ greater confirmation thereof. Now by these words he means that men as much as in them is, doe profane Gods name, and giue away his glorie vnto creatures; only the Lord in his admirable prouidence stops the course of this mischief, and keeps his glorie vnblemished. Although we by our fault then doe expose this glorie of God to contempt, yet will he preferre it as long as he shall continue our protector. Hence we gather a very sweet consolation, to wit, that the Lord ioines his owne glorie with our saluation, as we haue often shewed you before.

I will not giue. That is to say, I will not indure that any should rob me of my glorie: but this had fallen out if the people had bin vtterly consumed, then would they haue scorned the God of Israel; for the wicked were wont in the afflictions of the Saints to disgrace these blasphemies, *Where is now their God?* Psal. 79. 10. Psal. 42. 3. *Moses* also alledged, that the Lord withheld his hand from destroying the people for the same cause: *I feare, saith the Lord, the surie of their aduersaries, lest they should wax proude, and lest they should say, our hie hand, and not the Lord hath done all this.* Deut. 32. 27. And questionlesse, as oft as the Lord testifies the faithfull, by manifesting vnto them the signes of his heauie displeasure, the only remedie then left vs is this, that he will yet remember his owne couenant of grace made with vs in Christ, lest he should prostitute his holy name to the outrages and blasphemies of the wicked. Neither did the Prophet only stirre them vp hereby to giue thanks

A Consolation. Psal. 34. 20. Hab. 3. 2.

Exod. 3. 2.

A repetition of that he said vers. 9. with an interrogation added.

Simile.

Corrections would rather consume then refine vs, if God should not moderate and sanctifie them to vs.

thanks to God, and to confeſſe that their proſperitie proceeded from his free mercie; but he did likewiſe put a forme of prayer into their mouths, and a ſhield of defence upon the armes of the faithfull, wherewith they might repulſe all the ſerie darts of the diuell.

Verſ. 12. *Heare mee, O Iſrahel, and Iſrael my called. I am, I am the firſt, and I am the laſt.*

*Or, yet

Chap 41. 4. & 44. 6. God changeth not, and therefore we are not conſumed: as it is in Mal. 3. 6.

Simile

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WE haue told you heretofore why the Lord ſpeakes of his eternitie; namely, to teach vs that he is alwaies like himſelfe, and that we ſhould not meaſure his power by the narrow ſcantling of our owne ell. He here calles for audience, becauſe the onelic thing that deceiues vs, and makes vs wander after ſo many falſe opinions is, that we haue no cares to heare. Where he ſaith Iſrael is his called: he oppoſeth it ſerely againſt that reprobation, whereof hee ſpake in the beginning of the Chapter. For hee there ſhewed that the Iewes wrongfully vſurped this title, and falſly gloried therein; becauſe they ſhewed not themſelues to bee true Iſraelites in deed. But here he declares that Iſrael is his owne called: as if a father in rebuking his ſonne, ſhould in anger call him *baſſard*; and yet being appeaſed, ſhould afterward terme him his *ſonne*. Thus the Lord ſhewes that the Iewes were growne ſo degenerate, that hee had iuſt cauſe to reiect them: and yet albeit their vnworthineſſe of that great honour he ſhewed them, he ſtill reſpects his owne calling of them, which they could not abolish nor make vnfruitfull by their malice or vnthankfulneſſe.

The particule *yes* in this place, ſignifies a continuance: for the Prophet meanes nothing elſe but that God is alwaies like himſelfe: that is to ſay, he repents not, nor changeth not his mind, as men are wont to doe: and therefore he ſaith, that he is the *firſt* and the *laſt*. Now we haue alſo in theſe words to note, that *Iſaiah* ſpeakes not here of God his eternall eſſence, but applies this doctrine to our uſe: ſignifying that he will be ſuch a one to vs, as he hath euer been in times paſt: as alſo that we ſhould remember to ſeparate him from Idols; left our mindes being diſtracted by new inuentions, ſhould erre from his true feare.

Verſ. 13. *Surely mine hand hath laid the foundations of the earth, and my right hand hath ſpanned the heauens: when I ſhall call them, they ſtand vp together.*

As God is vnchangeable, ſo is he almightie.

THE Prophet ſhewes here more plainly, what his meaning was in the former verſ. For hauing ſaid that God is alwaies one, and neither changeth his affection nor will towards vs, hee now magnifies and extolles his power, in regard of his viſible workes which

wee daily behold. And thus the Lord comming forth of his Sanctuarie, doth after a ſort manifeſt himſelfe familiarly vnto vs in them.

Whether wee turne the wordes, my right hand hath *meaſured*, or, hath *ſuſtained*; the ſenſe will be alwaies alike: neither is it needfull that we ſhould ſtand much about the interpretation of the word *Tſapak*. For the word *To meaſure*, notes out the admirable wiſdome of God, in that hee hath ſo aptly proportioned all the parts of this faire *curtaine* of the heauens, that it ſhould neither bee higher nor lower from the earth then it is: but that they conſtantly keep the order preſcribed them of God: ſo as in this round and ample vaiſtneſſe, wee can behold nothing deformed or miſplaced: If any had rather retain the word *To uphold*, it is alſo a commendation of Gods ſingular wiſdome and power, who beares vp this infinite weight, and great maſſe of the heauens in their continuall motion, and yet keepeſt from tottering or reeling from one ſide to another.

Note.

But the laſt member where hee ſaith, that all things *ſtand vp together* when hee calls them; hath ſome more difficultie in it. For it is either to be referred to the firſt creation of the world, or to the perpetuall gouernement thereof. If we refer it to the firſt creation, the preſent tence of the verb *To appeare*, ſhould be taken for the future tence, thus; As ſoone as the Lord commanded them to appeare, they forthwith obeyed, according to that in the 33. Pſalme, verſ. 9. *He ſpake the word, and it was done*. But if wee accept of this expoſition, the word *together*, which is added, ſeemes not to ſute well with the historic of the creation mentioned by *Mofes*. For the heauens and the earth were not created and adorned in an inſtant: Gen. 1. 2. Things were firſt intermingled and confuſed: then the Lord ſeparated them and placed them in order. But the ſolution is eaſie; for the Prophets meaning is nothing but this, that the Lord created all things by his onely will, and ſo formed heauen and earth, that they forthwith obeyed his commandement.

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And yet for mine owne part, I willingly extend this ſentence to the perpetuall gouernment of the world. As if he ſhould ſay; Heauen and earth obeyed Gods voice, and yeelded to his abſolute power: ſo as theſe creatures ſo farre remote one from another, willingly conſented and agreed together, with an incredible harmonic; neither more nor leſſe then if they were turned about with one wheele. And howſoever the ſpace bee wondrous great betwene earth and heauen about, yet the Lords voice was diſtinctly heard in euery part of them. There was no need of meſſengers then to teach or publiſh his will, but himſelfe in an inſtant executes the ſame at his pleaſure. Shall a man finde any Prince that can haue all his ſeruaunts by and by about him as his call? No, Gods power then is infinite, it is diſperſed far and neere, and extends it ſelfe to all parts of the world, as the Scriptures doe manifeſt, and ſaith by experience makes vs feele.

Anſ.

Simile.

Simile.

P/4. 47. 1. 2.

Verf. 14. *All you assemble your selves and heare: which among the hath declared these things? The Lord hath loued him, he will doe his will in Babel, and his arme shall be against the Chaldeans.*

* Or, his worke.

God permits the Lewes to bring in their allegations.

NO doubt but the Lord directs his speech to the Lewes, though hee vtters nothing heere which ought not to be knowne of all. But because the heathen & prophane people had no eares, therefore hee summons not them to heare. Wee know that the Lewes had this priuiledge aboue other nations, that God manifested himselfe to them: as it is said in the Psalm; God is knowne in Iudah, his name is great in Israel: Psal. 76. 1. and 147. 19, 20. And thus their selfestesse was the lesse excusable, in that they reiected their owne happinesse. For whence sprang this lightnesse and inclination to apostasie; but from the little or no regard they had of this inestimable treasure of the heauenly doctrine? They well deserued then to bee thus sharply chidden, and that he should thus closely tax them for their malicious and manifest conspiracies to darken the grace of God.

Now it seemes the Lord permits the Lewes to bring in their allegations which they had, as those who trusting to the goodnes of their cause, dare thus defie their aduerser partie: Bring in thy reasons, and if thou hast aie merall in thee, shew it. The Lord then prouokes them first, and bids them tell if they can; whether the gods of the Gentiles haue foretold any such things or no. And this may also be applied to the Soothsaiers and Prognosticators, who attributed to the mensclues the knowledge of things to come, which they could not foresee at all. And in the same sense he repeats that which follows in the verse insuing: *I, euen I haue spoken it.* The summe comes to this then, that the Lewes wauer, yea and fall; because they haue not well informed themselues how singular a grace of God it is, to learne from his sacred mouth, whatsoever is needfull to saluation. In the latter part of the verse, hee recites one particular; namely, God had foretold the end of their captiuitie in Babylon. True it is that he names not Cyrus as the dispenser of this benefite: but in speaking of some certaine personage well knowne, he saith, God hath chosen him to surpris Babel by force.

The word *To loue*, is not taken heere simply, but for some speciall respect: and therefore he restraines it to the happy issue of his voyage. And so we may say that *Saul was beloved of God* for some priuate end; namely, that hee might raigne for a time, and might haue the gift of prophetic: 1. Sam. 10. 10. But there is an higher matter to bee considered of touching the faithfull, whom God loues with an euerlasting loue: for hee will neuer suffer them to be separated from him. The Prophet then meant to say, that *Cyrus* shall vanquish Babylon, because he shall vndertake that businesse vnder Gods authoritie & leading; not of his owne motion, but after such a

manner, as God thrusts forward the blind and ignorant, whether him listeth: or as hee vseth sometimes to serue his turne of men against their wills. For *Cyrus* is not praised for his voluntary obedience, but it is rather indeed an extolling of Gods singular prouidence, by which hee disposeth of all sorts of men to performe his will, and to execute his decrees.

By *arme*, (vnder a figure familiar amongst the Prophets) we may vnderstand his *uorke*. And thus the speech will runne better; *Hee shall execute his will against Babylon, and his uorke against the Chaldeans.* And wee know that the Prophets are wont to ioine Gods counsell and worke together. Now he priuilegeth the Lewes for their ingratitude, in that they would not belecue Gods promises, though hee pointed out the thing before them with his finger, and spake far otherwise then did the Chaplaines of the false gods. To conclude, hee meant to informe the Lewes, that the surprizing of Babel by the hand of *Cyrus*, shall bee a *uorke* of the Lord, vnder whose direction all things shall bee so carried, that the Church in the end shall be deliuered.

Verf. 15. *I, euen I haue spoken it, and I haue called him: I haue brought him, and his way shall prosper.*

HEE brings the Lewes againe to the prophesies, and attributes this honour vnto God, that hauing in fit time reuealed the thing, hee takes away all doubtings. Afterwards hee addes, that whatsoever was foretold, shall be confirmed. And thus there is a double force in the doubling of these words, *I, euen I.* As if he should say, it is none but the God of Israel that hath spoken these things which are hidden, and to come: secondly, he being true, and one that neuer deceiues, he will vndoubtedly accomplish whatsoever he hath promised. *Naiah* then propounds two ends here vnto himselfe: First, that the poore captiues should wait for their deliuerance: secondly, being deliuered, that they should acknowledge God to be the author of so excellent a benefite, and not to ascribe it either to the arme of flesh, or to haphazard. Now he shewes that *Cyrus* his good successe in his enterprises, shall proceede from Gods calling of him. Not that he was worthy of so great a fauour, neither that he obtained it by his own industry and power; but in regard that the Lord vied him as his *seruant* to deliuer his people. For where he called him his *blowen* in the former verse, and heere saith that he hath called and brought him; I told you erewhile that it is not to bee referred to that loue of God, whereby he adopts vs for his children, by calling vs to himselfe. *Cyrus* was neither *loued* nor called in this kind: for howsoeuer he were indued with excellent vertues, yet was he tainted with very odious crimes, as ambition, desire of swaying Kingdomes, couetousnesse, crueltie, and many other vices: for his wofull and vnhappy end manifested sufficientlie what

Cyrus

Example.

John 13. 1.
Iere. 31. 3.

How Cyrus is said to be loued and called of God: See Chap. 45. 3.

Cyrus had a miserable end.

what

what he was. The Prophets meaning is then, that God will be favourable to *Cyrus* in *proſpering* him outwardly: not to adopt, nor to ſhew him that fauor which he only communicates to liis choſen. The cauſe muſt be conſidered then for which he giues him theſe titles, to wit, that he will vie his miniſterie for the deliuerance of his Church, as we haue ſaid before.

Verſ. 16. *Come neere vnto me: heare you this: I haue not ſpoken it in ſecret from the beginning: from the time that the thing was.* * *I was there, and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath ſent me.*

HE directs his ſpeech againe to the Iewes, and in commanding them to draw neere, he meetes them halfe way (as it were) gently to receiue them, and yet he couertlie taxeth their reuolt, ſhewing, that they were vnfit to entertaine wholeſome doctrine, vnleſſe they departed from their errors. Surely it was a detestable fault in them to be ſo farre ſeparated from God, with whom they ought to haue bin ſo neerely conioined: but their ſeparation conſiſted not ſo much in diſtance of place, as in the want of conſent in affections: our *approching* then conſiſts in a readines to *heare*, hauing ſubdued our owne carnall reaſon. But this is a worke of his owne grace; for who will be readie to direct his heart vnto God, if himſelfe draw him not?

I haue not ſpoken in ſecret.] The expoſitors expound this place diuerſlie. Some applie it to Ieſus Chriſt, whereas *Iſaiab* had no ſuch meaning: and it ſtands vs in hand to auoid all wreſted and conſtrained interpretations. Others referre it to the Prophet himſelfe: but this ſutes as badly as the former, for this ſpeech can agree to no man. I thinke then that *Iſaiab* brings in God ſpeaking, and blaming of the people touching their ingratitude, in that from the *beginning*, that is to ſay, ſince the day he began firſt to manifeſt himſelfe to their fathers, he hath not *ſpoken in ſecret*, nor obſcurely. Whence it follows, that the ignorance which is in them muſt needs be imputed to their owne malice, in regard they did wittinglie ſhut their eyes againſt the cleare light.

When he ſaith *from the time, &c.* It ſignifies, that he performed that by his power which he had ſpoken with his mouth. Hee rightlie affirms then that he gaue ſignes of his preſence, when in perſonning all things, he not only ratified the prophesies by the effects, but alſo to reach, y^e thoſe things which men imagin to fall out by chance, were gouerned and directed by Gods ſpeciall prouidence. In a word, he puts them in minde of Gods ancient promiſes, and of the accompliſhment of them, to ſhew, that God will be alwaies like himſelfe. Thoſe which ſay that *Iſaiab* ſhall be preſent in ſpirit when the Lord ſhall bring againe his Zion, offer violence to the Prophets words, and are euery way ſarre wide from his intention.

And now the Lord and his Spirit, &c.] Heere *Iſaiab* ſpeakes of himſelfe indeed, and applies

this ſentence to the former doctrine, proceſſing therein that God who ſpake *from the beginning*, ſpeakes alſo *by him*, ſo as they were to giue no leſſe credit to that which he now pronounced by the mouth of his ſeruante, then if himſelfe were there preſent in his owne perſon. Hence we may gather a profitable doctrine, to wit, that we are carefullie to thinke vpon all the miracles which the Lord hath done, to confirme our hearts in his truth. For it is no ſmall confirmation of our faith that the Lord hath had a remnant from the *beginning*, to whom he hath *maniſteſted himſelfe*, inſtructing them, and making them aſſured promiſes, which he hath fulfilled, ſo as there neuer failed nor fell to the ground the leaſt iot of that which he hath ſpoken. For what hath he pronounced with his mouth that he hath not fulfilled with his hand in due and conuenient ſeaſon? As oft then as wee be ſurprized with doubtings, wee muſt haue our recourſe to theſe and the like examples, and thence conlude thus with our ſelues, God hath of old bin wont to keepe touch with his ſeruants: it is not ſince yeſterday that he hath *begun to ſpeake*: neither did he euer hold his people in ſuſpence by ambiguous or doubtful ſpeeches, but hath alwaies ſpoken perſpicuouſlie and plainly. Thus the Prophet ſhewes he vtters nothing from his owne braine, but was *ſent of God*, who hath ſhewed himſelfe iuſt in all liis ſayings.

He mentions the *Spirit*, not to note out a thing diuers from God, ſeeing he is of one eſſence with him. For in one eſſence of God we acknowledge three perſons: but he names the *Spirit*, becauſe he is the only teacher and conductor of all the Prophets. *S. Paul* ſaith, That none can ſay Ieſus is the Lord, but by the *holy Ghoſt*: and by and by after he ſaith, that the gifts of God are diuers, and yet it is one and the ſame *ſpirit*, which works all things in all, 1. Cor. 12. 3. 4. In this place alſo we haue a manifeſt prooſe of the diuinitie of the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe he *ſent* the *Prophets*, which appertaines to none but God, euen as Ambaſſadors are ſent by the only authoritie of the Prince. *Seeing the holy Ghoſt ſent* the *Prophets* then, and directs and giues them power and efficacy, he muſt needs be God. Beſides, hence we gather, that we are to abandon all ſuch as haue not this direction of Gods ſpirit, notwithstanding they crake, they be ſent of God: I meane this troupe of popiſh wolues, who glorie in the titles of Paſtors, and Teachers, and impudentlie brag of their ſendings, ſeeing they are whollie deſtitute not only of the holy ſpirit, but of his doctrine. For in vaine doe they boaſt that they are inſtigated and ſent of God, when they are vtterlie vnſuſhred of thoſe gifts and graces of the *holy ghoſt* which are fit for the execution of ſuch a charge. Moreouer, it is too great a ſauaines in them to pretend the illumination of the ſpirit of Chriſt, ſeeing themſelues are whollie void of faith, and knows not a B ſtro a battledore in the doctrine of ſaluation. There are horned Biſhops which ſit in the chaire, and God wot the moſt part of them as ignorant as beaſts: nay, there is not tenne of them among

How wee ought to make our benefit of former miracles.

The holy Ghoſt of one eſſence with the Father.

Three diſtinct perſons in one eſſence.

A manifeſt prooſe of the diuinitie of the holy Ghoſt.

Popiſh wolues will neede deck themſelues with the titles of paſtors and teachers.

Few of the horned Biſhops in the Papeſie that know the firſt rudiments of religion.

* Or, done.

God rebukes the people for their ingratitude.

John 6.

Wreſted expoſitions are to be avoided.

among three hundred who haue so much as tasted the first rudiments of pietie, *Is any thing more absurd, then to say that such an assemble is governed by the holy Ghost?*

Verf. 17. *Thies saith the Lord thy redeemer the holy one of Israel, I am the Lord thy God* which teach thee to profit, and leade thee by the way which thou shouldst goe.*

*Or, teaching thee profitable things, leading thee, &c.

This and the foure verses following, depend one vpon another.

I loine this verse with the foure verses ensuing, because they tend all to one end, in which God promiseth deliuerance to his people, yet in such wise, that he first shewes how they were brought into bondage by their owne fault, and that to the end they should not murmure in obiecing that it had bin better for them to remaine in the countrie, if the Lord meant to help them then to be brought back after they were led away. For a Physition deserues not praise so much for curing a disease, as for hindring and preventing it. The Prophet prevents them, and saith, that this hapned through the peoples fault, for they might haue escaped this iudgement if they had but diligentlie attended vnto Gods commandements, but they would not, therefore such an obstinacie well deserued such a punishment: for it was not the Lords fault that the affaires of the people succeeded ill, but they had reiected his fauor which was tendred vnto them, and yet he saith, the Lord will ouercome this rebellion by his great goodnes, because he is not minded his people should perish, though for a time he afflicts them.

Teaching thee profitable things.] By this he meanes, that Gods doctrine is such, that it is able to preferre his people in good state if they would constantlie follow the rules therein prescribed. Now the Lord takes paines to teach vs, not to procure his owne good, but ours. For what good are we able to do him? By his holy doctrine then he prouides for euey one of our saluations, that being rightly instructed by it, we might reape the fruit thereof, which is, an *happie* and blessed life. But when by our vnthankfulness we reiect the benefit freely offred, what remains but that we should worthily perish? *Isaiah* then had iust cause to reproch the Iewes, that if they had not wittingly deprived themselves of the fruit of this doctrine, they should haue bin ignorant of nothing that tended to their profit and saluation.

Now if it bee affirmed touching the Law, that by it God taught his people profitable things: how much more may it be said of the Gospell, by which whatsoever is profitable and necessary, is fully reuealed vnto vs? And here also we see how execrable y^e blasphemies of the Papists are, who auer, that the reading of the Scripture is dangerous and hurtfull, that they may disswade the Iaicie (as they call them) from meddling therewith. What? Dare they indeed giue the lie to God, who by the mouth of his holy Prophet pronounceth that they are profitable? See 2. Tim. 3.16.

Papists giue God the lie.

Whether is it better we should beleeeue God or them? Let them disgorge their blasphemies then as long as they will with an who-rish forehead, yet ought not we to restraints the studie of them: for wee shall perceiue that *Isaiah* hath spoken the truth, if wee reade the holy Scriptures with feare and reuerence.

Guiding thy way.] These wordes shew yet more cleerly, the *profitableness* before mentioned. For the Prophets meaning is, that the way of saluation is set open to vs, if we heare God speaking; because he is ready to leade vs through the whole course of our life, if we will submit our selues to his lore. And thus *Moses* protests that hee set before the people life and death: Deut. 30.19. Also, This is the way, walke in it. For the rule of a godly life is contained in the Law, the which cannot deceiue. I command thee this day, saith *Moses*, that thou loue the Lord thy God, that thou walke in his waies, and that thou keepe his commandements, ordinances, & iudgements, that thou maiest liue, that the Lord may blesse thee in the land whither thou goest to possesse it: Deut. 30.16. The summe is, that such as are teachable, shall neuer bee destitute of light, vnderstanding, nor counsell.

Verf. 18. *Oh that thou haddest hearkened to my commandements! Then had thy prosperitie been as the flood, and thy righteousnesse as the wanes of the sea.*

*Or, peace.

IN regard the people might haue complained of their being led captiue, the Prophet to prevent such grudging, shewes the cause why it came to passe; namely, because they reiected the doctrine of saluation, without reaping any benefit by it. No doubt but he had respect to *Moses* his song, where there are almost the same words repeated. Oh that they were wise, then they would consider their latter end! Deut. 32.29. The particle *Li* heere, signifies a wish, Oh that, or, Would to God. But the Lord not onely complains that the Iewes lightly esteemed the good and profitable things offerd them: but he also bewails their miserie, as a father doth that of his children. For he takes no pleasure in afflicting vs, neither would he shew himselfe seuer, but that wee constrain him thereto by our frowardnesse. God then is heere moued vth compassion in beholding their ruin, who had rather wittingly perish, then to be saued: for he was ready to haue dealt all sorts of blessings liberally amongst them, if they by their owne rebellion, had not repelled and put him backe.

A preuentio.

God takes no pleasure in our afflictions.

Now it were preposterous to enter into Gods secret counsell, and to inquire wherefore himselfe made not the externall word effectually vpon them, by the worke of his holie Spirit. For the question is not heere of his power; but mans rebellion is heere onely reproued, that they may be left without excuse. Truly as oft as God calles vs to himselfe by his word, there is a full and absolute felicitie

Who art thou that disputest with God?

felicitie offered vs, which wee obſtinate lie reſiſt.

Wee haue told you before that the word *peace*, ſignifies all happy euents. It is then as if he had ſaid; Thou haſteſt had abundance of all good things, and ſhouldeſt neuer neede to haue feared any change, in regard the bleſſing of God vpon his ſeruants is a fountaine that can neuer bee drawne drie. As touching the word *iniſtice*, ioined vnto peace, wee may take it for that which wee commonly call *thy right*. But I had rather vnderſtand it of a Commonwealthe well gouerned, where all things are ruled orderly and well: as if hee ſhould ſay; All things had prospered and had gone well with thee, and thou haſt had a flouriſhing State.

Hee worthily ioines ſuch an eſtate with *peace*: for if good gouernement bee ouerthrowne, all goes out of frame; for it is not poſſible to inioy a right *peace*, where *iniſtice* is wanting: that is to ſay, vnleſſe matters of ſtate be managed with equitie and vprightneſſe. If we loue peace then, let vs forthwith be inſtant with the Lord to obtaine this happie eſtate, which is bleſſed of him. Some deſcant heere vpon ſpirituall iniſtice, and vpon remiſſion of finnes: but they miſſe the marke, and ſtray quite from our Prophets meaning, who ſpeakes plainly and ſimply.

Verſ. 19. *Thy ſeede alſo had been as the ſand, and the fruit of thy bodie like the grauell thereof: his name ſhould not haue been cut off nor deſtroyed before me.*

This alſo appertaines to an happy eſtate, namely, when poſteritie is increaſed: for by their helpe, the aged are comforted and reſreſhed in their labours, and the aduerſaries reſpelled. The *Pſalmiſt*, you know, compares ſuch *children* to arrowes ſhot from the hand of a mighty man, and pronounceth him bleſſed that hath his quier full of them: *Pſal.* 127.5, that is to ſay; who hath many ſuch children. In mentioning of *ſand*, it ſeemes he had reſpect to the promiſe made to *Abraham*; I will multiply thy ſeede as the ſtarrs of the heauen, and as the *ſand* by the ſea ſhore: *Gen.* 22.17. Afterwards he repeats the ſame thing in diuers words, according to the cuſtome of the Hebrewes, calling *children* and *grauell*, that which he had called *ſeede* and *ſand*. In a word, hee ſhewes that the people hindered God, from cauſing them to feele and taſte the fruit of his promiſe.

Afterwards, coming to *the interruption* of this grace, hee plainly reprocheth them; namely, that themſelues had ſought their owne ruine and deſtruction; whereas God had multiplied them wonderfully by his power. For by the word *name*, hee vnderſtands the lawful eſtate of the people, which had alwaies flouriſhed, if the courſe of Gods bleſſing had not been ſtopped.

And whereas he ſaith the people were *aboliſhed*, this muſt bee vnderſtood in reſpect of the land of *Canaan*, out of which Gods peo-

ple being vomited, *Leuit.* 18.25.28, they ſeemed to bee baniſhed the houſe of their father. For the Temple whereof the Iewes were deſtroyed, was a ſacrament vnto them of Gods preſence, and the land it ſelfe was a pledge vnto them of their heauenly inheritance. Being exiled thence then, they were in a manner excommunicated, and caſt out of Gods preſence, and had had no teſtimonies of his ſuccour left them, had not theſe promiſes relieued their miſeries. Now it is for vs to conſider well of this their miſerie: for being baniſhed farre from their Country, they had neither Temple, ſacrifices, nor aſſemblies. Now thoſe amongst whom at this day there is no forme of a Church, vſe of Sacraments, nor preaching of the word, they ought to thinke that God hath in a manner caſt them out of his preſence. Let them learne then to call and cry inſtantlie with ardent praier, that God would plant his Church in their coaſts.

Verſ. 20. *Go ye out of Babel; flee ye from the Chaldeans with the voice of ioy: tell and declare this; ſhew it forth to the ends of the earth: ſay ye; The Lord hath redeemed his ſervant Iakob.*

This is the ſecond part of this complaint, by which the Lord proteſts that hee will deliuer his people, how vnworthy or ingratefull ſouer they be. For hauing told the Iewes that hee hath performed the office of a good teacher towards them, and that they would not lend their eares; ſo as by their owne default they were ſent into captiuitie: now in ſetting before them his inuincible patience, he addes, that he will not ceaſe to aſſiſt them, till hee hath drawne them out of their bondage. Hee commands them then to *goe out of Babel* where they were captiues. Whence we gather, that how iuſt cauſe ſouer God hath to complaine of vs, yet by his inextimable goodneſſe, he is ready to ſuſtaine our miſeries, and to aid thoſe that are vnworthy; yea ſuch as haue ſtrowardly reſiſted his grace.

That which is added touching the *voice of ioy*, ſerues to confirme this deliuerance: for hee meant to adde this confirmation to that promiſe, which was vtterly incredible. That he might remooue all doubtings then, hee highly commends this benefit.

Declare. He expreſſeth the greatnes of that confidence which hee meant to erect in the hearts of the Iewes: for we are wont to publiſh that plainly and openly, whereof we haue good experience and aſſurance: but if we doubt, we dare ſcarſe open our mouths, but remaine mute and dumbe. Now *Iſaiab* ſpeaks of a thing to come with that reſolution, as if it were alreadie come to paſſe, that the people might in their hearts conceiue the more ſure and certaine confidence: and therefore hee vſeth this *commandement*, which hath much more efficacie in it, and moued their mindes more then if hee had told it them in bare termes.

Verſ. 21. *And they weare not thir- X x 4 ſtice:*

Canaan a pledge to the Iewes of their eternal inheritance.

Iſaiab ſpeaks of a thing to come, as if it were already come to paſſe.

The vſe the Iewes were to make of this commandement.

Tou droit.

Not poſſible to inioy a comfortable peace where iniſtice is wanting.

*Or, the children.

*Or, aboliſhed.

He led them through the wilderness: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: for he clave the rock, and the waters gushed out.

Isaiah puts the in mind of their first passage out of Egypt, to correct their infidelitie.

Fables invented by the Iewes.

In regard the Iewes saw no way open to returne home, and that there lay betwene many great and vast wildernesses, the Prophet alledgeth Gods power, from whence he propounds some examples, that so the Iewes might be dispossest of all feare & doubtings. He would haue them then to consider, whether God was not sufficientlie able to deliuer their fathers out of Egypts bondage, and to bring them through horrible *deserts*, in which notwithstanding he furnished them with viands, water, and all other necessaries, Exod. 16. and 17. If he were able to do the one, why should they misdoubt his abilitie concerning the other? The Iewes here according to their maner coine fond fables, and inuent ridiculous miracles which were neuer done nor heard of. And this they doe, not so much of ignorance, as of impudencie, whereby they giue themselves libertie to publish any thing that may carrie a faire shew, though it be vterlie senselesse. But our Prophets meaning was to put them in mind of that first passage out of Egypt, and of the miracles which the Lord then did. For whē the Prophets meane to extoll Gods works, it is their custome (as we haue often shewed) to mention this first deliuerance. And thus *Dauid* setting forth the victories he obtained, saith, that the mountains trembled and shooke, the ayre cleft in twaine, and the Lord appeared from heauen, which he neuer saw notwithstanding, *Psa.* 18. but he therein follows the description of the deliuerance out of Egypt, to shew, that God was the author of it, and that he also fortified and guided him to overcome his enemies, and that his power was no lesse manifest in this victorie, then in those wonderfull signes and miracles.

And thus the Prophet now would haue the people consider of these wonders of old, to correct their incredulitie, & not to be tempted with diffidence: for it was the custome of Gods faithfull seruants to cast their eyes alwaies vpon this deliuerance, that by the re-

membrance of so great a benefit, they might confirme euery mans heart in faith and hope. We haue also told you before that they were from age to age to feele the fruit of this redemption, that the Lord by a continuall progresse might still be acknowledged the protector of that people whom he had so redeemed at the first. Our Prophets meaning is then, that the Lord will easly overcome all impediments, and will set open the passages that are shut, will furnish them with *water* in abundance that they faint not for thirst, for he will worke for them *as in old time* he did for their fathers, when extraordinarie he caused *waters to issue out of the rock*, they making their account to perish for thirst. Exod. 17.6. and therefore there was no cause why they should call the assurance of their returne into question, if they would but only meditate of that power of God wherof themselves by experience had tasted.

Verf. 22. There is no peace, saith the Lord, to the wicked.

Some inclose these words, *saith the Lord*, in a parenthesis; but we may keep this order in the text, to wit, *That the Lord denies the peace to the wicked, wherof they are unworthy.* A prevention in regard of hypocrites.

Now this is expressly added, lest the hypocrites according to their wont, should conceiue any vaine hope in these promises, for he saith, they belong nothing at all to such, that he might whollie exclude them from all hope of saluation. But it seemes *Iesaiah* respected some other thing, for in regard the greatest part of the people overflowed in impietie, and reiected this benefit, many infirme and weak ones might stagger, and be offended at their multitudes: for at this day there are many weak consciences troubled, when they see the doctrine of saluation contemned by the greater part of the world, Seeing then there were many in great danger of stumbling, he turnes their minds from this temptation, that the multitude of the wicked and vnbeleuers (who reiected Gods grace, and this happie estate mentioned *verse* 18. 19.) might not trouble them, but rather without gazing vpon such kinde of persons, might comfortably embrace and possesse this benefit themselves.

THE XLIX. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. Heare ye me, o Iles, and hearken ye people from farre, The Lord hath called me from the womb, and made mention of my name from my mothers belly.

From the treatise of their redemption, he comes to speake of Christ.



Auing discoursed of the redemption to come, hee now descends to speake of Christ, vnder whose leading, the people were deliuered from the captiuitie of *Babylō*, as in old time they were out of Egypt. Now it was needfull the former prophetic should be con-

firmed with this present doctrine: for they would hardly haue bin drawne to expect this redemption from the Lord, had he not set Christ Iesus before their eyes, in whom all Gods promises are *Yea, and Amen*, *2. Cor.* 1. 20. who only also is able to cheere vp and refresh the fainting spirits: for wee are no lesse to looke for temporall saluation from him, then that which is eternall. Adde, that the Prophets are wont in speaking of the restoration of *ſ* Church euer to mention Christ, not only because he is the minister thereof, but also because his adoption is grounded vpon him. The Iewes who haue any sparke of

All the promises are Yea and Amen in Christ.

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found judgement do confeſſe, that this place is to be vnderſtood of Chriſt only, & that all haue not kept the order which we haue noted. For the Prophet ſpeakes not of Chriſt at the firſt brunt, but vnder this *preface*, for wiſh- out it the people could looke for no redemption, in regard their reconciliation with God depended thereupon. Now that it might haue the greater efficacy, he brings in Chriſt himſelfe ſpeaking, not only to the *Iewes*, but to the *nations beyond the ſeas*, and to the ſtrangers farre remote from the common-wealth of Iſrael, who are ſpecified heere vnder this word *ies*, as we haue ſhewed in another place.

The Lord hath called me from the womb. Some aſke what this *vocation* is? for ſeeing we were elected in Chriſt before the foundations of the world, Ephes. 1. 4. it follows that he is before vs, becauſe he is *the beginning and foundation of our election*. It ſeemes the Prophet therefore hath ſpoken leſſe then the thing imports, in affirming that Chriſt was called from the womb, ſeeing he was before all time. But the answer to this is eaſie, for the queſtion is not heere touching Gods eternal election, whereby we are adopted for his children, but only of the eſtabliſhing and conſecration of Chriſt ordained to this office, that wee ſhould not thinke he intruded himſelfe thereinto at random. For no man takes this honor to himſelfe, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron, Heb. 5. 4. 5. So Chriſt tooke not vpon himſelfe the office of the high Prieſt, but he which advanced him to it, ſaid, *Thou art my ſonne, this day haue I begotten thee*, Pſal. 2. 7.

Moreouer, the Prophet defines not of the beginning of time, as if God had then begun to call him from the womb, but it is as if he ſhould haue ſaid, Before I came out of my mothers womb, God ordeined me to this office, as S. Paul ſaith, That God had choſen him from his mothers womb, Gal. 1. 15. though notwithstanding he had elected him alſo ſo before the foundations of the world. It is alſo ſaid of *Jeremiah*, Before I formed thee, I knew thee, Iere. 1. 5. In a word, the ſumme is, that Chriſt tooke our fleſh by the ordinance of his Father, that he might fulfill the worke of our Redemption vnto which he was deſtinated. Hereunto appertaines the laſt member of the verſe, for *the mentioning of his name*, ſignifies as much as a familiar knowledge of him. He ſeparates him then from out of the common ranke of men, becauſe he is choſen to a rare and ſingular piece of ſeruiſe.

Verſ. 2. *And hee hath made my mouth like a ſharpe ſword: vnder the ſhadow of his hand hath hee hid mee, and made me a choſen ſhaft, and hid me in his quiuier.*

HE ſeeth two ſimilitudes; to wit, the *ſword* and *quiuier*, to expreſſe the efficacy of his doctrine: and then he ſhewes to what end he was called and dignified with ſo noble a title, namely, that he might *teach*: for that is it he ſignifies by the word *mouth*. Chriſt then was not ſent of the Father to conquer by force

of armes, as earthly Princes doe; but his conquest is obtained by the ſword of the Spirit; that is to ſay, by preaching the whole counſell of God, in which hee will be fought and knowne: for he is not to be found elſewhere. Now hee ſhewes what the force of his *mouth* is; that is to ſay, of the doctrine which proceeds out of his mouth, when he compares it to a *ſharpe ſword*. For the word of God is liuely in operation, and more piercing then all two edged ſwords: for it divides betweene the ſoule and the ſpirit, and the ioints and the marrow; and is a diſcerner of all the intents of the heart: Heb. 4. 12. He compares it alſo to an *arrow*, becauſe it not onely hits neere, but alſo a ſarre off, and comes euen to them who ſeeme far remote.

But after Iſaiah hath ſpoken of the efficacy of his doctrine, hee adds, that God will maintaine both Chriſt and it by his power: ſo as nothing ſhall be able to hinder the courſe thereof. For as ſoone as Chriſt opens his *mouth*; that is to ſay, as ſoone as the Goſpell begins to be ſincerely preached, the aduerſaries band themſelves on all ſides, and infinite enemies conſpire how to ſuppreſſe it. So as this efficacy whereof he ſpeakes, and which hee attributes to his doctrine, would not ſtand, vnleſſe Gods protection and *ſhadow* came betweene, to abandon the aduerſaries.

But he ſpeakes not heere onely of Chriſt, but of the whole body of his Church. I grant we muſt beginne at the head, but ſo that thence we muſt defend to the members, and apply it to all the Miniſters of the word; which is heere ſpoken of Chriſt, in regard this efficacy of the word is giuen them, that their voice ſhould not beate the aire in vaine, but that it ſhould enter to the pricking of the heart: Acts 2. 37. The Lord alſo cauſeth the trump of his word to ſound, not in one place onely, but to the vtmoſt ends of the earth. Laſtly, in regard the Lord faithfully keeps them vnder the *ſhadow of his hand*, though they be ſubiect to many reproches, and that Satan on euery ſide aſſailes them; yet they breake not off their courſe, which experience might well haue taught vs. For there is not one of vs, but we had long ſince been vtterly rooted out by the ſecret and open practiſes of our enemies, had not the Lord been our defence. And truly I cannot but wonder, that any one Miniſter of the Goſpell ſhould ſtand ſafe, in the miſt of ſo many & ſo great dangers. But the cauſe is, the Lord keeps them vnder the *ſhadow of his hand*, and hides them as *ſhafts in his quiuier*, that they ſhould not be hurt nor deſtroyed of their enemies.

Verſ. 3. *And he ſaid vnto me; Thou art my ſeruant Iſrael; for I will be glorious in thee.*

THIS verſe muſt be ioined with the former. For heereby it appeares, that he ſpeakes not of one man, but of the whole people: which the expoſitors haue not conſidered: for this place neither ought to be reſtrained

by force of armes, but by the ſword of the Spirit.

Pſal. 45. 5.

God will maintaine both Chriſt and his doctrine. The Goſpell no ſooner preached, but it is oppoſed by enemies.

A miracle that a faithful Miniſter ſhould ſtand.

This verſe depends vpon the former.

Chriſt thruſt not himſelfe into his office without a calling.

Two ſimilitudes expreſſing the efficacy of his doctrine.

Chriſt conquer not

to Christs person, nor yet referred to Israel onely. But we must heere obserue the course of the Scriptures. When the body of the Church is mentioned, then Christ is placed in the middle, as it were, who vnder him comprehends the children of God. Wee heare what Saint Paul saith; The promises were made to Abraham, and to his seede. He saith not to his seede, as speaking of many: and to thy seed, which is Christ; Gal. 3. 16. For he comprehends not the multitude of children which came of Abraham according to the flesh, seeing all were not partakers of this blessing, *Ishmael* was reiected; Gal. 4. 30. *Elsaw* was hated; Mal. 1. 3. and many others were cut off.

When the people were deliuered from vnder the captiuitie of Babylon, the number of those which returned were very small; for the greatest part reiected this excellent benefit of God. Where was this seede then? Euen in Christ who is the head, and vnder him contains the rest of the members: for in him, by an inseparable band, is the whole seed assembled and knit together in one. And in the same sense that *Ishaiab* hath noted out Christ vnder the name of *Israel*, so also hath he comprehended the whole body, as the members vnder the head. Which is no new thing. For when Paul speakes of that vnion which is betweene Christ and the Church, hauing set it forth vnder the similitude of a mans body, he addes, *euen so is Christ*: 1. Cor. 12. 12. And in this place the name of *Christ* is attributed vnto *Israel*: that is to say, to the whole companie of the faithfull, which are vnited to Christ as the members to the head. Afterwards, the Lord giues this title to the Church, which is the spouse of Christ, as the wife is dignified with the name and title of her husband.

Now he calleth *Israel* his *seruant*: that is to say, his handmaid the Church; for shee is the pillar and ground of truth, because hee hath committed his word vnto her, as a pledge to keepe; that by her ministerie it may be published thorowout the world: 1. Tim. 3. 15. In the latter part of the verse, hee shewes what the end of this ministry is, and why those that preach the Gospell are called thereunto of God; to wit, that they make his *glory* by all meanes to shine cleere in respect of themselves, and to aduance it also among others. Which Christ teacheth in the Gospell, saying; *Father, glorifie thy Sonne*, that thy Sonne also may glorifie thee: Iohn 17. 1. But doth not God shew vs a singular fauour, when he appoints vs, base and vile wretches, to be procurers of *glory* vnto him? Oh! let this quicken vs vp to obey him carefully, and to imploy our selues faithfully in his seruice. And yet the Prophet meant to expresse somewhat more, namely, that howsoeuer Satan and his imps lay all the plots they can, yet Gods power shall ouerthrow them all: so as Christ shall triumph notwithstanding *gloriouslie*, and God his maiestic shall shine most bright in his Gospell still.

Verf. 4. *And I said; I haue labored in vaine, I haue spent my strength in*

vaine and for nothing: but my iudgement is with the Lord, and my worke with my God.

The Prophet addes a grieuous complaint heere, in the name of the Church; yet so, as he begins at the head, as we haue said before. Christ then with his members complains, that he hath in a manner vtterly lost his labour: for after hee hath greatly praised and commended the efficacy of that word which issueth out of his mouth, verf. 2. now he shewes that it hath done little or no good notwithstanding: so as this *glory* which God requires to shine in the ministerie of his word, appeares very little. For Christ saith, he hath laboured in vaine, because men wil not repent, nor turne to God by the preaching of the heavenly doctrine. It was to great purpose that the Prophet added this. First, to teach vs that this fruit whereof he spake, shall not alwaies appeare in the eyes of men; for otherwise we should be readie to call the truth of Gods word into question; and would also be brought to doubt, whether this doctrine, which is reiected of so many with such impudencie, were the word of God or no. Secondly, that we might bend all our forces with inuincible constancie to performe our duties, and to commend the successe of all our labours vnto the blessing of God, who will not suffer it to be fruitlesse in the end. And thus the Prophet meant to meeete with a dangerous temptation, that by the rebellions of men, we should not faint in the middle of our course. And truly *Christ* so begins here vnto a complaint, that he yet comforts himselfe by and by, knowing that nothing shall be able to direct him from the performance of his charge. And the text would be somewhat plainer, if wee reade it thus: *Although my seruante be in vaine, and that I haue spent my selfe without fruit; yet it sufficeth that my worke is approued of my God. Vnto which appertaines that which is added; but my iudgement is before the Lord.*

Albeit then the fruit of our labours appeare not before vs, yet must it content vs that they are done before that God whom we serue, and to whom our seruice is agreeable. For Christ exhorts and encourageth the faithfull Ministers to fight valiantly, vntill they haue ouercome this temptation: so as, setting light by the malice of men, they cheerfully goe on still in their calling, without suffering discontentments or carelesnesse to hindre their course. If the Lord haue a purpose then to try our faith and patience, so farre as that it shall seeme we labour in vaine, yet must wee satisfie our selues with the testimonie of a good conscience. But if this consolation take no place in vs, then is it certaine that we are not carried forwards with a pure affection: neither doe wee serue God in this function, but the world and our owne ambition. Wherefore it is needfull for vs to haue our recourse to this sentence in such temptations.

In the meane while wee may note that the whole world, is accused heere of ingratitude, both

Ishmael reiected. *Elsaw* repro- bated.

The vnion which is betweene Christ and his Church.

A bitter complaint,

Why this complaint is added.

An encouragement for Ministers.

The whole world taxed of ingratitude.

both by Chriſt and his Church: who ſo complain before God, that notwithstanding they expoſtulate with the world, in regard the doctrine of the Goſpelly which is ſo effectuall in it ſelfe, workeſ no better effects in the inhabitants thereof. But this fault wholly reſteth in mens vnthankfulneſſe and obſtinacie, who reiect the grace which God offers them, and chuſe wittingly to periſh, rather then to be ſaued. They therefore which charge the Goſpell of vnfruitfulneſſe, and wickedly belie and ſlander the bleſſed truth, ſcoffing at our labours as being idle and vnprofitable, and babble that it is the cauſe of conuulſions, and ſets men together by the eares; let them now come forth and accuſe the Sonne of God: let them conſider well with whom they haue to doe, and what profit their impudencie will bring them in the end. For men are in all the fault, in that themſelues make fruſtrate and void, the preaching thereof, as much as in them lieth. But the faithfull Miniſters who are vexed in their ſoules to ſee men periſh ſo miſerably by their owne fault, who alſo waſt and kill themſelues with ſorrow when they haue triall of ſuch an obſtinacie, ought notwithstanding to arme themſelues with this conſolation, and not to be ſo diſquieted as to caſt down the bucklers, though at ſometimes it ſeemes beſt for them ſo to do. Let them rather meditate that Chriſt is paraker with them in this their burthen: for he ſpeakes not only of himſelfe, as we haue ſaid before, but of all his faithfull ſeruants, who here in all their names, as a carefull protector, enters their accusation for them. Let them therefore reſt themſelues vpon his defence, and leaue the maintenance of their cauſe vnto him. Let them make their appeale (as Paul doth) *to the day of the Lord*, 1. Cor. 4. 4. and neuer ſtand to breake their braines about the lies, ſlanders, and outrages of their enemies; for as their iudgement is before the Lord, though the vnthankfull world diſgrace them an hundred times, ſo will God be the faithfull approuer and rewarder of their ſeruice. Contrariwiſe, let the wicked, prophane contemners of the word, and all hypocrites tremble; for when Chriſt ſhall accuſe them, all their defences will not be worth a ruſh, neither ſhall any be able to abſolue them from his iuſt ſentence of condemnation. We muſt looke to it then that the fruit which ſhould come of the Goſpell, periſh not by our fault, for God manifeſts his glorie, that we may be made the diſciples of Ieſus Chriſt, and bring forth much fruit, Iohn 15. 8.

Verſ. 5. *And now ſaith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his ſervant, that I may bring Iacob againe to him (though Iſrael be not gathered) yet ſhall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God ſhall be my ſtrength.*

HE confirms the former ſentence, and ſets before vs a more full conſolation by a repetition of the duties of his calling, and the teſtimonic of his owne conſcience. And

this ought to be a ſtrong tower for vs to run vnto; for nothing diſquiets nor troubles our minds more, then when we be vnertaine vnder whoſe leading it is that we enterpriſe this or that. Iſaiab therefore brings vs to the certentie of our vocation. Firſt then the faithfull Miniſters ſay with Chriſt their Prince and Captaine, that *God hath formed* them, in regard he alwaies endues them whom he ſends and calles to the office of teaching, with neceſſarie gifts, for they draw all the graces wherewith they are furniſhed from the only fountaine of grace the holy Ghoſt. Thus then in the firſt place God hath ſet his ſeale vpon Chriſt: next vnto him, vpon all his Miniſters, whom according to their meaſure he fits and prepares, that they may haue wherewithall to execute their charge. Therewithall he ſets downe the end of their calling: for the Apoſtles and teachers of the Church are ordeined and ſent to gather the ſcattered flock of Chriſt together, that all his ſheep may be folded vnder him into one bodie. For there is a wofull ſcattering in the world, but in Jeſus Chriſt all are gathered in, as S. Paul ſaith Ephes. 1. 10. other band of vnitie there is none.

As touching the word created, or *formed*, many triſtle in deſcantiſing about the humane nature of Chriſt, which indeed was created: for it is more cleare then the Sunne at noone day that this *creation* is to be referred to his office.

Though Iſrael be not called.] The Iewes reade this by an interrogation, Shall I not bring Iacob againe, and ſhall not Iſrael be gathered? But this reading is conſtrained, neither do they conſider of the Prophets meaning, but as much as in them is, corrupt the text, that they might couer the ſhame of their nation. Others expound, He ſhall not be loſt: or, He ſhall not periſh. For the verb *Aſick* ſignifies, to truſt vp; for, they gather together that which is to be kept, or to be conſumed: and ſo when we ſpeake of one that is dead, we commonly ſay, he is truſted vp.

This ſenſe agrees not ill, I am ſent, that Iſrael periſh not, but I had rather follow another expoſition. Although all Iſrael be not gathered, yet ſhall I be glorified: for in this place we may ſee that two contraries are oppoſed one to another. If the Miniſters of the word be ordeined to ſaue men, it is a great honor to them when many are brought to ſaluation; if not, it makes them abaſhed and aſhamed: for S. Paul calles thoſe whom he gained to Chriſt, *his ioy, and his crowne*, Phil. 4. 1. 1. Theſſ. 2. 19. Contrariwiſe if men periſh, we beare ſhame and diſgrace by it, in regard it ſeemes God curſeth our labors, in that he vouchſafeth vs not that honor, as to be the aduancers of his kingdome by our Miniſtrie. Notwithſtanding our Prophet affirms, that ſuch as haue ſerued Chriſt in this office, ſhall be glorified: for he comprehends the members vnder the head (as we haue ſtice ſaid before.)

Will not Iſrael be gathered then? yet ſhall Chriſtes Miniſtrie loſe no lot of glorie thereby. For if men be not gathered, the burthen will lie whollie vpon their owne necks. In which

A caueat for ſcorners.

The Miniſters appeale:

Tremble and ſinne not ye prophane contemners of the word.

A confirmation joined with a more ample conſolation.

which sense Saint Paul affirms, that although the preaching of the Gospell be a saour of death vnto death in the reprobates, yet euen that is a sweete saour vnto God, who by the meanes of preaching, will make the wicked the more without excuse. God is glorified double, if the effect answer his desire. But, if the Ministers of the word, hauing omitted no part of their duties, shall (to their grieue and smart I confesse) see no fruits to come of their labours; yet let them not repent that they haue heerein pleased God, whose approbation is heere opposed to all the peruerse iudgements of the world. As if the Prophet should say; Be it that men abhorre you, and charge you with many faults; yet must you swallow this, and much more too with patience: for God hath another end, and will crowne your patience with glorie and honour, which the wicked so proudly and scornfullie despise.

He addes in the same sense, that it ought to suffice them that God is their strength, to the end that neither the multitude nor power of their enemies doe astonish them, seeing in their God consists their strength.

Verf. 6. *And hee said; It is a small thing that thou shouldest be my seruant, to raise up the tribes of Iacob, and to restore the desolations of Israel: I will also giue thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou maiest bee my saluation to the end of the world.*

HEE goes on further and shewes, that the labours of Christ and of all his seruants, shall be glorious indeede; not onely before God, but also before men. For howsoeuer they be esteemed vaine and vsfruitfull in the beginning, yet in the end the Lord will cause them to bring forth fruit contrary to all the opinions of men. It was enough that in the first place God approved their labours: but in that he now addes, that the same shall not proue vnprofitable, no nor in regard of men: this ought to bee as a spur to put life into them, and much to comfort their comfortlesse spirits. Whence it followes, that wee ought to hope that the issue of that which is committed into Gods hands, shall be good, because the blessing which hee promiseth to our labours, shall in the end appeare; so farre forth, as he sees it expedient, and for his own glory.

Besides, he addes that this labour shall not onely fructifie among the people of Israel, but among the Gentiles also: which (blessed be our God) is now come to passe. Nay, more then that; for seeing the Iewes with an obstinate hardnesse, became so gracelesse as to reject Christ; the Gentiles are now grafted into their stocke. And thus Christ is appointed of God to be a light vnto the Gentiles, and his saluation manifested to the vmost parts of the world.

This consolation then was very necessarie, as well for the Prophets, as the Apostles: Acts

13.47. For they had but too wofull and daillie experience more and more, of the frowardnesse of the Iewes. In which regard, they might haue called the certainty of these promises into question, seeing so little fruit of them appeared. But vnderstanding that Christ was also sent to the Gentiles, they were not so vnwilling to goe thorow thicke and thin, as otherwise they would haue been. I grant it was a thing incredible; nay, prodigious: but thus the Lord is wont to worke far about the reach of mans reason. Saint Paul calles it a secret hidden, Eph. 3.9. from the foundations of the world, and is yet vnknowne to the very Angels: 1. Pet. 1.12. further forth then it is manifested vnto them by the Church: Eph. 3.10. Thus then, although the Iewes were once the onelie wise people vnder heauen, Deuteronomie, 4.6. yet they are heere matched with the Gentiles: neither is there anie more distinction now betweene them before God: Rom. 10.12.

The Rabbines reade this verse by an interrogation; *Is it a small thing?* As if he should say; that it is enough, and that nothing greater nor further is to be required. But they doe maliciously peruert the natie sense of the Prophets words; and make themselues belieue, forsooth, that they shall one day become Lords ouer the Gentiles, and raigne ouer all nations. But the true meaning is, that this shall be an excellent and glorious worke in it selfe, when God shall restore and reestablish the Tribes of Israel. And yet this worke shall be much more glorious, in respect that he will ioine the Gentiles to the Iewes, that they may with one mouth and heart, professe the name of one Christ. He speaks not in this place of the reiectiō of the ancient people then; but of the increasing of the Church, when Iewes and Gentiles shall be made one body. I grant that after the Iewes fell away from the couenant of grace, the Gentiles supplied their emtie place: so as their reuolt was the cause that those which were strangers before, were now made children by adoption. But heere (as in many other places) *Isaiah* foretelles that the Church shall haue a large extent, when the Gentiles shall be receiued in, and made one body with the Iewes.

Now albeit the word *light*, may be vnderstood ioy and felicitie, yet I doubt not but the Prophet respects the doctrine of the Gospell, which giues light to our vnderstandings, and pulles vs out of darknesse. Hee also saith, that this light which Christ shall bring, shall be saluation: for as Christ is called the way, the truth, and the life, because we obtaine life by the knowledge of the truth: so in this place he is called the *light* and *saluation* of the Gentiles, because hee enlightens our mindes by the doctrine of the *light* of the Gospell, that he may bring vs to *saluation*. Let vs obserue these two things then: first, that our eies are opened by Christs doctrine: secondlie, that wee which were dead, shall be raised vp to life; or rather, that life is restored vnto vs.

Verſ. 7. Thus ſaith the Lord the redeemer of Iſrael, and his holy one, to him that is deſpiſed * in ſoule, to a nation that is abhorred, to a ſervant of rulers; Kings ſhall ſee and ariſe, and Princes ſhall worſhip, becauſe of the Lord that is faithfull: and the holy one of Iſrael which hath choſen thee.

Iſaiab goes on with the ſame argument, that the people might conceiue a better hope in their munde, touching their eſtate & condition, when they ſhould ſee themſelues afflicted vnder to many tedious calamities. And the rather to confirme his ſaying, hee calles God, who promiſed to performe theſe things, the redeemer of Iſrael. But may ſome obiect; How can theſe things ſtand together; that God ſhould bee called the redeemer of his people, whom he ſuffered to be overwhelmed with miſeries? For where was this redemption and ſanctification become, ſeeing the people had iuſt cauſe to complaine of their povertie and calamities? I anſwere, that the memorie of that which had fallen out long before, is heere propounded and ſet before them, to miniſter vnto them matter of hope and truſt. For the Iewes being preſſed with deſpaire, the Prophet preuenteth it by aduertizing them, that that God which in times paſt had deliuered their fathers, is now no leſſe almighty then he was then. Albeit then for a time, hee withdraw the light of his countenance from them, to exerciſe and trie their faith, yet hee commands them not to caſt away their confidence, becauſe their certaine and full redemption is in his hands: and yet they were heerein to looke farre aboue the reach of humane reaſon. This therefore is a very excellent place: out of which we may gather how carefully we ought to beleaue God when he ſpeakes, albeit hee doe not forthwith accompliſh that which hee hath promiſed, but ſuffers vs to languiſh vnder afflictions a long time.

Some translate the word *Veru*, Contemned; others, Contemptible; which I approoue of. But this augments the miſerie of the people, when the Prophet calles them deſpiſed * in ſoule: for many are deſpiſed of others, who notwithstanding are worthy of honour, in regard of the graces wherewith they be indued: or being pulled vp with pride, ceaſe not with an higher contempt, to treade vnder their feete the contempt of others. But Iſaiab affirms, that the Iewes are not more deſpiſed and contemptible in the eies of others, then they are in their owne. Thus then hee notes out an exceeding ignominie and low eſtate; therewithall comprehending the affliction of the Spirit: to teach them that God ſhall ceuſe in his time to ſuccour them, when they ſhall be thoroughly humbled.

I ſee no reaſon why ſome haue changed the number in the word *nation*, ſeeing the Prophet ſeeth the ſingular number *Go*; it being certaine that hee addreſſeth his ſpeech to

the poſteritie of Abraham. Afterwards hee calls them ſervants of rulers: as if he ſhould ſay, that mightie tyrants oppreſſed them: for by the word *Moschelim*, hee means thoſe that haue ſo much force and power, that it is an hard matter to eſcape their hands.

When he ſaith that Kings ſhall ſee, he ſpeaks in high and glorious termes of the deliuerie of his people; but in the meane while, hee is contented they ſhould bee tried in the furnace, to proue their faith and patience; for where were the triall of faith, if God ſhould forthwith giue that which he hath promiſed, (as we ſaid before.)

In the word *Princes*, there is a repetition much vſed among the Hebrewes. But we will ſpeake it thus ſhortly; Kings and Princes ſhall ſee, they ſhall ariſe, and bow downe.

By the verbe To bow downe, he expounds what he meant by ariſing: for wee riſe vp to giue honour. The ſumme is, that the greateſt Princes of the world ſhall bee awakened to confeſſe that the reſtauration of the Church is an excellent worke of God, and worthy of reſpect and reuerence.

Becauſe the holy one of Iſrael who hath choſen thee, is faithfull. See the cauſe of this great aſtoniſhment, touching the honour which Princes ſhall performe to God; to wit, becauſe they ſhall acknowledge his faithfullneſſe and conſtance in his promiſes. For the Lord would not be acknowledged faithfull from a bare and naked imagination, but from experience it ſelfe; to wit, in the preſeruation and protection of his people, whom hee hath adopted. Hence therefore let vs learne not to iudge of Gods promiſes by our present eſtate, but by his truth and faithfullneſſe: ſo as when we perceiue nothing but death and the graue to compaſſe vs round, yet wee may remember this ſentence, by which the Lord calles vs to him, euen the vile and contemp-
2. Cor. 7. 6;
tible.

God would not be held to be faithfull by a bare imagination, but from good experience.

Hence alſo wee are to conſider how glorious and admirable a worke the deliuerance of the Church is, in that it conſtrains Kings, be they neuer ſo proud (thinking nothing), be it neuer ſo excellent, worthy to behold them) to behold, to admire, yea and to honour and reuerence the Lord, whether they will or no. This new and extraordinary worke then, is heere greatly recommended vnto vs in this behalfe. For not to mention ancient hiſtories; by what means hath God deliuered vs out of that woſull tyrannie of Antichriſt? Truly wee were as thoſe that dreame, as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, Pſal. 126. 1. eſpecially if wee doe but ſeriously conſider of the thing it ſelfe: for the Lord hath wrought a miracle in bringing vs to doe homage vnto Chriſt.

In the end of the verſe, the Prophet repeates that which hee touched before; to wit, that this people were ſet a part to bee the Lords. But in election we muſt ſeeke the beginning of ſanctification: for the people were the *holy* inheritance, becauſe God had vouchſafed of his meere grace to chuſe them. Iſaiab. then means that ſecret will of God, from whence ſanctification flowes; that Iſrael might not thinke they were choſen for their own deſerts.

*O. in himſelfe.

Obiect.

Anſ.

We muſt not ceate to be heere, though God for a time deſerue his promiſe.

*O. in himſelfe.

As if he had said, The Lord which hath *elect* thee shewes, that thou art so indeed by the effects. As we ought then to acknowledge Gods *faithfulness* and truth in our saluation, to must we attribute this *saluation* only to our *free election*. And yet it behoues euery one that will partake in so great a benefit, to be a portion of the true *Israel*, that is to say, of the Church, out of which there is neither *truth* nor *saluation* to be found.

Neither
truth nor
saluation
out of the
Church.

V. vs. 8. Thus saith the Lord; in an acceptable time haue I heard thee, and in a day of saluation haue I saccored thee, and will preserue thee, and giue thee for a covenant of the people, that thou mayst raise vp the earth, and obtaine the inheritance of the desolate heritage.

From this verse we may yet more clearly gather that which we haue handled in the beginning of this Chapter, to wit, that the Prophet so speaks of the whole body of the Church, that he begins at the head thereof. And this, as I haue said, ought to be well obserued, for the expositors haue bauked it, and yet without it we shall not be able to make these verses to cohere. S. Paul plainly shewes this, in applying this very sentence to the whole Church, 2. Cor. 6.2. But yet that which follows, *I will giue thee for a covenant of the people*, sutes to none but Christ only. How shall we make these things agree then? To wit, if we shall consider that Christ is not so much his owne as ours, For he was not borne; neither died he, nor rose againe for himselfe. He was sent for the saluation of his people. He seeks nothing at our hands: for he stands in neede of nothing. Thus then, God makes his promises to y^e whole Church: and Christ, who is as it were the suretie or pledge betweene both, receiues these promises, and procures nothing to himselfe by them, but altogether for the Churches behoofe, for whose saluation he was sent. He speaks not then of Christ, as singling him out by himselfe, but as of one that is ioined and made one with his Church for euer. It is an inestimable fauor then which the father shewes vs when he beares his sonne for our sakes: yea, that he directs his speech to his sonne whilest he is speaking of our saluation. For by this we may perceiue how neere the coniunction is betweene Christ and vs. He represents our person. He hath nothing which is not ours: and is heard of his Father in respect of vs.

Christ not
so much
his owne
as ours.

Our vnion
with Christ
againe noted.

By the *acceptable time*, the Prophet meant to keepe the faithfull within their bounds, that they should not be too eager in their desires, but might patientlie wait the Lords leisure euen till his prefixed time were come, in which sense S. Paul calles the coming of Christ the fulnes of time, Gal. 4.4. He would haue them then to depend vpon the will of God, and in the meane while to beare his wrath with a quiet and meeke spirit. Moreover, albeit the Prophet meant to exhort the faithfull to patience, and to learne to subdue

their wills to the will of God, yet he therewithall teacheth, that our saluation flows from the free fauor of God. For his receiving of vs is the foundation of our saluation. And saluation is the effect of this grace. We are salued because we please God; not for our owne merits, but of his meere goodnes. And yet withall he shewes that our saluation is certaine, in that we haue so sure a pledge of Gods grace: for in assuring vs of his fauor, he remoues all doubtings.

This place serues to set forth the commendation of Gods word, without which, there is no enquiring after saluation: as also S. Paul saith, 2. Cor. 6.3. where he shewes that Gods fauor is plainly manifested vnto vs in the preaching of the Gospell, so as that which is written heere touching the *day of saluation*, is thereby accomplished. Thirdly, the Prophet admonisheth vs, that when the Gospell is sent to any place, there God discouers a sure pledge of his fauor, and good will. For is it not euident that he pities vs, when he so graciously allures vs to himselfe? He might let vs erre in darknes without this light, but it comes vnto vs only from his free grace, that so he might remoue all doubtings and stumbling blocks out of our way. Let vs lay it vp in our hearts then, to wit, that this mercie whollie depends vpon God his free will.

No saluation
without the
word.

Where God
sends his
Gospell,
there he
discouers a
sure pledge
of his fauor.

If it be asked, why the Lord hath illuminated vs rather in this time then in any other: We must answer, *because it was Gods good pleasure* so to haue it. For S. Paul in the place before alledged, brings vs to this point. Behold now the *acceptable time*, behold now the *day of saluation*; which place will help vs much to vnderstand the Prophets meaning, that so wee may learne to ioine Gods free accepting of vs, and our *saluation* together. A pledge of which fauor we haue in the preaching of the Gospell.

Quest.

Ans.

We are also to note that these prophesies were not to be restrained to a certaine time, seeing they appertaine to the Church to the worlds end. For when wee begin at the redemption out of Babylon, we must come forward til the redemption purchased by Christ, of which the first deliuerance was but as it were a preparatiue. And seeing there are still certain reliques of this seruitude remaining, it must continue to the worlds end, at which time all things shall be restored, and set againe into their perfect estate.

These prophesies appertaine to the use of the Church to the worlds end. Three redemptions.

I will giue thee for a covenant.] Hence it appeeres, that whatsoeuer was said of Christ before, was not promised in regard of his owne particular profit, but for our sakes. For he was ordained to be the pledge of the covenant, because the Iewes by their finnes made a diuorce between God and them, who had contracted a perpetuall covenant with them. The renning of *this covenant* then, which was broken or disannulled, is attributed vnto Christ. In which regard, that which Paul saith, Ephes. 2. 14. and 17. is to be noted: Christ is our peace which hath made of both one, and hath preached peace as well to those that are far off, as to those that are neere. But our Prophet had a speciall eie to that horrible diffi-

paria

patron, which none but Chriſt alone was able to remedie. It remains now then, that we apply this grace to our uſe : wee (I ſay) who were ſtrangers and enemies, far from the covenant of grace in reſpect of the Iewes, before the Goſpell was publiſhed ; without which, we had neuer taſted of our reconciliation with him. Chriſt then was given for a covenant to the people, becauſe there was no other way to come vnto God, but through him. The Iewes were then the onely people; but the partition wall being broken downe, all, both Iewes and Gentiles haue bin gathered into one body.

That thou ſhouldeſt raiſe vp the earth, which was deſolate. For the returne of the people was as a new creation: as wee haue ſhewed elſewhere. Vnto which alſo appertaines the words of the Prophet, that we might know there is nothing but a wofull waſte and ſcattering in the world : for Chriſt is ſent to raiſe vp that which was deſtroied and fallen to the earth. If all things ſtood in a perfect ſtate, then he ſhould be ſent to vs in vaine. Wee ought therefore diligently to conſider of our eſtate : for in our ſelues we are ſtrangers from God, and excluded from all hope of ſaluation; but Chriſt hath raiſed vs vp together with him, and hath reconciled vs to his heavenly Father. Beſides, Iſaiah addes the benefits which we obtaine by Chriſt, after wee be reconciled.

Verſ. 9. *That thou maielt ſay to the priſoners; Goe forth: and to them that are in darkneſſe; Shew your ſelues, they ſhall ſecke in the waies, and their paſtures ſhall bee in all the toppes of the billes.*

Behold heere a deſcription of the change, that happens at Chriſts coming. Notwithſtanding it is very ſure that the Prophet meant in this place, to giue ſome conſolation to the Iewes, things being then in ſuch a deſperate ſtate, to the end their reſtauration might not ſeeme incredible; no, not albeie they lay in darkneſſe of death. Yet in generall termes, he ſhewes wherein the office of Chriſt conſiſts; to wit, in reſtoring the deſolate heritage: verſ. 8. For before his coming, we lie manacled hand and foote vnder a miſerable ſlauerie, and are plunged into the darkneſſe of hell. By theſe two ſimilitudes then he ſhewes, that wee are wrapped in all ſorts of miſeries, as long as Chriſt is abſent from vs. For by darkneſſe, he excludes vs from all the benefits which appertaine to Chriſts kingdome: as faith, righteousneſſe, holineſſe, truth, and the like graces: wee are in darkneſſe then, till Chriſt ſay; *Shew your ſelues: we are bound, till he cry, Goe forth.* Now there is great weight in the claufe; *That thou maielt ſay:* for hee ſhewes that the preaching of the Goſpell, is the meanes by which we are debuiered. If we then deſire the libertie and the light of Gods kingdome, let vs hearken vnto the voice of Chriſt, for elſe we ſhall be oppreſſed vnder the per-

petuall tyrannie of Satan.

Where is now the libertie of our free will? For whoſoeuer attributes to himſelfe light, reaſon, or vnderſtanding, can neuer haue part in this deliuerance by Chriſt. Why ſo? Becauſe libertie is promiſed to none but to ſuch as acknowledge themſelues captiues; nor light and ſaluation to any, but to ſuch as confeſſe themſelues to ſit in darkneſſe.

Moreouer, in that he promiſeth Gods children that their paſtures ſhall bee in all waies, and in all high places: by theſe ſimilitudes hee ſhewes, that thoſe who are vnder the protection of Chriſt, ſhall fare well: for he is a vigilant and careful thepheard, and furniſheth his ſlocke with all things neceſſarie: ſo as nothing can bee wanting vnto them, that appertaines to their ſoueraigne good. This aduertement was of great uſe for the Iewes, in that time in which they were to paſſe throw hot & ſcorched paths, and to come at length into a land waſted and deſolate. The Prophee therefore ſaith; that albeie humane helpes ſhould faile, yet God of himſelfe is rich enough to ſupply all their wants. This is the reaſon why the Spirit of God delights ſo much in comparing the faithfull to ſheep; that feeling their owne weakneſſe, they might willingly and wholly ſubmit themſelues to be governed vnder the protection of this good thepheard: Iohn 10. 11.

But withall it is very likely that the faithfull are admoniſhed not to affect great delicacies, for they ſhall neuer taſte of ſuch abundance, but they ſhall feele many wants mingled therewith. Beſides, it is not fit they ſhould bee pampered or full fed, in regard they are ſubiect to many dangers: for wee know that the waies are fraught with theenes and enemies, and the tops of the inmountaines are for the moſt part barren and dry. The Church of Chriſt is ſo defended then, that ſhe is neuer far from assaults and outrages of enemies, and ſo repleniſhed, that yet ſhe dwelles in waſte and terrible deſerts. But whoſoeuer her enemies inuiron her on euery ſide, yet the Lord protects her from their violences. If we be in hunger or want, he is ready to furniſh vs with all neceſſaries in abundance, and to nouriſh and ſuſtaine vs; yea, in theſe neceſſities, we better perceiue the care he hath of vs, then if we were in a place of the greateſt ſafetye.

Verſ. 10. *They ſhall not be hungrie, neither ſhall they be thirſtie, neither ſhall the heate ſmite them, nor the Sunne: for hee that hath compaſſion on them, ſhall leade them, euen to the ſprings of waters ſhall he driue them.*

The Prophet confirms that which was ſaid in the former verſe; to wit, that God hath ptouiſion ready to ſuſtaine the Iewes in the way; ſo as no neceſſaries ſhall be wanting vnto them. And no doubt hee puts them in mind of that time in which their fathers were readie to periſh in the deſert for want of food; in which neceſſitie, God gaue them

Free will.

No libertie but to ſuch as feele their captiuitie, not light, but to ſuch as confeſſe they ſit in darkneſſe.

The faithfull muſt learne not to want, as well as to abound.

Note.

See verſe 10.

A confirmation of the former verſe.

Why Chriſt was given for a covenant to the people.

Neither light, liberty, nor ſuccour out of Chriſt.

Manna from heaven the space of forty yeers: Exod. 16.35. Also in speaking of the shadow against the *beat*, it is certaine that he hath respect to the pillar of a cloud, wherewith the Lord couered them by day, to the end they should not be parched vp with the heate of the Sunne: Exod. 14.21. For the Prophets are wont, as we haue said, to mention the peoples departure out of Egypt, as oft as they were to confirme their barts in the assurance of Gods goodnesse, either towards all in generall, or towards any one in particular. In that hee mentions the *springs of waters*, he also alludes to those waters which issued out of the rocke, when the people were almost dead for thirst. For these things fell not out in the deliuerance of Babylon, but in putting them in remembrance of former benefites, the Prophet sets before them the power of God, which hath alwaies bin sufficient to procure the saluation of the Church.

Verf. 11. *And I will make all my mountaines as a way, and my paths shall be exalted.*

God the Churches companion in her pilgrimage, prouiding her of all necessaries.

HE here expresse and fitly mentions the peoples returne: for to what purpose should hee promise such felicitie vnto the Church, vlesse they had been restored to their first libertie? Hee signifies then that all obstacles and impediments shall be remoued, which might any way hinder their passage: and that the *mountaines*, the toppes whereof might seeme impossible to be climbed, shall be made passeable and easie to bee attained. In a word, that hee will make all rough and hillie places smooth, that they may with ease returne into Iudeah. When the Church then was to bee restored to her perfect estate, no lets whatsoeuer, were they neuer so great, were able so to ouermatch the Lord, but that in the end hee would easly overcome them all.

And in that hee calles them *his mountaines*; it is to shew, that he hath not onely power to command them to giue his people way; but he further expresseth, that it shall be himselfe who will bring the Iewes home; no lesse then if he went in person before them. He carried them vp (saith *Moses*, Deut. 32.13.) to the high places of the earth, when they passed thorow the wilderness. Also he saith, that the Lord went before the Israelites, when they departed out of Egypt: Exod. 13.21. Heere we see then what singular loue the Lord beares to his Church, in that hee vouchsafeth to be a companion vnto her in her iourney, and takes vpon him the whole care touching her necessarie prouision therein: so that in succouring her, he seemes to prouide for himselfe.

Verf. 12. *Behold, these shall come from farre: and loe these from the North, and from the West, and these from the land of Sinim.*

Whereas some think the Prophet notes out heere the foure quarters of the

world, it hath no great likelihood. And yet I reiect not this opinion altogether, because it is probable, & agrees with many other texts of Scripture. First hee saith, these shall come from *farre*: then hee addes some particulars, for an exposition of the generall sentence. In stead of *Sinim*, some reade *Sinim*: and the Hebrewes themselues reade it diuersly. Saine *Ierem* thinkes it is meaing of the south part from Mount Sinai; lying towards the South. And this is the most receiued opinion. Others thinke it to be the name of a citie or region, called *Sienes*, situated towards the tuncing of the Sunne, when it is at the highest. But these opinions make nothing for the explanation of our Prophets meaning, which is cleere and manifest in it selfe. For doubtlesse hee speakes of such as were *farre remote*, and scattered in diuers quarters, whether they were to be gathered in fro the North parts, or beyond the seas. *Isaiah* then so promifeth the returne from Babylon, that therewithall hee also extends this propheticie to Christs time: as wee may easly gather from that which we haue said, Chap. 36.6. For we must still hold this principle, that the second birth of the Church vnder the Kingdome of Christ, is heere described: for hee not onely promifeth that the Iewes shall returne to Ierusalem to reedifie the Temple; but that those also, who before were strangers from the Church, should be gathered from out of all quarters of the world.

Verf. 13. *Reioice, O heauens, and be ioyfull, O earth: braist forth into praise, O mountaines; for God hath comforted his people, and will haue mercy vpon his afflicted.*

THOUGH hee exhorts and stirres vp all the faithfull to thankgiuing: yet hee hath a speciall drift to confirme that promise, which otherwise in it selfe seemed doubtful. For our consciences wauer, and are perplexed in affliction: so as it is an easie matter to settle them timely vpon the truth of Gods promises. In a word, either men stagger, tremble, fall, or vtterly despaire. For if the least feare, distresse, or affliction doe but arise, much adoe there is to fasten any consolation vpon vs. For this cause we haue neede to haue our faith confirmed by all sorts of arguments. See the reason then why *Isaiah* speakes so gloriouslie of the benefite of this deliuerance; namely, to the end that the faithfull, who saw nothing round about them but ruine and death, might notwithstanding bee of good comfort, and in hope to wait for a happie change. Hee sets the deliuerance therefore before their eyes, as if it were already accomplished; that so they might haue all matter of ioy and reioicing: though at that time there appeared nothing but cause of sorrowe and mourning.

As oft as the Lord therefore promifeth a nic mercie, lets vs euer bee mindfull to ioine praise and thankgiuing thereunto, though we see not the accomplishment thereof: that

Isaiah so propheticall the Iewes returne, that therewithall hee also comprehends the kingdome of Christ.

S. Ierom.

A principle.

*Or, poore.

A thankgiuing, in which is included a confirmation of the former promises.

Praises must be ioined to the promises.

ſo wee may the better *waſhen our drowzie ſpirits*: next, lee vs hit vp our eyes alſo to Gods power, by which he ouerrules all creatures both in heauen and in earth: for he no ſooner beckens with his finger, but they all ſtand vp together, as it is in Chap. 48. 13. to fulfill his commandement. If the ſignes of his admirable power then do euery where appeere, ſhall wee thinke he will not make the ſame much more glorious and admirable in the ſaluation of his Church? Vnder this figure then *Iſaiah* teacheth, that neither *the heauens, nor the earth* can yeeld a more acceptable ſeruitie vnto God, then when they ioyne and combine themſelues together to aide the Church.

Moreouer, that the faithfull ſhould not ſinke vnder the weight of the calamitie, before he promiſeth that God will *comfort them*, he exhorts them quietly to ſuſtaine their ſorrowes. For by the word *poore*, he ſignifies that the Church in this world is ſubiect to many afflictions. Therefore that we may be fit to partake of Gods mercie, let vs learne vnder the croſſe, and vnder many miſeries, teares, and groanes, to wait till we attaine vnto the poſſeſſion of it.

Verſ. 14. *But Zion ſaid, The Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.*

The Lord minding further to amplify his grace, complains that the hearts of the Iewes were ſo cloſed vp, that they had almoſt diſcouraged him, had not his infinite bountie ſurmouned all their peruerſe imaginati- ons. Yet therewithall he indeuours to correct this vice, that they might ioyfullie embrace, and (as it were) ſee the promiſed deliuerance before hand which was offered them: as alſo that ſeeing his forwardnes to ſuccor them, they on the contrary might prepare themſelues to hope well. But this doctrine doth now alſo appertaine to vs, for when God deſerues his help, all of vs for the moſt part are too much perplexed, wee thinke by and by God hath forſaken and reiected vs. And thus deſpaire eaſily preuailes, vnleſſe we be wiſe to prevent the ſame betimes: which we ought to do, leſt we be bereaued of Gods grace.

Truly our infidelitie manifeſts it ſelfe to the vtmoſt in ſuch doubts, in that we neither quietly reſt vpon Gods promiſes, nor patientlie beare his corrections, which leade vs to repentance: nor yet the triall of our faith, by which he diſpoſeth vs to mortification: neither any other afflictions, which he vſeth for our humiliation. For God iuſtly complains of the Iewes, who by their diſtruſt reiected his ſaluation offered, and could not indure to leaue of his help. Now he reſtraines not this only vice to a few, but comprehends alſo the whole Church, to ſhew that he will be liberal and beneficial towards the Iewes farre above the meaſure of their faith: yea, he will oppoſe himſelfe againſt their incredulitie, that he wich his ſaluation may paſſe through all the lets and impediments which ſtand in his way. Let euery one of vs beware

then how we flatter or ſooth vp our ſelues in this vice, for the Lord pleades againſt his Zion, that is to ſay the whole Church, *becauſe ſhe vſeth ſuch ſpeeches as ſhaun and proceed from a (bitter) roote of diſtruſt.*

Verſ. 15. *Can a woman forget her child, and not haue compaſſion of the ſonne of her womb? though they ſhould forget, yet will not I forget thee.*

To correct this diſtruſt, to the complaint he addes an exhortation full of ſweet conſolation. For by a very fit ſimilitude he ſhews what great care y Lord hath ouer his Church in comparing him to a mother, whoſe *affection* and care is ſo great towards *her child*, that the fathers loue in compariſon thereof is as nothing. He propounds it not then, you ſee, in the example of a father, which notwithstanding is often vſed: Deut. 32. 6. 2. Cor. 6. 18, but that he might the better expreſſe his ſingular loue, he rather compares him to a mother: and he names not children only, but *the fruits of the wombe*, to which vſualle the woman beares much greater affection. For the loue that a mother beares towards the little one which the nourriſheth and ſuckleth at her breaſt, is almoſt vnutterable. Alſo what care doth the vſe, euen to ſpend many nights together without ſleepe, by reaſon of the ſtewardnes of the childe! And to ſpeake all in a word, the ſpares not to waſt and conſume her ſelfe dayly; ſo as *her loue* makes her cleane *forget her ſelfe*. And this care wee ſee is not only in the reaſonable creatures, but in the vnreaſonable alſo: yea, euen in wilde beaſts, who yet are gentle and louing in this behalfe, howſoever otherwiſe they be of cruell and fierce natures.

Now in regard women ſometimes proue more vnnatural then wilde beaſts, yea, and ouercome them in crueltye, by neglecting the *fruits of their bodies*, the Lord addes, that if this ſhould fall out, that yet he will *neuer forget his people*. For the firme and vnumoueable affection he beares vs, farre ſurmounes the vehement loue and amitie of all fathers and mothers in the world. Let vs then call to minde what Chriſt ſaith, Math. 7. 11. If you which are euill can giue good things to your children, how much more will your heavenly father! Is it poſſible that he ſhould empie himſelfe of this fatherly affection? No verily. Men which are of peruerſe natures, and loue theſelues, yet will not neglect their children, and will the Lord (the fountaine of mercie, who needs nothing, but giues to all men liberallie, and hath not the leſſe) neglect his Church? Wherefore howſoever it ſailes out ſometimes that mothers reiect and forſake their children (which yet is prodigious) yet notwithstanding, God, who loues his children with a ſtable, conſtant, and perpetuall loue, will neuer reiect them. To conclude then, our Prophet heere ſets out the inſtimable care of God, who watcheth night and day for our ſaluation, to aſſure vs, that he will neuer leaue nor forſake vs, though we be toſed

An exhortation, full of ſweet conſolation.

A correction of the Iewes infidelitie.

Chap. 27. 2. 3
Hebr. 13. 5.

fed to and fro with many and great calamities.

Verf. 16. *Behold, I haue grauen thee vpon the palmes of mine hands: thy walles are euer in my sight.*

Gods loue to his Church set forth by another similitude.

BY another similitude he sets forth this inestimable care that God hath ouer vs. We vse to say in our common prayer, That one hath that vpon his fingers ends, which is seruicible imprinted in his memorie. And when Moses commands a dayly meditation in Gods law, he saith, Thou shalt bind them vpon thine hands, Deuter. 6.8. that so they might alwaies haue Gods commandements before their eyes. Heere our Prophet vseth the same similitude, as if he should say, I can no sooner looke vpo my hands, but I behold thee there: I beare thee so ingrauen vpon my heart, that nothing is able to blot out the remembrance of thee: In a word, I can not forget thee, but I should also forget my selfe. True it is that GOD hath neither hands, nor any bodily shape: but thus it pleaseth the holy Ghost to stoupe downe to our slender and weake capacities, that he might the better set forth the infinite loue which he beares vs. And because the Church is in many places called the Temple, or Citie of God (whence also comes that similitude of building so much frequented in the scriptures, Psal. 102. 16. Ier. 24. 6. Math. 16. 18.) therefore the Prophet brings in the similitude of *walles*: by which hee notes out the quiet and peaceable estate of the Church: as if he should say, I will alwaies see that Ierusalem shall flourish, and be in good plight. Whence also we obserue, that heere is set forth vnto vs a right order of government and discipline, whereof the Lord will be the perpetuall protector and defender, as himselfe heere protests. Let vs also remember that this prophesie tooke place in that wofull desolation when the walles of Ierusalem (which were the liuely image of the Church) were throwne downe, the Temple rased, good government abolished, and in a word, when all things were out of ioint, and almost brought to vtter confusion: for he promiseth that all the Churches priuiledges shall forthwith be restored to their first perfection.

Verf. 17. *Thy builders make haste: thy destroyers, and they that haue made thee waste, are departed from thee.*

An amplification of the former verf.

HE amplifies that which he touched in briefe in the former verse: for his speech might haue bin esteemed ridiculous & vaine, concerning this continuall care that God hath ouer the Church, and her walles, which he now suffered to be rased to the very foundations. For this cause, I say, he adds an exposition, to wit, that it is ruinated indeed, but ere long it shall be reedified anew.

The right way to re.

From this word *builders*, wee may gather wherin the right way of repaying the church

consists; namely, if the Lord bee pleased to send forth *maister Carpenters and Masons* to *frame it anew*. Secondly, in driuing out the *destroyers*, which build not, but breake downe. For albeit God can build vp his church without the helpe of men, yet is he pleased to vse their labours: and howsoever he finisheth the whole building himselfe alone, by the secret worke of his holy Spirit, yet hee blesteth the inducers of his seruants, that the same should not become altogether vnfruitfull. To him we must pray, and from him alone wee must expect workemen; for hee is able to fit them with gifts and graces, and to appoint one to euery one his taske, as *Saint Paul* saith, 2. Cor. 3. 5. Thus wee are then, not onely to pray that God would send forth labourers into his harvest, but also that he would furnish them with power and efficacy, that they may not bestow their paines in vaine. Is the doctrine of the Gospell then preached with some fruit: It comes to passe by the singular goodnesse of God.

Mat. 9. 38.

But this were not enough, vnlesse he therewithall should driue off the *destroyers*: for Satan inuades and assaults the Church by infinit waies: neither wants hee his supposts and catchpoles, who employ all their forces either to slake, hinder, or ouerthrow the Lords building: and therefore we ought continually to pray, that God would still defeat all their enterprises. But if that good be not done, which we desire, let vs accuse our selues and our owne ingratitude; for the Lord is readie to bestow his benefites vpon vs in great abundance.

Verf. 18. *Lift vp thine eyes round about, and behold; all these gather themselves together, and come to thee: As I lue, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely put them all vpon thee as a garment, and gird thy selfe with them like a bride.*

HE awakens the Church by setting her deliuerance before her eyes, to the end she might view this so glorious a worke, & might behold the *swoopes of men* which should flow in vnto her on euery side. Now as this *gathering together*, serued to sustaine the mindes of the faithfull in captiuitie: so was it their duties, who saw it accomplished indeede, to render thanks vnto God. Whence it appears, that this prophesie was of good vse in both the times; as well whilest their deliuerance was yet hidden vnder hope, as when it was ratified by the effects. And albeit also he speaks to the Church in generall, yet this speech belongs to euery one in particular: that so, all generally, and euery one particularly, might embrace these promises.

The Church is exhorted to behold her glory in the midst of her greatest ruines.

When hee commands them to *lift vp their eyes*; it is to shew, that the cause which moues vs to saint, is, in that we doe not so diligentlie obserue the work of the Lord as we ought; but suffer our eyes to bee couered as it were with a vaile, by reason whereof, wee cannot see three paces before vs. Thence also it comes,

comes, that we can hardly conceiue any hope, but are euer and anon plunged into deſpaire, when the leaſt troubles ariſe.

Now if this bee ſaid of the whole Church, let every man examine his owne heart, and ſee how ſubiect he is to this vice; and let him euer ſtirre vp, yea awaken his ſpirits, to behold the workes of the Lord, and to reſt himſelfe vpon his promiſes with his whole heart.

In that he ſaith, the children of the church ſhall be gathered; the meaning is, to bee one bodie with Chriſt, and as one ſold vnder one ſhepherd, we muſt be gathered into one lap of the Church. For Chriſt holds none other to be in the number of his ſheepe, but ſuch as are ioined into one body by the vnitie of one faith: Iohn 10. 16. *Whoſoeuer then would bee accounted among Gods children, let him be a child of the Church: for as many as are ſeparate from her, ſhall alwaies bee held as ſtrangers before God.*

As a garment, or, ornaments.] The Prophet ſhewes wherein the chiefe ornament of the Church conſiſts; to wit, in hauing many children gathered into her lap by faith, and gouerned by the Spirit of God. Behold the true beautie; behold the glorie of the Church; which otherwiſe is deformed, and ill fauoured, yea torne and rent in pieces, if ſhe be deſtituted of *theſe ornaments*. Heereby we ſee that the Papiſts haue great ſkill in diſcerning of the right ornaments of the Church: for they pleaſe themſelues in nothing but crucifixes, paintings, images, ſtately buildings, gold, precious ſtones, and glorious veſtments: that is to ſay, in bables and puppets, fit for little children. But the true dignitie and glorie of the Church is all inward: Pſal. 45. 13. becauſe it conſiſts in the giſts and graces of the holy Ghoſt: in a word, it conſiſts in faith, and in good workes. Whence it followes, that he is then clothed with royall robes, when people being knit together by faith, doe aſſemble into her lap, and worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth.

Now that this promiſe might haue the greater weight, the Lord adds an *oath*, that he might draw vs to credit the ſame; to the end that when the Church (as we thinke) is at the very pits brinke, we ſhould then wait and expect her reſtauration. Which doctrine, if euer there were neede of it, it is now much more. For whether ſoeuer we turne our eies, what ſee wee elſe but horrible deſolations? What are we to doe then? Let vs deliuer our ſoules from deſpaire, by ſtaying our ſelues vpon this *oath*, *As I liue?* And let not our ſmall number diſmay vs, though for that cauſe the world deſpiſeth and diſgraceſh vs. No, the Lord, we doubt not, hath his elect ſcattered heere and there, whom at the length he will aſſuredly gather into his Church. Let vs plucke vp our ſpirits then, and liſt *vp our eies* by a true faith, that wee may not onely extend our hopes to one age, but to many.

Verſ. 19. *For thy deſolations and waſte places, and thy land deſtroied, ſhall*

ſurely be now narrow for thee that ſhalt dwell in it: and they that denoure thee ſhall be farre away.

HE confirms that which went before, but in other words; to wit, that the change by him promiſed, is in Gods hand, who will cauſe his Church, which hath a long time *lien deſolate and waſte*, to be ſuddenly *inhabited* againe; and that in ſuch wiſe, as the *land* ſhall not be *large* enough to containe ſo manie inhabitants. He ſetth a ſimilitude of a Citie broken downe, whoſe walles and buildings are reſtified: vnto which alſo, the people flow in ſuch troopes, that the bounds thereof muſt be enlarged, becauſe the firſt circuits are too narrow for them all. And thus he not onely ſpeakes of the peoples returne from Babylon, but alſo of that reſtauration wrought by Chriſt, when the Church was not onely ſpread thorowout Iudca, but alſo thorowout all the quarters of the world.

Moreouer, he addes that ſuccours ſhall be in a readineſſe to defend the Church againſt her enemies, which would moleſt her with outrages and iniuries. Theſe ſhall not be able to hurt her. Why ſo? God will driue them *farre away*: not that the Church had euer any perfect reſt in this world, or could be exempt from all violence of enemies: but howſoeuer it be, God, who ſtill ſupports the infirmities of his ſeruants, hath alwaies reſiſted the wicked, reſſeſſed, or vtterly deſeated their plots, that ſo the kingdome of Satan might neuer waxe great by the ruines of the Church.

Verſ. 20. *The children of thy barrennes ſhall ſay againe in thine eares; The place is fruit for mee, giue places to me that I may dwell.*

Iſaiab goes on with the ſame argument, and vnder another figure, promiſeth the Churches reſtauration. Now he compares her to a widow (or rather to a wife) that is barren: to ſet forth the miſerable and deſolate condition of this people, who were oppreſſed vnder ſo many cuils, that the memory of that nation was in a manner extinct: for they were mingled among the Chaldeans, who held them priſoners; ſo as they were almoſt incorporated into one body with them. Wee are not to maruell then if he compares the church *to a barren wiſe*, for ſhee conceived no more children in her wombe. In former time the Iewes flouriſhed; but now their kingdome was torne in ſunder, their power vtterly ouerthrowne, and their name in a manner buried in obliuion, when they were led into captiuitie.

Hee promiſeth then that the Church ſhall come forth of theſe ſinnes, and that the who now liſt ſolitarie, ſhall returne to her firſt eſtate. Which is ſignified by the word *againe*: for thereby he aſſures them, that God was able to render them that *againe*, which in former time he had beſtowed vpon them, though

Vſe to vs

Chriſt holds none for his ſheepe; but ſuch as are made one with him by faith.

Wherein the chiefe ornament of the Church conſiſts.

With what ornaments the Church of Rome deckes her ſelfe.

Faith and good workes the Beauty of the Church.

The vſe to vs

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

The Church attaines not a full reſt in this world.

The ſame argument ſtill profecuted.

now for a season he had deprived them thereof.

Whereas many take children of barrennes for orphelins, methinks it suites not with the text, because widowhood and barrennes is referred rather to the person of the Church. And therefore by way of amplification he calles them so, who beyond all hope were giuen to her that was a widow and barren.

Giue place:] That is to say, for my sake giue way. Not that it is seemly for the faithfull to driue their brethren out of y place wherein they dwell: but the Prophet borrowed a phrase of speech which is commonly vsed, to signifie, that no incommoditie whatsoever shall hinder many from desiring to be receiued, and that place may be giuen them. This came to passe when the Lord gathered an infinite number of soules from all parts of the world. For in a moment, and aboue mans reason the Church which was *emptie* before, was replenished: *her bounds were enlarged*, and extended farre and neere.

Verf. 21. Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I am barren and desolate, a captiue, and a Wanderer to and fro? And who hath nourished them? Behold, I was left alone: Whence are these?

The Church brought in, admiring her extraordinary exaltation,

By these words he shewes, that the restoration of the Church whereof he now speaks, shall be admirable: and therefore he brings her in wondering, yea astonished, that she is exalted by so extraordinarie and vnexpected a manner. And to say the truth, this is no superfluous description. For the children of God, and of the Church, are not made new creatures by the will of flesh and blood, but by the secret vertue of the holy Ghost; neither are they borne into this world as we see men dayly haue a new of-spring to replenish common-wealths, for naturallie we haue no part in the kingdom of God. If any man then will but consider of this new and vnacustomed change, and then by what meanes the Church was multiplied and nourished a long time in her poore estate, he shall be constrained to admire and wonder thereat.

Now he shewes that this shall be no fained admiratiō, in which arte flatterers haue great skill, but it shall proceed from a true affection of the heart. Why so? Because there shall be iust occasion so wonder, in regard the Lord hath so long, and in so many dangers not onely preterued his Church, but hath made it multiply into a new generation vn hoped for. For who would haue imagined that when the Iewes were in the most contemptible condition that might be, couered ouer as it were with miseries and reproches, that any one of the Gentiles would haue desired societie with such: Moreover, there was no likelihood that mens minds could feele so sudden an alteration as to ioine themselves to such a religion as themselves both hated, and despised before: nay more then that, the wall of separation then stood, which shut out all stran-

gets and vncircumcised ones from entring into the Church of God.

But he addes the reason of so great an astonishment, to wit, that she was barren before, and therefore was vterlie destitute of children. For the word of God which is the spirituall seed wherewith the children of the Church were begotten, ceased: the sacrifices also were broken off: in a word, whatsoever serued to maintaine a state in perfection, was abolished.

Besides, the Church is called barren, not because God euer forsakes her, but in regard his gracious presence doth not alwaies appere. We saw a wofull spectacle of this barrennes when the Lord to punish mens ingratitude tooke from vs his blessed truth, and suffered vs to walke and erre in darknes, then we might well say that shee was a widow and barren indeed, when the was left quite destitute of children. Hence also we may perceiue how foolish the Papists are, in that they will alwaies haue Christ so to dispose of his Church, that the must neuer know the state of widowhood nor barrennes. For howsoeuer the Lord at no time vterlie reiects his Church, yet he often withdrawes from her the signes of his presence, because of the worlds vnthankfulness.

A wofull spectacle of the Churches barrennes scene in our times.

Who hath nourished these?] Those who are banished and often remoue their habitation can not well nourish nor bring vp children: So, when the law and doctrine of godlines sounds no more in the Temples, spirituall nourishment must needs faile. But the Lord who stands in no need of humane helps, begets vnto himselfe children after an extraordinarie manner, by the incredible vertue of his holy Spirit, and these he nourisheth, how, and in what place it pleaseth him. Now to accomplish this prophesie, he hath contrarie to all hope, raised vp nurses, so as the Church admires not vnusuaus cause at the fostering and bringing vp of her children.

When we reade this prophesie we are admonished not to vex our selues about measure if at any time we see the Church left like a widow. Neither so farre to giue way to distrust, as to thinke that God who is all sufficient, can not in a moment renew and restore her to a perfect estate, though for the present we see no likelihood nor appearance at all of it.

Verf. 22. Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set vp my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sonnes in their armes: and thy daughters shall be carried vpon their shoulders.

Isaiah confirms that which he said erewhile, to wit, that y Lord would cause the Church which a long time was a widow and barren, to bring forth an innumerable of-spring, so as her selfe should be constrained to admire at her owne fruitfulness. And this he doth to remoue all scruples and doubtings, which peradventure might arise in their minds. But the

A confirmation added to the Churches admiration.

the Lord pronounceth, that he will not only give children to his Church among the Iewes (as in former time) but among the Gentiles also: and yet he shewes, that this generation shall be spirituall, to wit, by the grace of adoption. To which purpose appertaines the similitude of the *standard*, for thereby he encourageth the faithfull to hope for a new kinde of generation, far different from that which we see in the common course of nature. It was necessarie then that the Lord should set up his *standard*, and to discover his secret power by the preaching of the Gospell, that among so many sorts of languages and differing dispositions, he might bring children to the Church, and to be made one with her in the same faith, euen as brethren gather together into the lap of their mother.

Those are deceiued who by the metaphor of the *band*, and *standard*, thinke the preaching of the Gospell is only signified, separating it from the efficacy of the holy Ghost, for both must be conioined together. The vertue of the holy Ghost must in no wise be separated (I say) from the preaching of the Gospell, witness 2. Cor. 3. 6. We must run therefore to this *band* of God, and to this *standard*, when we see the Church oppressed vnder the tyrannie of the wicked. For albeit they be euer plotting all sorts of mischiefe vterlie to ouerturne it, yet is Gods *hand* stronger then all, and men in the end shall gaine nothing by resisting him, for at last he wil subdue and bring down their rebellion, that his Church may haue some breathing time in despite of them all. In that he promisseth the childre of y Church shall be brought in betwene the *armes*, and vpon the *shoulders*, it is a figuratiue maner of speech, in which he would signifie that God will no way be hindered, when he meanes to gather his Church from the scattering, wherein he shall find her, because all the *Gentiles* shall help him. And howsoever this be in the first place to the banished and disperſed Iewes, yet no doubt it is to be extended vnto all Gods elect in all places, who are, or shall be receiued in, to participate of the same grace.

Verſ. 23. *And Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queenes shall be thy nurses: they shall worship thee with their faces towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet: and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me.*

HAving spoken of the obedience of the Gentiles, he shewes, that it not only appertaines to the common people, but euen to Kings also, whom he compares to *foster fathers*, who bring vp other mens childre, and *Queenes* to milch nurses, which are hired forth for that purpose. Why so? Because *Kings* and *Queenes* shall furnish y Church with all things necessarie for her children. For whereas before they banished Christ out of all their coasts, now they shall from henceforth ac-

knowledge him for their soueraigne King, and shall yeeld him honour, homage, and seruice. And all this came to passe after God manifested himselfe to all the world by his Gospell, for the great Kings and Princes thereof not only submitted themselues vnder the yoke of Christ, but also imployed their wealth & riches to restore & maintaine the Church, so as they became the protectors and defenders of it.

Whence we note, that a speciall and particular dutie is heere required of Princes, besides their ordinarie profession of the Christian faith. Why so? Because the Lord hath clothed them with power and authoritie, to the end they should provide for the Churches good, and also procure the glorie of God. I grant this dutie belongeth to euery one, but by how much the greater power Princes are indued withall, the more carefull should they be to imploy their studies and paines about these things. That cause why *David* expressly names them, and exhorts them to be wise, to serue the Lord with feare, and to kisse his *donne*, Psal. 138. 11. Hence also we may discern the follie and madnes, who affirme that Kings can be no Christians vnlesse they give ouer this office and dignitie. For this was accomplished vnder the kingdom of Christ, when Kings being conuerted vnto God by the preaching of the Gospell, came to this hie degree and dignitie, which far surmount all sorts of rule and principalties, to wit, to be the *nursing fathers*, and defenders of the Church.

The Papists thinke none can be right nursing fathers to the Church vnlesse they leaue vnto Priests, Monks, and idle bellies, great reuenues, large possessions, & fat prebendaries, to fatten them vp as swine in a stie. But this *nomifluens* tends to a far other end, then to cramme and stuffe the guts of such a companie of insatiable gulphs. For the question is not here touching the enriching of their houses, who vnder a fained pretence of holines will needs be taken for the Ministers of the Church (who haue bin the only poysoners and corrupters of the Church of God, with the deadly venome of the whores cup) but rather to roote out Superſtitions, and vterlie to ouerthrow all idolatrie, to aduance the kingdom of Christ, to conferre the puritie of doctrine, to remoue scandalles and offences, and to purge out the filthie dregges of false doctrine, whereby the wholesome doctrine of God is corrupted, and whereby his glorie is darkned and obscured.

When Kings haue taken order for these things, then are they also to furnish the Pastors and Ministers of the word with all things necessarie, let them relieue the poore, and looke that the Church susteine not by their negligence beggerie, or vndecent wants. Then let them erect Schooles, and endow them with sufficient pensions for the teachers: let them foster and cheriſh Students, let them build Hospitals for the aged and diseased, and performe other offices which serue for the maintenance and conser-

A speciall and particular dutie required here in Kings and Princes.

The follie of such as affirme that Kings can be no Christians vnlesse they give ouer their dignities.

After what maner Kings ought to be nursing fathers to the Church.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Pastors.

The poore Schooles erected and endowed with sufficient pensions. Building of Hospitals.

The preaching of the Gospell, and the efficacy of the holy Ghost must goe together.

- 1
- 2

Iob. 9. 4.

Or, all.

conferuation of the Church. But these exces-
sive expences superfluouslie bestowed to-
wards the founding of Masses and Orato-
ries, and imploied for the making of ves-
sels of gold and siluer, rich & gorgeous vest-
ments, in which Papists glory and brag; only
serues for a pompe and ambition to corrupt
the pure and sincere nourishment of the
Church; yea, to choke and extinguish Gods
seed, which is the onely food by which the
Church liues.

If Kings in
stead of nur-
cing fathers
to the
Church, be-
come tor-
menters of
her, it is the
iust reward
of our sins.

Now when we see things otherwise carried
at this day; to wit, that Kings in stead of *nur-
cing fathers* to the Church, become torment-
ers & destroyers of the Church, that the true
doctrin is reiected, the faithfull Ministers
banished, and that greafe idle paunches, in-
satiabie gulfes, and supposts of Satan are put
in their roomes, (for to such, Princes distri-
bute their riches : that is to say, the blood of
the people which they haue sucked) when al-
to those Princes, *vid.* otherwise being faith-
full, yet wanting power, and therefore hauing
little or no courage to defend the word, or
to maintaine the church. Let vs acknowledge
that this is the iust reward of our iniquities,
and let vs confesse that wee be vnworthy to
inioy such good *nurcing fathers*. Notwithstand-
ing after these so horrible ruines, wee must
be euer waiting and looking for the restau-
ration of the Church; and for such a conuer-
sion of Kings, as that they shall shew them-
selves fathers and protectors of the faithfull,
and such as shall constantly vphold the do-
ctrine of the word in their dominions.

They shall lick the dust of thy feete. The Pa-
pists in like manner offer violence to this
place, to establish the tyrannie of their Idoll :
as if forsooth, Kings and Princes could not
otherwise shew themselves the true and law-
full seruants of God, vnlesse in his stead they
should fall downe at the feete of their disgui-
sed head of the Church. This they account a
testimonie of great seruice done to God,
when they will abase themselves to kisse his
feete with great reuerence. But first of all, if
they will know what an opinion we ought to
conceiue of such an idolatrous and barba-
rous reuerence, let them learne it from Saint
Peter, whose seat they brag to hold : for hee
would not suffer *Cornelius* the Centurion to
doe him such reuerence: *Act. 10. 26*. Let them
also learne it from Saint *Paul*, what to doe in
this case, who rent his garments, and reiected
this honour with great detestation: *Act. 14. 14*.
Is any thing more absurd then to say that the
Sonne of God, in stead of ordaining a Mini-
ster of the Gospell, should consecrate a pro-
phane King, exercising a Persian-like pom-
pous state, vterly insupportable ? But let vs
remember that whilst the Church is a pil-
grime in this world, that shee may bee hum-
bled, and that shee may be conformed to
Christ her head, shee is subiect to the crosse,
And if her enemies giue her any rest, yet you
shall perceiue that her chiefest glory and
beautie consists in modestie. Whence it fol-
lowes, that shee is stripped of her ornaments,
when shee is decked with a prophane arro-
gance.

S. Peter.

S. Paul.

The Pope a
prophane
King.

The Chur-
ches chiefest
glory consists
in humilitie.

The Prophet then by these words vnder-
stands nothing else but *that adoration* by
which Princes humble themselves before
God, and that obedience which they yeeld
to his word in the Church : for we must care-
fully beare in mind what hath been said be-
fore; to wit, that the honour which is done
to the Church, must neuer be separated from
her head. For this honour and seruice ap-
pertaines vnto Christ: and if it be in any sort
attributed to the Church, it is in such wise,
that it alwaies remains intirely to her onely
head. Adde also that Kings doe not submit
themselves to the true religion; but that they
should beare the *yokes of men*, but that they
might submit themselves to the doctrine of
Christ. Who euer be they that reiects the
Ministers of the church, and refuseth to beare
the yoke which God imposeth vpon all his
seruants by her hand : such a one hath no
communion with Christ, neither can hee be
the child of God.

The honour
done to the
church, must
euer be sepa-
rated from
her head.

Hee is no
child of God,
that will not
beare the
yoke which
he imposeth
vpon him by
the Churches
hand.

For those that *vva*it for me, &c.] I take the
word *Ascher*, for a particule of rendring a rea-
son: for the words runne on so in a line, that
those who diuide them, doe much darken the
Prophets meaning. For by this argument,
he proves that it is good reason Kings and
Princes should cheerefully bow vnder Gods
government, and need neuer be squemish to
humble themselves before the Church; be-
cause God will not permit any that wait for
him, to be athamed. As if he should say; This
shall be no slauish, but an honourable and an
amiable subiection.

No slauish,
but an hono-
rable subie-
ction, to
humble our
selves before
the Church.

Now he ioines his truth with our saluation:
as if he should say; Let me be held neither for
God, nor true of my word, if I accomplish not
that which I haue promised. Hence we gather
an inestimable fruit. For as it is impossible
that God should lie or repent, so it is necessa-
rie that the stables of our saluation, which
the Prophet drawes from the *truth of God him-
selfe*, should euer remaine stedfast, without be-
ing moued or shaken.

*Vers. 24. Shall the pray be taken from
the mightie ? O the iust captiuitie deli-
nered ?*

*25. But thus saith the Lord; Euen
the captiuitie of the mightie shall bee ta-
ken away, and the pray of the tyrant shall
be deliuered: for I will contend with him
that contendeth with thee, and I will saue
thy children.*

H Aving answered an obiection in the for-
mer verse, which might arise in the minds
of the faithfull : now hee confirms this solu-
tion yet better. For it seemed a thing incredi-
ble that the Iewes should euer be deliuered from
vnder the hands of so mightie an enemy,
who held them prisoners by the law of armes,
and had iustly subdued them vnder bondage.
He addes this interrogation then (as it were)
in the person of all the common people, who
as it is likely, had this speech rise in their
mouthes : to which he makes answer, as wee
shall

God testifi-
eth in these
verses, that
he will op-
pose his pow-
er against
the power of
such as ty-
rannize ouer
his Church,
be they visi-
ble or inuisi-
ble aduer-
saries.

ſhall ſee anon. But firſt we muſt obſerue the ſimilitude, in that the Church is called *the pray of the mightie, and the iuſt captiuitie*: that is to ſay, lawfull. For he is called a juſt poſſeſſor, which hath gotten it lawfully: as in a juſt war, he that takes the ſpoile, is the juſt poſſeſſor of ir. Such was the condition of this ancient people, whileſt they were in exile; for they loſt both their *Country* and *libertie* together, and the *conquiſhers* *will* onelic was a *law*:

But yet we are diligently to obſerue this ſimilitude; to wit, that the Church ſhould be oppreſſed by the tyrannie of Princes, & made a pray to the throte of wolues: and yet notwithstanding ſhee ſhould be eſteemed good purchaſe, yea eſteemed a *iuſt captiuitie*. What is more vniuſt? But thus were our fathers handled: and are we better or more worthy then they? But let them boaſt as long as they liſt of their iuſt captiuitie, and let them glory at their pleaſure in this vaine title, the Lord pronounceth them abominable (cut-throtes,) and theeces, in affirming that he will be a- uenged of them, and *plucke the prayes of their teeth*: for God vieth not to ouerthrow *iuſt poſſeſſors*. Whence it follows, that the dominion which they vſurped ouer Gods people, was an vniuſt tyrannie, and plaine robbetic. Neither could their weapons nor munitions hinder the Lord from taking from them, that which they vnlawfully detained.

And this promiſe ſtands in force not onely againſt tyrants, and viſible enemies, but alſo againſt the tyranny of Satan, from which we are now deliuered by the admirable power of God. I grant, Satan is a powerfull aduerſarie; but the Lord, which is ſtronger then he, will bind him, and take away his weapons, and caſt downe his ſtrong holds, that he may reſtore vs vnto libertie: Mat. 12. 29. Haue wee tried the power of God then in this behalfe? The greater reaſon haue we to relye vpon his deliuerance ſtill, as oft as our enemies tread vs vnder their feete, and tyrannize ouer vs with cruelties.

Now when he ſaith he will *contend* for our ſakes: firſt, he therein brings vs to the conſideration of his power, that we ſhould not iudge of things either by common reaſon, nor yet by the ſtrength of mans arme. Wee muſt not look then vpon y which we are able to doe, or to the meanes which we haue in a readineſſe; but commit the whole ſum of our affaires vnto the good will of God, who vouchſafes both to care for vs, and to defend vs. And not onely ſo, but affires vs that he is furniſhed with ſtrong arguments, to answer al the ſlanders of our aduerſaries. For we haue ſaid a little before, that the wicked doe not onely aduance themſelves, by violence and crueltie againſt the Church; but do alſo lode her with infinite ſlanders, as if they had *iuſt occaſion* giuen them to tyrannize ouer her.

Is not this conſolation more then needefull then; to wit, *that* God will maintaine our innocencie, and by his *allegations*, will cauſe

the vaine pretext to vaniſh, which may anie way ſerue to augment the crueltie and impudencie of the godleſſe? Therefore it is that hee addes once more, *And I will ſaue*. Heere then you ſee wee haue a ſingular conſolation, knowing that we are made one with the Lord in ſo faſt a couenant, that hee *oppoſeth* himſelſe againſt all thoſe that *contend* with vs. So as he will bleſſe thoſe that bleſſe vs, and on the contrary, will curſe thoſe that curſe vs: in a word, hee teſtifies that he is an *enemie* to our *enemies*. From this word *ſaue*, we muſt alſo note, that whẽ we are ſet free from bondage, and defended againſt the furie of our enemies, or *ſaued*; that we impute not theſe things to the worke of fleſh & blood: leſt any ſhould aſcribe that to his owne induſtry, which God commands vs wholly to expect and *vvaie* for *onely* from himſelſe, in regard it is a ſingular benefit that proceeds from his hand.

See Chap. 26. 12.

Verſ. 26. *And I will feed them that ſpoile thee with their owne fleſh, and they ſhall be drunken with their owne blood, as with ſweet wine: and all fleſh ſhall know that I the Lord am thy ſauiour, and thy redeemer, the mighty one of Iakob.*

IN the firſt place hee ſhewes what ſhall become of the enemies of Gods Church, threatening that the time wil ſhortly approach, in which they being enraged and *ſet on fire* *vviſh* hearts burnings one againſt another, ſhall at laſt *butcher* one another. Truly it is the Lord which deprives them of reaſon, and plungeth them into frenzies, and that in ſuch wiſe, that they bend againſt themſelues the very weapons, which in times paſt they had drawne forth to maſſacre the Church withall. And thus they *turne their ſwords points one againſt another*, till they haue fought their owne vtter ruine, as the Madianites did: Iudg. 7. 22. The ſumme of all is, that the Church ſhall haue no need of mans helpe, nor of any preparation at all, when God is minded to confound and bring the wicked to nought: for *hauing firſt ſmiſten them vviſh* *giddiniſſe*, they ſhall fall to eat and deuoure one another, being ſet on fire with the furies of hell, euery one againſt his fellow.

And all fleſh ſhall know.] Hee repeats the ſame thing which we haue ſcene in verſe 23. namely, that the time ſhall come, in which *the God of Iſrael ſhall be acknowledged of all, the true and onely God*: becauſe he hath *ſaued* his people from deſtruction. For he would haue this to be noted as a ſpeciall teſtimonie of his Diuinitie, when hee appeared in all mens ſight the *ſauiour* and *redeemer* of his people. Some reade the name of *Iakob* in the vocatiue caſe: but I expound it in the genitive. For the Lord ſhews that he is the *ſauiour*, redeemer, and the *mighty one of Iakob*; that his people might learne to reſt themſelues ſecurely vnder his ſauegard and protection.

The church this enemye ſhall at length turne their ſwords points againſt themſelues, which they drew forth to maſſacre her withall.

THE L. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Thus saith the Lord, Where is that bill of your mothers diuorcement, whom I haue cast off? or who is the creditor to whom I sold you? Behold, for your iniquities are you sold; and because of your transgressions is your mother forsaken.*

The Lord proues the lawfulness of the Churches diuorce, vnder two similitudes.



His place is diuerslie expounded: but very few haue attained y^e Prophets meaning. To the end wee may haue the sum briefly, we must note this *conclusion*, whereby the Lord in manie

places testifies, that his people are obliged and bound vnto him: namely, that he is as it were our husband, and we his wife: for it is a spirituall mariage consecrated by his eternall word, and sealed vp with the blood of Iesus Christ. As he then for his part receiues vs into his protection as his beloued wife, vpon condition that wee keepe faith and loyaltie towards him: so when we play false with him, he reiects vs; and then it is rightly said, that *he puts vs away*: euen as if a husband should banish an adulterous wife his house. Now, because wee could not easilie conceiue the reason why God should reiect the Iews which were pressed vnder so many and great calamities, it was necessarie the should here come to manifest the cause of this *diuorce*. But for as much as we are ordinarily too eloquent in couering of our owne faults, and strue to lay all the blame where we should not; that is to say, vpon God himselfe: so the Iewes also then murmured at their estate, as if the Lord had done them wrong so to reiect them. Why so? Because they could not bee brought to acknowledge that the promises were made vneffectual, and the covenant abolished by their leaud behaviour. At least they could not be drawne to make this confession, but with much adoe: for they posted ouer their fault to their predecessors, as if *they* forsooth had borne the punishment of their offenses. From thence proceeded those complaints recited by *Ezekiel*: Our fathers haue eaten fower grapes, and our teeth are set on edge: *Ezek. 18.2.* Now because such prouerbs at that time went current among them, the Lord bids them bring forth that *letter of diuorce*, by which they might iustifie their owne innocencie, and proue that God had vniuistly put them away.

It was the custome then to giue a woman vniuistly diuorced, a letter in her hand: for thereby her husband was constrained to testify, that his wife had liued chastly and ho-

nestly with him: that all might know that she was not put away for her owne fault, but because she pleased not her husband. And thus the wife was set at libertie, and her innocencie approued; and the fault was laid onlie vpon the husband, to whose discontented mind the cause of this rent was imputed. *Moses* ordained this law, *Deur. 24.1.* in regard of the peoples hardnesse of heart, as witnesseth our Lord Iesus Christ, *Mat. 19.7.* The Lord by a very fit similitude then shewes, that hee is not the author of this diuorce, but that the people put away themselves by their owne fault, and so pursued their lusts, that they vterly dissolved the mariage knot. This is the cause why he asks for this *letter*, whereof they boasted so much: for there is great weight in y^e pronoune demonstratiue *that*; by which the Prophet meant to tax their vaine excuses. As if he should say, You haue skill to put the fault farre enough from you, and to reproch the Lord; you haue your defences in your hands ready to shew; and yet in the meane while you your selues haue violated the faith of marriage: neither are you able to alleadge any iust matter for your felues, whereby to disproue the lawfulness of your diuorce.

Is here is the creditor? Heere hee sets forth the same thing by another similitude: when any was so farre indebted, that hee could not satisfie his creditors, hee was constrained to giue his children in payment. The Lord now asks if hee were forced to doe this; to wit, whether hee hath *sold* or *giuen* them to pay his creditor; or whether he was like to those vnthrifts, who fondly waste their substance: or to those householders, who suffer themselves to runne ouer shoes in debt. As if he should say, I am sure you are notable to charge mee with any such matter. And therefore it is euident to all, that you haue been *sold* & brought into bondage *for your iniquities*. And thus the Lord maintaines his owne iustice against all false imputations; which by this second member hee thus repulseth, in regard that the Iewes were *sold* and *put away* by their owne fault.

Saint Paul vseth the same similitude when he saith, We are sold vnder sinne: *Rom. 7.14.* but in a diuers sense. Besides, the Hebrewes are wont thus to speake of wicked ones, who giue ouer themselves to commit sinne with a reprobate mind. But heere the Prophet onely meant to conuince the Iewes, in regard that by their owne offenses, they had wittingly pulled all the euils they sustained vpon themselves. If any aske, but can the Lord reiect his heritage? Can hee disanull or breake his covenant? No verily: but it is said hee forsakes and prophanes his heritage: as in *Psal. 89. Ezech. 24.* because we can iudge no otherwise of it by outward appearance: For in that he bare not that affection towards them hee was wont, it was a kinde of diuorce or re-

The second Simile.

1. *King. 21.25*

The first Simile.

iection. To be ſhort, we muſt note theſe oppoſitions, either that the wife is diuorced by the husbands fault, or becauſe her ſelfe is a ſhameleſſe harlot. Again, that the children are ſold, either by reaſon of their fathers powerte, or for their owne vniuſitineſſe. And thus the context of this text will be eaſily vnderſtood.

Verſ. 2. *Wherefore came I, and there was no man? I called, and none answered: is mine hand ſo ſhortened that it can not help? or haue I no power to deliuer? Behold, at my rebuke I drie vp the ſea: I make the floods deſert: their fiſh rotteſh for want of water, and dieſh for thirſt.*

IT may be the Prophet renders a reaſon there why the people hauing prouoked the holy one of Iſrael to anger, hath not only pulled vpon themſelues a ſea of euils, but are alſo worthely cut off by their owne obſtinacie from all hope of pardon and ſaluation. But I rather thinke the Lord proceeds yet further. For hauing ſhewed that he had good cauſe giuen him to reiect this people, who willinglie choſed rather to liue a ſeruite life then to be free, he addes, that it is none of his fault that they were not forthwith deliuered. And as in the former verſe he ſhewed that the fault whollie reſted in the Iewes, ſo here he proues that their owne malice was the cauſe why they grew old and purrified in their miſeries, for there wanted neither will nor power in the Lord to haue holpen them if they had not stubbornly reſuſed his grace and liberalitie. To thut it vp in a word, Iſaiab ſhews, that both their entrance, and conſuance in this calamitie came only from their owne fault, that he might free God from blame: and ſignifies, that the Iewes did wickedlie when they accuſed him to be the author of their miſeries; or in complaining, that he came not ſoone enough to their ſuccor.

Fiſt then the Lord ſaith, that he came. But to what end? To reach the Iewes his hand. Whence it followeth, that they are iuſtly deſtitute of help, in regard they deſpised his fauour. Now the Lord comes, when he giues vs any ſignes of his preſence. He comes by the preaching of his word, and by the ſundrie benefits which he beſtows vpon vs: as alſo, by the many teſtimonies which he vſeth to manifeſt the fatherly loue and good will he beares vs. Was there euer any people, ſaith Moſes, that ſaw ſuch ſignes and wonders as thou haſt done, or that hath heard the voice of God ſpeaking out of the middes of a fire, and liue? Deut. 4.33.34. Seeing ſuch a dayly ſummons ſerued to no purpoſe; and that in ſetting hope of mercie before the, he ſought to draw them to repentance, doth he not iuſtly cõplaine as of a prodigious thing, that they would not come forth to meet him? They are couined of ingratitude then, that whereas they ought to haue fought vnto God, they would not vouchſafe to meet him. For what a vile vnthankfulnes is it, not to receiue that

grace which is freely offered?

In that he ſaith, I called, he repeats the ſame thing in diuers words. When God calles vs we ought to giue care, and to offer our readie and willing obedience. For this is the answer (which he complaines is not giuen him) to wit, that we ſubmit not our ſelues whollie vnder his command. But this word ſutes very well heere to the circumſtance of this place, in that they wilfullie deſpised God, who offered them preſent deliuerance out of their troubles. It auailed him no more to ſpeake vnto them therefore, then if he had ſpoken to ſo many deafe and dumb men. Thence he concludes, that their deliuerance was deſerred only in reſpect of their owne backwardnes, which he confirms vnto them by former teſtimonies, in that he had in former time manifeſted to their fathers the ſufficiency of his power.

Now leſt they ſhould cauill and excuſe themſelues in affirming that they were not ſaued, though they deſired it: God on the contrarie affirms, that they muſt ſeek the cauſe of ſuch a change elſewhere then in him. For ſure it is, his power was not diminiſhed. He would not haue bin ſlack in reaching out his hand to them in their affliction, if they had not obſtinately reiected his offer.

Now by this Interrogation, he expreſſeth the equitie of his cauſe, as one that maintained a thing cleare and manifeſt. For who dares obiect that his power is leſſened? And to that end he puts them in mind of that power of his, by which he brought them out of Egypt, leſt they ſhould imagin ſome were now diminiſhed, but might rather acknowledge that their vices ſtopped the courſe of this power, that it could not now manifeſt it ſelfe. At his rebuke he ſaith the ſea is dried vp, as if he had terrified it, in rebuking of it. For by his commandement the waters parted in twaine to giue his people paſſage, Exod. 14.21. And Iordain fled back, Joſt. 3.16. Pſal. 114.5. ſo as the fiſhes being deſtitute of water, died and rotted.

Verſ. 3. *I clothe the heauens with darknes, and make a ſack their covering.*

HE alſo mentions the thick darknes which was ſpread ouer the whole land of Egypt for the ſpace of three daies, Exod. 10.22. for then the heauens were in a maner clothed with mourning weeds, becauſe as a faire and cleare day glads our hearts, ſo a darke and gloomie day brings ſadneſſe & heauines with it. Therefore it is ſaid that the heauens were covered with a ſack, or with a mourning garment, as ſignes and teſtimonies of affliction. And if any had rather take them for general ſentences, he may do ſo if he will. But as I thinke the Prophet hath reſpect to the hiſtorie touching their deliuerance out of Egypt. From whence they might gather, that God who had deliuered their fathers after ſo wonderfull a maner, was now leſted from ſuccoring the in the miſeries which oppreſſed them, by reaſon of their owne vnthankfulnes,

It was not, ſur want of power in God that he ſuccored not the Iewes: but it reſted whollie in their owne vnthankfulnes.

Verf. 4. *The Lord hath given mee a tongue of the learned, that I should know how to minister a word in due season to him that is wearie: he will raise me vp in the morning; in the morning hee will awaken mine eare to heare, as the learned.*

After a double reprehension, he addes a consolation.

HAving twice convinced the people of ingratitude; now, according to his custome, he addes a consolation: for the Lord so shames vs, that he forthwith mindes to free vs from shame and confusion. Albeit then vpon good grounds hee hath proued, that the people were iustly reiected, and perished by their owne desert; yea, and had made themselves vtterly vnworthy of deliuerance: notwithstanding all this, hee promisseth them helpe and succour. Now because in a matter so difficult, there was need of more then ordinarie authoritie, the Prophet saith, that God sent him, and fitted him with abilitie to execute that which was inioined by him. All in a manner doe refer this place vnto Christ, as if it futed not to the Prophets person, whē he saith he was smitten. We read not indeed that *Isaiah* was so handled: and yet it followes not therefore that their argument is found enough. For *Dauid* complaineth that his garments were diuided; which properly appertained vnto Christ: & yet it followes not that the like befell not *Dauid*. For mine own part, I am out of doubt that *Isaiah* brings in himselfe as one representing the person of all Gods seruants, as well touching those that were before him, as of those that were to succeed him.

Now hee saith that the Lord gaue him a tongue; to the end the promises, whereby hee seekes to cheere vp the peoples hearts, might haue the greater weight: for our faith soone begins to wauer, if we once deeme that men speake without warrant. Besides, the condition of this people was so forlorne, that they could not be drawne nor allured by any reasons that could be alledged to hope or expect deliuerance. The summe is then, that the message of their present deliuerance is brought them from heauen: so as if any will refuse to credit it, such a one shall shew himselfe no better then a rebell against God.

Now howfoeuer the Prophet inducours to purchase authoritie vnto himselfe in this behalfe: yet hence we may gather in generall, that none are fit to teach, vnlesse they be first taught and instructed of the Lord. Thus then all faithfull teachers are admonished to craue that of Gods Spirit, which otherwise they can neuer haue. I grant they ought to studie diligently, lest they should get vp into the chaire without sufficient preparation: but yet we must hold this principle, that whatsoeuer serues to furnish them for able Ministers, must be so many gifts of the holy Ghost. And to speake the truth, what boldnesse and presumption is it to represent themselves in the

publike assemblies in the name of God, if they bee not the organs and instruments of the holy Ghost.

Thas I should know.] Somewhat must be supplied heere (which wee also haue done) that is, to minister or publish. Vnder the word to know he comprehends that wisdom and dexteritie which a Pastor of the word ought to haue that meanes to preach the word faithfully and fruitfully. As if he should say; I haue been well instructed in Gods schoole, and therefore I haue attained sufficient skill to speake a word in due season, for their comforts that are laden with the burthen of their sinnes.

He calles them *wearie*, who were broken with many afflictions, as wee haue seene before. I giue strength to him that is *wearie*. And Christ speakes thus, Mat. 11. 28. Come vnto mee all you that are *wearie* and laden. Thus hee meanes then that God hath instructed and taught them, that he might be fitted to comfort the afflicted with apt and fit words: so as the broken hearts might be healed by the sense and feeling of Gods mercie in Christ. Hence we gather, that the Ministers of the word ought chiefly to extend their care ouer such as are in distresse, and to comfort those that are oppressed, and in a manner ouerwhelmed with the weight of their calamities: and then to teach them wherein the true rest of the soule consists: as wee haue shewed, Chap. 29. 18, 22. Moreouer, heere we see what euery one of vs ought especially to search after in the holy Scriptures; namely, how to arme and fit our selues with proper and apt sentences to minister consolation to our owne soules in the time of need. He then that shall bee able to cheere vp and sustaine his owne spirit with solid cōfort when things are perplexed; nay, when they seeme altogether desperate: let such a one assure himselfe, that he hath well profited in the Gospell. I confesse the doctrine of the holic Scriptures hath many other vses. For they not onelie containe in them matter that is meete and profitable to comfort the weak and afflicted, but also sharpe rebukes and threatenings against the obdurate: 2. Tim. 3. 16. But *Isaiah* heere shewes, that his principall charge was, in due season, to minister or bring a word of comfort to the Iewes, who were now in a manner comfortlesse.

He will awaken me in the morning.] Heere the Prophet witnesseth, that the Lord is so carefull of the miserable and oppressed, that he will giue them comfort in the morning: that is to say, in time conuenient. I grant we are often left destitute of consolation: but howfoeuer the Lord suffers vs to languish for a time, yet the fit times and seasons are in his owne power, in which hee will preuent our necessities by his succours. And if it so fall out that he tarry long, let vs impute it to our negligence: for we stop and hinder the course of his mercies from flowing in vnto vs by our owne sloth: or rather indeed, by our rebellion. But howeuer it be, yet he watcheth alwaies carefully for our saluation, and makes speede to succour vs: nay, whilst wee flee from him and resist him, he then allures vs to himselfe,

Chap. 4. 29.

Over whom the Ministers ought to extend their chiefest cares.

What euery one of vs ought especially to seek in the scriptures.

2. Tim. 3. 16.

None are fit to teach others, but such as haue first been taught of the Lord.

himſelfe, that he might reſreſſe vs by his loue and fauour.

He repeats the word *morning* twice, thereby ſignifying a daily continuance: leſt wee ſhould thinke there were any paſſions in him, as there are in men, to reiect & deſpiſe them afterwards, whom hee hath once taken into his cuſtodie. No, contrariwiſe, he makes them alwaies to feele his goodneſſe euen vnto the end, and neuer deſtitutes them of conſolation.

That I may heare as the learned.] His meaning is, that his care was attent, not like to one that is ignorant, or dull witted, but that hee was fitted and wel inſtructed for the purpoſe. And yet withall hee ſhewes by his example, that God teacheth all ſuch Miniſters as hee ſends forth, for the ſaluation of the Church with efficacy: for it were to ſmall purpoſe for them to be indued with humane learning, vnleſſe therewithall they had the inward teaching of the holy Ghoſt. By this wee ſee yet better, how true that is which wee haue ſaid before; namely, that none proue good teachers, but ſuch as haue firſt been good diſciples. Such the Prophet calles them *taught and learned*: for thoſe that will not vouchſafe to learne, as thinking that they know enough, are twice mad and fooliſh. For by Gods owne cenſure, none are truly *taught and learned*, but ſuch as ſuffer themſelues to be taught, before they take vpon them to teach others; that ſo they may haue the certaine knowledge of the things which they meane to teach them. Now to publiſh ought abroad to the world, which they may not with good conſcience proteſt they haue receiued from God. To ſhut vp all in a word; *theſe are learned, who in learning daſtie diſdaine not to grow ſill in learning.*

Verſ. 5. *The Lord God hath opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious; neither turned I backe.*

HE repeats that againe which he ſaid before, and heere comprehends whatſoever is fitting for the office of a teacher. For *the opening of ſiue eare*, ought not onely to be referred to doctrine, but to the whole vocation: as firſt, to his entrance; ſecondly, when he that is to bee ſent, receiues his charge, touching all that which he is to performe; to wit, the commandement it ſelfe, and authoritie to execute the ſame. Beſides, the Lord not onely *opens the eare*, when hee manifeſts his will, but when hee toucheth the mans heart with efficacy, and ſo moues him, that hee yeeldes him his obedience. As in the ſortie Pſalme; Thou haſt pierced mine eare. And Chriſt ſaith; Whoſoever hath *heard and learned* of my Father, hee comes to mee: Iohn 6. 45.

Hitherunto appertaines the ſecond member, where the Prophet ſaith, he was not rebellious. The ſumme is, that hee vnderooke nothing at random; but being well aſſured of the calling of God, hee performed the office of a teacher: notwithstanding it was heauie

and tedious to beare, becauſe he was made fit and willing to obey.

Verſ. 6. *I gaue my backe to the ſmiters, and my cheekes to the nippers: I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.*

HE oppoſeth the inuincible force where-with hee is indued, to the reproches, ſcoornes, and outrages of the wicked: as if he ſhould ſay; Albeit the contemners of God vſe many deuices, yet will hee overcome all their iniuries: ſo as hee will neuer repent himſelfe of that labour which hee hath taken in hand. Moreouer, this place manifeſtly ſhewes, that the Miniſters of the word cannot faithfullly diſcharge their duties, but they muſt therewithall prepare to buckle againſt the world; yea, to ſuſtaine ſharpe aſſaults on all ſides. For *Iſaiab* no ſooner affirms that hee was readie to obey Gods commandement, but by and by he addes, that his perſon was expoſed to the *ſmiters*. Wherefore the faithfull ſeruants of God cannot auoid this condition, in preaching the word as they ought; but they muſt looke for ſtripes, reproches, hatreds, ſlanders, and diuers aſſaults of the aduerſaries, who reſpine at the libertie which the true Miniſters of God muſt needes vſe in their reprehensions and admonitions. Let them arme themſelues therefore with faith and conſtancie: for there is a terrible combat prepared for them.

But hee not onely expreſſeth what meaſure the Prophets ſhall haue at the hands of the wicked, but alſo the contempt of the world: for the wicked will haue men ſuppoſe that their cauſe is good and juſt, euen whiſt they oppreſſe the Miniſters of the Goſpell, and perſecute their doctrine: for they will haue Gods ſeruants reputed as euill doers, that by this meanes they may bring them into diſgrace and hatred. That is the cauſe why they rent and teare them with varietie of falſe imputations, and belch out all the outrage they can. And haue not wee experience hereof at this day? Doe not our aduerſaries load vs with the nickenames of ſeducers, ſeditious, ſchiſmatikes, and heretikes, and diſgorge manie other reproches, wherewith they haue heerefore taxed Chriſt and his Apoſtles?

Now he complains that he was ſmitten and ſpitted vpon, not only by ſtrangers and open enemies, but hee toucheth the wrongs which were done him by thoſe that made ſhew to be of the Church. For it is alwaies ſeene, that out of the lap of the Church there ariſeth wicked contemners of God, who are the furtheſt enemies that the Prophets of God haue. Thoſe then who will ſerue God purely, muſt fit themſelues aforehand to beare all theſe things with patience, that ſo they may paſſe as well through good as euill report, 2. Cor. 6. 8. Yea, let them not only deſpiſe bands, tortures, baniſhments, and death, but reproches and ſpittings alſo, though ſometimes theſe things ſeeme harder to beare then death it

Ministers
muſt make
account to
meete with
oppoſitions
in the diſ-
charge of
their duties.

Iohn. 18. 30.

He ſhall ne-
uer become a
good Do-
ctor in the
Church,
that hath
not firſt been
a good diſ-
ciple.

selfe. This doctrine appertaines indeed to all the faithfull; but especially to the Ministers of the word, who ought to be the ringleaders to others, and to be as standard-bearers.

Verf. 7. *For the Lord God wil help me, therefore I shall not be confounded: therefore haue I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.*

To those oppositions of men, the Prophet sets the help of God.

HERE the Prophet shewes from whence this great magnanimitie proceeds, wherewith he and other the seruants of God were indued to sustaine the violence of all comers, namely, the *help of God*: for by faith therein *Isaiah* affirms, that he hath hardened his face as a flint against all the iniuries of the vngodly. Hauing then with a stout courage, wherewith he is endued, set light by all his aduersaries, he also labors to draw others to the same constancie with him; and (as in a glasse) describes to the life what the state and condition of all Ministers of the word is, and shall be. For thus he would turne them from the loue of the world, that they might giue themselues whollie vnto God, and to fixe their eyes altogether vpon him, for there is no combat so sharp, in which they shall not be more then Conquerors vnder the leading of such a Capitaine.

By the similitude of a flint, he shewes, that come what come will, he will not shrink an inch, for the signes of feare and astonishment, and of all other afflictions appeare by and by in the face, which plainly vtters to all how matters goe within. When Gods seruants are handed thus shamefullie, they must needs quaike vnder so many iniuries, if they had not browes of brass and yron to repulse them. And in this sense it is said, that *Ieremias* was set as a defended Citie, and *yron pillar*, and *vallies of brass* against the Kings of Iudah, against the Princes, and against all the people, *Iere. i. 18.* *Ezechiel* also had his forehead made as hard as the adamans, which is much harder then the flint, that he might not recoile back from the obstinacie of the people, *Ezech. 3. 9.*

This sentence, *I shall not be ashamed*, is not to be taken in the same sense with that in the former member: for there it is referred to the affection, and heere to the effect, or the thing it selfe. When in the beginning of the verse then he glories that he shall not be confounded because God is on his side, it is to shew, that it sufficeth not to know that God will help vs, vnlesse we also feele the same by experience. For what profit haue we by his promises, vnlesse wee put our confidence therein? Faith then is required, both to yphold our comfort, and assure vs of Gods fauor: but in the end of the verse the Prophet boldly protests, that he is vndoubtedlie perswaded of an happie issue. And thus to be ashamed, signifies to be disappointed. For they that conceiue a vaine hope, are subiect to mocks and reproches. Heere we see then that the faithfull teachers and Ministers of the word haue promise of a speciall defence. Let

Satan and the world bend their forces together then to assaile them with all their power: the more they assault them, the stronger shall Gods defence and protection be ouer vs. Thence we must conclude, that all such as are fainthearted and quaike when they come to the triall, were neuer yet well fitted to execute their office. For he that hath not learned to fight, is neither apt to serue God nor his Church; neither is he fit to preach the doctrine of the word.

2. Tim. 2. 5.

Verf. 8. *He is neere that iustifieth me, Who will contend with me? Let vs stand together: Who is mine aduersarie? Let him come neere to me.*

9. *Behold, the Lord will help me: who is he that can condemne me? Loe, they shall wax old as a garment: the moth shall eate them vp.*

WE must alwaies remember that the Prophet speaks nothing heere that is proper to himselfe only, but testifies what a one God will, and euer shall be towards the faithfull Ministers, that so being assured of their lawfull calling, and executing their offices faithfullie, they might boldly contemne all aduersarie power, and neuer slack their duties an inch for any slanders. Why so? Because the Lord who *iustifies* them, hath, and euer will be readie to maintaine and defend his owne truth. Now whofouer he be that will indeed boldly protest this, he ought to haue a pure conscience. For if he haue vndoubtedly intruded himselfe, not hauing a sure testimonie of his lawfull calling: or if he be such a one as brooeth his owne dreames and fantasies, in vaine shall he boast of this promise, for it appertaines to none but to such as being called of God, doe faithfullie and purely discharge their duties.

A Minister that hath a good conscience, may haue also great boldnes.

Intruders can not challenge to themselves this priuledge.

Now howsoeuer mockers and despisers of God will neuer cease to make many replies against his seruants, yet *Isaiah* still offers himselfe to pleade his masters cause, and that as boldly, as if none durst enter the lists against him, or to forge any slanders for their defence. Not that he was able to charme their tongues, but because he was well assured they should gaine nothing by all their tattle. Thus then he shewes, that notwithstanding all the false imputations which the aduersaries lay vpon the word and the Ministers thereof, they must not be discouraged. For there is no crime with which they do not charge vs. But all in vaine. Why so? Because the Iudge that defends their innocencie is neere. The faithfull Ministers therefore may (by *S. Pauls* example) summon the false and sinister iudgements of men before the Iudgement seate of God, who will giue a iust sentence, *1. Cor. 4. 4.*

Let vs stand together.] The faithfull teachers ought to be so confident, as without feare to challenge all their enemies the field. For Satan with all his supports dare not at all times stand to their tackling openly, but especially when they encounter vs with lies. But they haue

haue cloſe and ſecret practiſes, and iugling tricks vnder boord to ſurprize ſuch as ſtand not vpon their watch. Yet the ſeruants of God feare not to ſhew their faces, nor to enter the liſts againſt the aduerſarie: neither are they aſhamed to reaſon and debate the matter, if the enimie dare appeare. For the truth is of ſuch ſtrength, that it flees not the noone day, as we ſee heere, that Iſaiab feares not boldly to egge and prouoke all thoſe to the fight, whom he ſaw to lie in wait to trap him. And here he vrgeth them againe ſaying, *Let him come neere me.* For the true Paſtors ought to be alwaies readie to yeeld a reaſon of their doctrine. But where is he that vouchſafes to heare them patientlie, or that will conſider what his doctrine is which they preach. I grant the aduerſaries are readie enough to draw neere, but it is only to draw out their ſwords, and to cut the throates of Gods ſeruants, or to whet & file their tongues, that they may be fit to defame them by all ſorts of ſlanders. In a word, their beſt defences conſiſts in fraude, and tyrannie, for with reaſons orderly gathered from the Scriptures, they dare not encounter, we therefore being well aſſured of the equitie of our cauſe, are readie with a chriſtian fortitude to challenge them the field. For though they *condemne* vs without hearing our defences; yea, and though the numbers of the be great, which ſubſcribe to their ſayings, yet will we not be outſeared, for God, whoſe cauſe we defend, is the Iudge, who at the laſt will giue ſentence on our ſide.

It ſeemes S. Paul alludes to this place, where he ſaith, It is God that iuſtifies, who ſhall condemne? Rom. 8. 33. For we may boldly appeale to the Iudgement ſeat of God, when we are clothed with his free righteousnes in Ieſus Chriſt. But Iſaiab handles another argument heere. For he ſpeakes not now of mans ſaluation in generall, but of the miniſtrie of the word, whereof the Lord will be the protector againſt all the aſſaults of the wicked, neither will he ſuffer his ſeruants to be ouerwhelmed with their falſe packing nor violences. In the end of the verſe he ſhewes that he vaunts not of his fortitude as one out of gunſhot, or as if he meant to fight with his owne ſhadow, but he proteſts that he will keepe his ſtanding in the face of the proudeſt of them all that dare aſſaile him. For whoſoever they be that bid battell to Gods word, ſhall but daſh themſelues vpon their owne deſtruction by reaſon of their owne brittle-nes, and ſhall forthwith vaniſh to nothing.

Now as if he had had the thing before his eyes, he ſeeth a particule demonſtrative, *Behold, or loe, they ſhall waxe old as doth a garment,* the moth ſhall conſume them. The Pſalmiſt ſeeth the like ſimilitude, when he compares the men of this world with the children of God, Pſal. 49. For albeit the worldlings braue it out, and that they ſhine as precious ſtones, yet ſhall they periſh. But the faithfull who now lie covered with filth and rubbiſh, being once decked with new beautie, ſhall in the end ſhine as the ſtars. But in this place Iſaiab properly ſpeakes of theſe mad dogs, who hate and barke at the faithfull Miniſters

of the word. Now howſoever ſuch prophane wretches are in beſt eſteeme with the world, and in great authoritie in the middeſt of the, yet all their brauadoes ſhall fall and come to nought, euen as the beautie of garments that are defaced by the gnawing of the moth.

Verſ. 10. *Who is amongſt you that feareth the Lord? Let him heare the voice of his ſervant: he that walketh in darknes, and hath no light, let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay vpon his God.*

H Aving ſpoken of the inuincible ſuccors which God giues to all his Propheits, Iſaiab now directs his ſpeech to the faithfull, admoniſhing them to ſuffer themſelues to be governed by Gods word, and to yeeld themſelues teachable. Whence we may gather how farre he inſulted ouer thoſe with an holy pride which were his detractors. For in regard the wicked among the Iewes at that time preuailed, in reſpect of their multitudes, the little flock were in danger to haue their faith extinguished by them. In that he asks where thoſe were *that feared the Lord?* it is to note out the fewnes of them. And yet he calleth *theſe few* to take part with him, that they might ſeparate themſelues from that great rout, left they ſhould conſent with them in their wicked plots, ſo much condemned of God. As in Chap. 8. Say ye not a conſpiracie, &c. Thus then howſoever Gods enemies make a great armie in regard of their multitudes, yet Iſaiab aſſures himſelfe, that there is a remnant left who will profit by his doctrine.

Now he ſpeakes to ſuch as *feare God*, for where religion and the feare of God is wanting, there wholeſome doctrine can take no place. We ſee how thoſe who otherwiſe will be taken for great clerks, and ſharp witred, do yet receiue the ſame. Why ſo? Surely thoſe that are ſwollen with pride, and hate modeſtie and all humilitie, proue more then diſtinct when the matter concernes the diſcerning of this *or iſtome* of God. It is no maruell then that Iſaiab layes this as the foundation, to wit, *the feare of the Lord*, that ſo the word may indeed be diligentlie and attentiuely received and heard. Whence alſo it appeares, that there is no true feare of God where the hearing of his word is contemned. For hypocrites; will make great brags of pietie, and the feare of God: but by their contempt of it they plainly manifeſt their rebellion, in that they obſtinately reiect the doctrine of the Goſpell, and all ſound admonitions. Take a ſure triall heere then of ſuch kind of perſons, that ſo you may pluck off their vizard where-with they would couer their faces.

Let him heare the voice of his ſervant. He might euen as well haue ſaid the *voice of God*, but he chooſeth rather to ſay, *of his ſervant*. For God will be no otherwiſe heard of vs, but by the *voice of his Miniſters*, whoſe ſeruiſe he ſeeth for our inſtruction. Iſaiab then ſpeakes firſt of himſelfe, and next of all his fellow brethren, who haue the ſame office of teaching with

Heere the Propheſie turns his ſpeech to the faithfull.

The voice of Gods Miniſters the voice of God.

him. And thus heere is a close opposition betwene the audience which he requires, and that licentious contempt of holy doctrine, which being basely accounted of among the impure, they by their pride drew others, as witleffe and giddie headed as themselves, to the like base estimation of it.

Now because the faithfull might reply, that the fruit of their feare and pietie did not yett appeare, but that they were contrariwise in miserable seruitude, as if they had been wicked liuers; the Prophet meetes with this complaint, and affirms that the faithfull, who hitherto had been hardlie dealt withall, should not for all that lose their labour, in yeelding obedience to God and his word: for though they haue *walked* in darknesse, yet they shall at the length inioy the *light* of Lord.

By *darknesse* the Prophet meanes not ignorance, nor blindness of munde, but the afflictions whereby Gods children are in a manner ouerwhelmed. And this is the consolation whereof he spake vers. 4. where hee said, that the tongue of the learned was giuen him, that hee might know how to minister a word in due season to him that was wearie. And he also heere promiseth, that those who hitherto haue been almost drowned in so many calamities, shall be comforted.

Vers. 11. *Behold, all you kindle a fire, and are compassed about with sparkes: walke in the light of your fire, and in the sparkes that yee haue kindled. This shall yee haue of mine hand, yee shall lie downe in sorrow.*

Hee reprocheth the Iewes because they chose rather to make a fire alone by themselves, to walke in the light thereof, then approach to Gods light. This place hath bin ill expounded. And if we would haue the right meaning of it, we must note the opposition which is betwene Gods light, and mans light: that is to say, between the consolation which the word of God brings, and the vaine com-

forts of men, who will indeouour to put away their sorrowes, by things ridiculous and of no value. Hauiug spoken before then of *light* and *darknesse*, and hauiug promised light to such as gaue eare to the voice of the Lord; hee now saith, that the Iewes reiected this light, so *kindle* one of their owne: and in conclusion affirms; that they shall be *consumed* as with a fire, by their owne light.

In this sort Christ reprocheth the Iewes, for reioicing in *Iohn Baptists* light: Iohn 5. 33. Because they abused his person, to darken, nay rather to quench the glory of Christ. For in opposing *Iohns* person against Christs, to darken his glory: what did they else but put out the light of God, shining in a mortall man, to kindle themselves another? Which yet directed them not to walke in the right way; but made them wander in by-paths, wherein they had small cause to reioice.

In saying that they were *compassed about with the sparkes*, he taxeth their froward imaginations, which harried them to and fro: and therewithall derides their vanitie, in that they ranne swiftilie and with great alacritic, whither foucer their deceiueable lusts led them.

[*Vvalke.*] As if he should say; You shall feele by experience how vaine and vanishing your light is, when your vncertaine hopes haue failed you. And thus by this so taunting a perniission, hee signifies that they shall both lose their time and their labour. Others expound, that the wicked kindle against themselves, the fire of Gods wrath. But the Prophet hath an higher drift; neither doe I thinke that this exposition agrees to this place.

[*Of mine hand.*] In regard the wicked being beguiled with a false confidence, think themselves utterly out of danger, and doe boldly contemne all after claps, by trusting in their light; that is to say, in the meanes wherewith they haue furnished themselves: the Lord shewes that they shall *lie downe in sorrow*, and that this shall proceede *from his hand*. In a word, that such as forsake the light of Gods word to seeke consolation elsewhere, shall miserably perishe.

THE LI. CHAPTER.

Vers. 1. *Heare mee yee that follow after righteoufnesse, and yee that seeke the Lord: looke vnto the rocke whence yee are hewen, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*



ow the Prophet exhorts the Iewes not to faint, though they were few in number: for they were so humbled and diminished, that they seemed neere their vtter ruin: euen as if they had been hopelesse of any posteritie to

succeed them. Hee therefore brings them to their *originals*; to teach them that howsoeuer they were but a small handfull now, yet God was able to increase & multiply them. Then he commands them to *looke* vnto their father *Abraham*, who being but one man, yet grew into a great number, and God gaue him children as the starrs in the firmament: Gen. 15. 5. (and as the sand vpon the sea shore: Gen. 22. 17.) Thence they might colle&, that if God in so small a space was able so admirably to multiply their fathers, he was no lesse powerfull to make them increase heereafter, seeing his power is no whit abated, nor his will changed.

Looke

Darknesse taken for afflictions.

The difference betwene Gods comforts, and those of our owne deuising. Verse 10.

A consolation or exhortation vnto patience.

Lookes to the rocke,] Some thinke that *Abraham* is heere called a rocke, because hee was strong in faith: as *Saint Paul* saith, *Rom. 4. 19.* Others alleadge a reason cleane contrarie to this similitude: for they thinke *Abraham* is heere called a rocke or stone, because he was vnfit to beget children: and that *Sara* was called a caue, because she was barren. But all of them, as I take it, are deceiued: for it is a plaine similitude taken from stones. He saith then, that they were hewen or digged out of *Abraham* and *Sara*, as stones are hewen or digged out of a rocke or stone. There was exceeding need that the faithfull should be vpheld by this admonition, in the ruine of the whole nation. God had promised (as we said before) that *Abrahams* seede should be as the *stars*, and as the *sand*. This promise in outward appearance was abolished in the destruction of *Ierusalem*: for then those that remained, were like a small cluster of grapes that remains after the vintage. But in regard they had already prooued how powerful God was, to create a great people of nothing; the Prophet exhorts them to hope well still, that they may not bee taxed of vnthankfulness: towards God. And thus hee directs his speech properly to the faithfull, who had much adoe to sustaine so sharpe temptations: for hee speakes not to all in general, but to those only that rested vpon the promises, whom he calles *followers of righteousnesse*.

The Country was filled with vnbelieuers and hypocrites, who had for a long time been apostataes from the exercise of pietie: the more praise those deserted then, who constantly followed a godly and a sincere course. Where there is a desire of *righteousnesse*, there God hath audience: but where infidelitie reignes, there is no place at all for the promises. Thus then, albeit they boasted they were *Abrahams* children, yet all were not capable of this doctrine. In the next place the Prophet shewes the way how to follow this *iusse*, to wit, in *seeking the Lord*: for it must needs be that such as seeme to follow *righteousnesse*, and yet aime not at this maie, doe erre in all the parts of their life. These two things then, *to follow righteousnesse*, and *to seek the Lord*, must be ioined together.

Vers. 2. Consider Abraham your father, and Sara that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

This application shews sufficiently wherunto the Prophets exhortation tended; namely, to confirme the peoples hearts in the hope of a better estate. He faith he called him *alone*, not onely because *Abraham* had no companions with him when he was called to forsake his Country; but because the Lord suffered him to inhabit the land of *Canaan*, without hauing issue, till his old age: so as he looked not to haue any at all. And besides that, *Sarah* his wife was also barren: but at the last they had a sonne giuen them to comfort their old yeeres in their afflictions. Which

was no sooner giuen, but it seemed that God had appointed him to the slaughter: and yet for all this, the Lord furnished him with a great number of children. I told you ere while, how necessary this consolation was for the Iewes; which wee may also iudge by that wofull and miserable estate in which they then were; as histories doe at large record.

It is also no lesse needfull for vs at this day, in regard of the scattering of the church; that so our small number may no white discourage vs. No, wee are rather to hope that God wil one day multiply the same, by means to vs vnknowne. For we haue heere a manifest and an excellent example thereof in this *blessing*, whereby wee see how the Lord in *Abrahams* old age, weakens, yea and out of death it selfe multiplied his of spring. Which promise appertaines not onely to the Iewes, but to other nations: and therefore his name is no more called *Abraam*, but *Abraham*: *Gen. 17. 5.*

Vers. 3. Surely the Lord shall comfort Zion, hee shall comfort all her desolations, and hee shall make her deserts like Eden, and her wilderness like the garden of the Lord: ioy and gladnesse shall be found therein, praise and the voice of singing.

The Prophet shewes that the example propounded in *Abrahams* person, agrees to all ages. For as the Lord created so great a stocke out of one man in a moment; so will hee replenish his Church by extraordinarie and vnknowne means: not for once onely, but as oft as in the worlds account the is become a widow and barren. And thus after *S. Paul* hath spoken of *Abrahams* faith, and commended the excellencie of it, he applies the same doctrine to euery one of vs in particular: *Rom. 4. 24.*

Where he addes, *and shall comfort all her ruines*; it may be thus expounded: The Lord will comfort his Church, not onely whilst she flourisheth, but euen when she shall be brought to desolation and solitarie. And it was necessary indeed that the should be wasted and deformed euen to the vtmost, before shee could rightly taste the helpe whereof hee heere speakes. Whereas it follows, that *her deserts shall be as a place of pleasure*, the Prophet hath respect to that place of *Moses*, where he shewes how man at the beginning was put into the *garden of Eden*: *Gen. 2. 15.* that is to say, into a place of pleasure: whence by his owne fault he was banished. Now we which are deprived of this benefit and blessing which God bestowed vpon our first father, are also *scattered* vpon the face of the earth, and deprived of the *pleasure*. Wherefore when many *desolations* befall vs, and that wee see the order of nature ouerturnd, and nothing to bee perceived but miserable wastes and scatterings, let vs acknowledge that this is the iust punishment of our infidelitie, and

Vs to vs.

*Or, a place of pleasure.

After darknesse, light.

The Church must be very low bough, before she is fit to receive comfort.

The Garden of Eden, a place of pleasure. *Gen. 2. 3.*

Gen. 15. 5. & 22. 17.

The Prophets alwaies make a distinction betwene the faithfull and the hypocrites.

Note.

The application of the former consolation.

A good meditation for vs in the Churches desolation.

of the rest of our horrible iniquities. Let vs also remember the sentence pronounced against our father *Adam*, or rather against his whole posteritie, which as we are to do in the whole course of our liues, so then principallie when wee see the desolations and wracks of the Church. For the earth which otherwise of it selfe would abound with all sorts of pleasures, is now brought into a *wildernes*: by our fault, and the Church which eueri where flourished, is destroyed and laid waste. Now in the next place the Prophet adds *joy and gladnes*, whereby he signifies, that there shall be such a wonderful change, that the Church shall mourne nor lament no more: for whilest she was oppressed vnder so heauie a bondage, there was nothing heard but *sighs and groanes*, but being restored, she shall *reioyce, and sing praises vnto God*. Heere then we are admonished to praise and blesse the name of God, after we haue tasted of his liberalitie, *Psal. 147.*

Verf. 4. *Hearken ye vnto me, my people, and giue eare vnto me my people: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will bring forth my iudgement for the light of the people.*

*Or, peoples.

Our slow attention causes God to double his exhortation: See *verfe 1.*

IT is not without cause that the Lord so often calles for *audience*: for wee haue too wofull experience how dull wee are of hearing, and chiefly in aduersitie. When we stand in greatest need of consolation, then by our impatiencie and faint-heartednes we put it farre from vs. Wherefore it stands eueri one of vs in hand to pluck vp our spirits, especiallie when aduersities do pinch vs to the quick, that by this meanes wee may *rouse up and awaken our spirits, and banish all slothfulness to receive cōfort*. Such an attention the is heere required as may confirme our hearts in patience, till the time of grace be come. And thus the Lords meaning is, that he will reigne againe, and restore his Church to her first estate, in which he will haue his name called vpon.

Albeit the word *Law* signifies as much as the *Edict* which the Lord will publish when he is determined to gather together his scattered Church, yet therewithall he shewes by what meanes he will reigne, to wit, by his law, and by the doctrine thereof. And thus we see that where the doctrine of the law is reiecte, there God reignes not: that is to say, there men acknowledge him not.

By *Iudgement*, he meanes the rule of a well ordered government, by which he will restore his kingdome. He saith, that this Iudgement shall be for the *light* of peoples, because miserable men by nature are drawne out of darkness when God begins to reigne, and are then *enlightened* by the doctrine of the word.

The verb *I will bring forth*, is diuerslie translated by the Interpreters, because the Hebrew word *Rage* hath diuers significations, for sometimes it signifies to cut, and to open, sometimes to rest. Some then expound, I will cause to rest: that is to say, I will make firme, and this sense agrees not ill. Many among the

Jewes vnderstand it otherwise, but I will not trouble the reader with their harsh and intricate expositions, I rather willingly receiue this translation, I will bring forth; or cause to come forth: that is to say, I will manifest my iudgement, for this I thinke fites best with the former member. Now we know that the Hebrewes are wont to vse many repetitions. And therefore albeit the Lord repeats one thing twice, yet the sense is but one and the same. For where he said, that a law should proceed from him, now he promisseth to bring forth, or to manifest his iudgement.

Verf. 5. *My righteousness is neere: my saluation goeth forth, and mine armes shall iudge the people: the Isles shall wait for me, and shall trust vnto mine arme.*

HEE confirms the former doctrine. The *righteousnes* of the Lord hath relation vnto men, who haue experience that he is iust. When the people were oppressed vnder so sore a bondage, they had good cause to think they were iustlie chastised for their sinnes. But they might wonder they were thus left and forsaken, that Gods worship was disolued, and his holy name blasphemed by the prophane & vngodly, who committed many outrages against him without punishment. That he might giue them some consolation then, *Isaiah* promisseth that God will shortly assist them, that so his truth and righteousness may be published throughout the whole world. But by the word *Iustice*, he meanes not that recompence, which he giues to eueri one, but that *faithfulness* of the Lord, who protects his Saints, and bestowes many graces vpon them, and keeps his promise touching their deliuerance, in not suffering them to be ouerwhelmed. This appears yet better to be so by the member following, where by way of exposition he adds, that his *saluation is gone forth*: for the *righteousnes* of God appeared in the *saluation* of the people. The captiuitie of the Jewes in Babylon was vnto them as a kind of death, and this is the cause why he calles this deliuerance *saluation*.

Mine armes shall iudge.] By *armes* he signifies the manifestation of his power, for it is a figurative manner of speech much vsed in the Scripture. Now because Gods soueraignie and power seemes to be limited within very narrow bounds; yea, sometimes appeeres not at all, therefore he mentions his *armes*, thereby signifying that his kingdome shall be spread farre and neere.

Verf. 6. *Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and looke vpon the earth beneath: for the heauē shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old as a garment, and they that dwell therein shall perish in like maner: but my saluation shall be for euer, and my righteousnesses shall not be abolished.*

WHILEST wee see so many changes fall out in the world, and that y Church

A confirmation of the former doctrine.

How God will reigne in his Church.

The ſtabilitie of the Church.

As we often thinke ſhall be violently ſwallowed vp therein, it is very needfull that our minds ſhould be gathered vp farre aboute the whole order of nature, otherwiſe the ſalvation of the Church ſhall ſeeme to hang in a net, and to ſtope vp and downe in the middeſt of theſe tempeſts, we may eaſily diſcerne *with what wiſdome God governes all things both in heauen above, and in the earth below:* ſecondly, with what a fatherly care he vpholds and preſerues his work, and the whole frame of the world: thirdly, with what equitie he diſpoſeth and provides for all his creatures therein: but his care and providence ouer his Church is ſurpaſſing great, which indeed he hath ſeparated from the reſt of the world. The Prophet hath here comprehended both theſe points, for he commands the faithfull to turne their eyes on euery ſide of them, to conſider Gods admirable providence as well in the *heavens*, as in the *earth*, by which he hath conſtantlie continued from the creation that goodly order by him then eſtabliſhed. Hee addes, that although theſe things ſeeme to *fall to decay*, yet it is vnpoſſible that y^e Church which hath her ſure foundatiō in God ſhould euer be ſhaken. As if he ſhould ſay, Heauen and earth ſhall periſh an hundred times rather then the promiſe (vpon which the ſalvation of the Church is grounded) ſhould be *aboliſhed*. He therefore puts *ſalvation* in the firſt place, and then he addes *righteouſnes*, which is the ſolid foundation wherewith this ſalvation is vpheld: when dangers threaten vs on all ſides then, let vs learne to flee to this citie of refuge.

Vnto this ſentence alſo belongs that which is in Pſal. 102. The heavens ſhall wax old as doth a garment, but thou, Lord, art the ſame, and thy yeeres ſhall not faile: and therefore thy children ſhall dwell, &c. Both places do admoniſh vs, that the fauor which God ſhews in the conſeruatiō of his Church, farre ſurpaſſeth all the reſt of his works in excellencie; for the whole matter and ſubſtance of the heavens and earth is but periſhable and tranſitorie, but the ſalvation whereby God preſerues his Church neither is nor can be liable to ſuch changes and alterations, becauſe it is eternall.

Verſ. 7. Hearken vnto me, yee that know righteouſnes, the people in whoſe heart is my law. Feare not ye the reproch of men, neither be ye afraid of their rebukes.

BECAUSE the wicked hauing all things at their wiſh, deride and ſcorne our hopes, and make themſelues ſport with our miſeries & calamities, the Prophet exhorts the faithfull to ſuffer with patience, and not to feare their rebukes; neither to be diſcouraged for their outrages, becauſe the felicitie which they inioy, ſhall be *but of ſhorts continuance*. For notwithstanding their meriments ſtuffed ſo full of deriſions and proud diſdainings, they are alreadie ordeined to be meate for *mothes* and *wormes*: as on the contrarie, that God

holds the ſaluation of the faithfull (which for a time he ſeemes to neglect) ſafe in his owne hand. But we are againe to note the repetition of this verbe, *To hearken*, for this is the third time the Lord hath required audience in this Chapter: for when we be in perplexities, and tremble in regard of our miſeries, we haue much ado to apprehend or imbrace the promiſes. There is great need then that we ſhould often be rouzed and wakened vp to attention, vntill we haue wound our ſelues out of all entanglings.

But he directes not his ſpeech heere to the hypocrites, but to ſuch as *know righteouſnes*. For howfocuer the faithfull do not offer purpoſe reiect the word of God, yet they often ſhut the doores againſt this *righteouſnes*, and ſo hinder the ſame from hauing any entrance, becauſe in aduerſitie they ſtop their eares, and nouriſh diſcomfortable thoughts within them. To the end then that they might giue the promiſes entrance, and ſuffer themſelues to be comforted, the Prophet awakens them againe, and bids them *giue eare*.

The order of his words is alſo to be noted, for firſt he ſhewes who they be of whom the Lord would haue audience, namely, of ſuch as *know righteouſnes*: ſecondly, expounding what this knowledge is, he addes, *the people in whoſe hearts my law* is written and planted, for there is no *righteouſnes* without Gods word. Let men make neuer ſo many *lawes*, and that in the beſt forme they can deuife, yet they can not bring vs to true *righteouſnes*: they may well bring vs to ſome ſhadowes of it, but they ſhall neuer attaine ſo farre as to expreſſe it to the life. He alſo therewithall ſhewes the way how to profit in the law of the Lord: for the *law* hath not his ſeate in the braine, but in the *heart*, that ſo being leaunened with this heauenly doctrine, Mat. h. 13. 33. we may be whollie transformed into it, 2. Cor. 3. 18.

Verſ. 8. For the moth ſhall eaſe them vp like a garment, and the worme ſhall eaſe them like wooll: but my righteouſnes ſhall be for ever, and my ſalvation from generation to generation.

BECAUSE the faithfull ſeruants of God were to indure many iniuries & wrongs which the enemies of the world would load them with: therefore the Prophet exhorts them againe to beare theſe things patiently: for the diſgraces and checks which we often receiue from the wicked, wound vs more to the heart then their fires or ſwords. But we muſt hold it our glory and crowne of offriciōing, that wee be contemned of them, and accounted as the of-ſcouring of all things. Thence ariſeth that fortitude; though the world reiects vs *as the ſcumme of the world*: for God holds vs precious in his ſight, in regard our cauſe is his owne. Let vs then with *Moses*, eſteeme the rebuke of Chriſt aboute all the riches of Egypt, Exod. 2. 11. Heb. 11. 26. Let vs with the Apoſtles reioyce, who went from the Councell with glad hearts, in regard they were counted worthis

Verſ. 1. & 4.

The faithfull againe diſtinguiſhed from hypocrites. See verſe 1.

1

2

Note.

A prevention of an obic-tion.

A third exhortation to attention: ſee verſ. 1. and 4.

Verſe 8.

worthy to suffer rebuke and wrongs for the name of the Lord Iesus: Act. 5. 41.

Now because it were little *ioy* vs to see the wicked brought to nought, vnlesse wee might inioy our freedome and safetie; the Prophet shewes what our condition shall be, namely, *neuer* to be *defiined* of the *righteousnesse* and *saluation* of God. But this comparison seemes not verie fitting, when the ruine of the vngodly is opposed to his *righteousnesse*. For it might haue been more properly and plainly affirmed, that howsoeuer the wicked reioice, yet they shall shortly perish, and the faithfull, who now resemble dead men, shall liue. For seeng he mentions not them at all, but onely recommends vnto them the perpetuie of his *righteousnesse*; it might bee objected, what profit shall we haue by this, that Gods *righteousnesse* shall remaine for euer, whilest we in the meane while, are ouerwhelmed with miseries? But the Prophet in these words aduertiseth vs, that the consolation which belongs vnto vs in afflictions, must arise from hence, that our health and saluation is after a sort shut vp in God. For whilest men rest in themselves, they cannot conceiue so much as the least dramme of hope, which will not forthwith vanish. And therefore he turnes our eies vnto God, whose mercie indures for euer, vpon them that feare him, and his *righteousnesse* vpon their childrens children, as *Dauid* saith, *Psal. 103.* In regard that our saluation then is founded on Gods *mercy* and *truth*, *Isaiab* brings vs vnto it, that all men being accounted as *nothing*, wee may wholly trust in the saluation of the Lord. For thus we must reason; *Saluation* is in God; not for himselfe, but for vs: as also his *righteousnesse*, which hee is readie to manifest for our defence. From the saluation & *righteousnesse* of God then, wee ought to gather that his seruants can neuer perish. Which we haue also proued from the testimonie of *Dauid*: Thou art alwaies the same, and thy yeeres shall not faile: the children of thy seruants shall continue, and their seede shall stand fast in thy fight: *Psal. 102. 27, 28.* Wee see then how hee applies this *perpetuie* vnto Gods children, who stand not by their owne strength, but in God, who is the rocke of their saluation.

Verf. 9. *Rise up, rise up, and put on strength, O arme of the Lord: arise as in the old time in the generations of the world. Art not thou * the same that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?*

10. Art not thou the same which hath dried the sea, euen the waters of the great deepe, making the depth of the sea a way for the redeemed to passe ouer?

The Prophet heere teacheth, that when God raiseth vs vp by his promises, we on the other side ought instantly to intreat him

to accomplish that which hee hath promised, For he giues vs not comfort to nourish vs in idleness; but the more to inflame vs with a greater affection of praier, and to a daily exercising of our faith. Now the Prophet speaks heere according to our vnderstandings. For we thinke that God sleepest, as long as he defertes to relieue our miseries: and yet the Lord beares with vs thus far, that hee suffers vs to pray with such words, as saour somewhat of the infirmities of our natures. The faithfull then pray that God would *arise*, or awake: not as if he were *idle*, or *asleepe* in heauen; but they rather acknowledge therein *their owne dulnesse* or *sloughnesse*, in regard they cannot conceiue ought else of God, as long as he defertes to helpe them. Notwithstanding howsoeuer the flesh imagineth that hee sleepest, and neglects our miseries, yet faith looks higher, and apprehends his infinite power.

The Scripture therefore is wont to say, that God *awakes*, and *puts on strength*, when he manifests some testimonies of his presence and power: for without this, we esteeme him either idle or asleepe. Now when the Prophet calles it the *arme of the Lord* which was then hid, he sets it heere before them, as if it were present, that they might conclude; surely our enemies could not afflict vs thus cruelly, if that the Lord had not withdrawne his *arme*, and helping hand from vs. We haue shewed you the cause of this delay in Chap. 50. 1. namely, for their reuolt from God.

By the *daies of old*, hee shewes, that they ought to remember all the wonderfull works which God had in former time wrought for their saluation. For howsoeuer he seemes to sit still as one vtterly carelesse of vs, yet is he the same God still, who *of old* hath gouerned his Church, and therefore can neuer now reiect or abandon those whom he hath receiued into his protection.

In the *generations of old*.] This repetition doth yet better expresse, that wee ought not onely to consider what was done *yesterday*, but those things also which were done *long agoe*: for we must extend our thoughts euen to the most *ancient* generations, that wee may overcome those temptations, which otherwise would seeme to ouerwhelme vs. The Prophet doth heere then gather together in *one*, all the testimonies of Gods fauour, which he hath from time to time manifested to his people, that if two or three were not sufficient, yet at least the *great* numbers of them might wholly confirme the faith of the elect.

Now because it was too tedious to draw a long catalogue of all, hee names *this first* and *excellens miracle* among the rest; namely, the wonderfull deliuerance of the people *out of Egypt*. For by *Rahab*, I doubt not but he means proud and cruell Egypt: as in the 87. *Psalme*; I will make mention of *Rahab* and *Babylon*, among those which know me. Also, *Ezechiel* calles the King of Egypt a *dragon*: 29. 3. Behold, I come against thee *Pharaoh* King of Egypt, the great dragon, that lieth in the midst of the riuers. Thus it sufficiently appears,

Saluation in God, not for himselfe, but for vs.

In what sense God is said to wake, &c.

Wee must meditate on Gods works of old.

* that arme.

Gods promises must beget in vs the

peates, and all (in a manner) are of the ſame opinion, that the Prophet heere puts them in minde of that ſtrange deliuerance of the people out of Egypt. If the pride and loſtineſſe of Egypt was at that time brought low; if the dragon was then ſtaine; why ſhould wee not ſtill hope for the like?

Art not thou that arme? [The Prophet reaſons from the nature of God: for this cannot bee ſaid of the arme of fleſh: the ſtrength whereof (be it neuer ſo great) yet decays and diminifeth in ſucceſſion of time. *Milo*, who was the ſtoutest and ſtrongest among many, waxing old, and looking vpon his arme, ſighed, becauſe hee felt himſelfe deſtitute of that force which once hee inioiced: but it is not thus with God, for his power can neuer diminiſh. Theſe words then, *Art not thou that arme?* muſt be read with a certaine vehemencie: for the Prophet ſhewes that the Lord is the ſame which he was wont to be, in regard he continues alwaies one and the ſame.

Now howſoever *Iſaiah* recites not all the miracles which God did, when he deliuered his people from vnder the bondage of Egypt; yet he meant in a word to comprehend whatſoever *Moſes* expreſſeth at large; that the Iewes being admoniſhed by this brieſe ſentence, might from thence call to minde after how manie waies God did then manifeſt his power.

Hee mentions the red ſea, which was dried vp; not onely for the rareneſſe of the miracle, but becauſe all the former miracles tended to this end, that the people being now ſet free from an vnjuſt oppreſſion and tyrannie, might paſſe out of Babylon into the land of promiſe: and therefore hee makes expreſſe mentiō of the way which was opened for the redeemed. From this example we may conſider what a one God hath been towards vs, that thence we may conclude, that he will for the time to come, bee alwaies like himſelfe, as plainlie appears by the coherence of the text.

Verſ. 11. *Therefore the redeemed of the Lord ſhall returne, and come with ioy vnto Zion; and everlaſting ioy ſhall be vpon their heads: they ſhall obtaine ioy and gladneſſe, and ſorrow, and mourning ſhall ſce away.*

Now hee ſhewes that more plainly, which hee briefly touched before; for hauing recited the wonderfull workes of God, whereby in times paſt hee manifeſted his power in Egypt, for the deliuerance of his people, hee concludes that neither the high rockes, nor the bottomleſſe gulphes, no nor the gates of hell themſelues ſhall be able to let him from bringing backe his people out of Babylon. Now the better to confirme and apply this, hee calles them *the redeemed*; to teach them that God intitles not himſelfe to bee the ſauiour of his people, but for their ſakes: and alſo to aſſure them, that he will ſhew ſuch a teſtimonie of his power for their deliuerance, as

hee once did; in regard the cauſe is now the ſame.

Vnto Zion.] That is to ſay, vnto that place where hee once appointed his name to be called vpon, that ſo hee might aſſure them that the Temple ſhould be reediſied, and Gods pure worſhip eſtabliſhed. For when the Iewes who were in Babylon, were to looke for that deliuerance which their fathers formerly had, in regard God was alſo the redeemer of their children: they had yet a priuiledge about their fathers, becauſe God had choiſen Mount Zion, in which he had promiſed to reſt for euer: *Pſal.* 132. 14. But becauſe the worke of God promiſed heere by *Iſaiah*, was extraordinary, therefore he exhorts the people to thankſgiuing. The word *Rima* may be ſimply taken for ioy: but becauſe it often ſignifies that praiſe, which wee yeeld vnto God in the acknowledgement of his benefits, I had rather take it for a ſong in this place. The Prophets meaning is then, that there ſhall be an vnwonted, and an vnexpected change; ſo as the faithfull ſhall haue an exceeding cauſe of ioy and thankſgiuing.

In ſaying that *everlaſting ioy ſhall be vpon their heads*; he alludes vnto thoſe crownes and garlands of flowers, wherewith they were adorned at banquetts. He addes, that they ſhall obtaine ioy: meaning thereby a firme and ſolid ioy. Laſtly, for amplifications ſake, hee ſaith, that *all ſorrow ſhall ſce away*: and this was to confirme them againſt that ordinary feare which men haue; namely, when as all their ioy in a moment is turned to mourning. And yet heere withall the Prophet admoniſheth them to wait patiently for that happy iſſue which he hath promiſed, though for a while (if neede bee) they are in heauineſſe and ſorrow.

Verſ. 12. *I, euen I am he that comfort you. Who art thou, that thou ſhouldeſt feare a mortall man, and the ſonne of man, which ſhall be made as graſſe.*

The Lord not onely promiſeth ſaluation and grace heere to the Iewes, but complains that they would not belieue his word, neither would they make that account of his power, which they ſhould haue done. For what an vnworthy thing is it, that the threats of men ſhould ſo terrifie vs, as to make vs ſee light by the promiſes of God, who is ready to manifeſt his power, that ſo at the laſt we might be fortified againſt all aſſaults? Wee ſhew our ſelues flat contemners of God then, when we nourish in our ſelues an inordinate feare of men. Whence it appears how odious a thing it is to make a tumult in our mindes, by reaſon of mens threats, when God calles vs to reſt quietly in him. Truly the ingratitude of men is too groſſe, if in hearing that God is of their ſide, they conceiue not hope from ſo many famous promiſes, to cry with boldneſſe; If God be with vs, who can be againſt vs? *Rom.* 8. 31. That is the cauſe then that when dangers appear, they ſtand as men amazed; and attribute more power to a mortall

A complain
againſt the
peoples inor-
dinate feare;
proceeding
from infide-
licie.

Miloſopheth.

*O. a ſong.

An ampli-
fication.

mortall man to harme them, then to God to help them. He iustly reprocheth the Iewes then, that they had fortified themselves no better with these promises, and that by them they were no better armed against all dangers. For what greater dishonor can we doe vnto God, then to call the truth of his promises into question, which yet falles out, when men to affright vs, that we can not quietly rest in the things reuealed?

This repetition *I, I am*, hath great weight, because he that promiseth this consolation is true, neither can the forces, nor deceits of men defeat him of his purpose. *Who art thou, &c* He shewes how fraile, transitorie, vaine, and brittle mans nature is, the better to bewray the fottishnes of this people, whilest they preferred bubbles, a smoke, and shadowes to strong God. But withall he shewes, that men can not be ouerwhelmed with feare as long as they retaine within them the remembrance of Gods power. Doe wee then stand amazed when dangers approach? It is a signe that we haue forgotten God, and therefore he addes,

Prou. 24. 10.

Verse 13. And forgettest the Lord thy maker that hath spread out the heauens, and laid the foundations of the earth? And hast feared all the day continuallie because of the rage of the oppressor which is readie to destroy? Where is now the rage of the oppressor?

We must be-
wee how we
feare the
creature a-
bout the
Creator.
See Chap. 43.
15.

IT is not enough to imagin that there is one God, but wee must acknowledge and imbrace him by faith. In calling himselfe a maker, it must not be referred to the generall Creation, but to spirituall regeneration, as we haue noted before in diuers places. And in this sense *Pau* calles vs the *workemanship* of God, because *he hath created* vs vnto euery good woike, *Ephe. 2. 10.* If we remember then the worke of our *Creation* and adoption, from this beginning we may hope of perseverance vnto the end, lest we should proue vnthankfull vnto God, when after so vndoubted testimonies, he hath manifested his faithfulness and truth vnto vs.

Besides, the Prophet ioines Gods infinite power with his speciall goodnes which he shewed to his people: and this power he opposeth to mans imbecillitie, who in the former verse he compared to *grass*. He shewes by his works what his power is, so as those which perceiue not the same therein, are more then blinde. For which way can we turne our eies but we must needs behold most ample and large testimonies of Gods power and goodnes which he notwithstanding notes out here in a word, wher he speakes of the *spreading out of the heauen*, and of *laying the foundations of the earth*. It is our brutishnes then, & matchlesse sensuality to forget the same, seeing there are so many infinite testimonies of Gods power, which may daily refresh our memories.

And hast feared.] Hee continues the same comparison. For what are men, saith he, that

thou shouldest so feare them, if thou comparest them vnto God, who hath promised to relieue thee? Truly it is an exceeding dishonor done to his Maiestie, if we beleuee not that he hath more power to saue vs, then the enemies haue to destroy vs. The Lord therefore would haue vs to consider well what and how great he is, and how farre his power extends it selfe that we should not feare the rage of the oppressor, nor the furie of a mortall man, who vanisheth as a puffe of winde, or as the smoke.

See 2. Kin. 6.
16. 2. Chr. 32.
7. 1. Ioh. 4. 4.

Verse 14. The captive hasteth to be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should faile.

THIS verse is diuersly expounded: for some thinke it is to be referred to *Cyrus*, and so they expound the word *Tisbith* (which we haue translated *banished*) he which causeth to remoue. But the most receiued opinion is, that this word is to be taken for him that is bound or oppressed: or, for one exiled, wandering hither and thither. The Iewes were not only banished, but were to held captiues, that it was impossible for them freely to returne home into their countrie: and therefore I expound this of the Iewes: but yet it may be taken both waies, either that the Prophet reproues their ouer-great haste to be loosed, in regard of their impatient wishing to returne: or it signifies, that their returne into their countrie shall come in due season, that their long expectation might not put them vtterly out of heart. As if he should say, The time in which you are to depart home is hard at hand. This second exposition is the most approued, and I willingly receiue it, because it agrees with the scope of the text.

A thousand yeeres with the Lord is but as one day.

1
2

But is it not strange that he saith, the people shall shortly returne, seeing the captiuitie indured so long a time. But it is not without cause that God saith, his deliuerance which he deferred to a fit time should forthwith be accomplished: for albeit the same seeme very long to vs, yet is it but short in deed, because it is the fittest and best time. And truly if we shall consider the estate of this so great and mightie a Monarchie, which had not then so much as any appearance of euer being ruinated, we may safely affirme that the time was very short.

Thus then, whereas we thinke Gods promises long in performing, we shall esteeme the time but a moment; prouided that wee lift vp our eies vnto the heauens, *Psal. 123. 1.* This exposition is yet better confirmed by that which is added, *that he die not in the pit*. See how the Lord hastens then to deliuer his elect: in due season, that out of the darke dungeon they may come forth safe and sound. Neither doth he promise his people a speedie dispatch, to free them from their bonds only, but also that he may do the good after their deliuerance; for he promiseth them all things necessarie for this life present, that so they may rest whollie vpon the Lord, who is not wont to aid his people for once only, but is wont

worke to be with them, euen till their latter end.

Verſ. 15. *And I am the Lord thy God that diuided the Sea when his waues rored: the Lord of hoſtes is his name.*

HE mentions his power againe. For mens diſtruſt and ſlothfulneſſe is ſo great, that albeit the ſame his power bee manifested in their ſight, yet the leaſt temptation that is, prouokes ſufficiently that they are not well perſwaded thereof. For they alwaies turne to their old bias againe, when the cuill preſſeth them; neither can they conceiue how this power which is in God, appertaines any whit vnto them. Hee ſpeakes not heere generally but alleageath that worke of wonder, ſo often mentioned heretofore: for in that redemption of their fathers, hee gaue hope of eternall ſaluation to all their poſteritie. He therefore rightly affirms himſelfe to be that God, who long ſince diuided the ſea, Exod. 14. 21. Then he adornes this miracle, in ſaying, that at his voice the *roaring* and boiling *waues* were appeaſed. Let vs know then that there are no floods ſo violent, but the Lord can ſtil and aſſwage them, for the deliuerance of his Church: Pſal. 93. 3, 4. For it is hee that calmes the ſea by his power, as *Iob* ſaith, Chap. 26. 12, though it bee very boiſterous and vntamed. He alſo raiſeth the tempeſts when it pleaſeth him. But the Prophet, as I haue ſaid, chiefly reſpected the hitoriſtic of their deliuerance out of Egypt.

He giues God the title of the *Lord of hoſtes*, to teach vs how farre his power extends it ſelfe; which hee is readie to manifeſt, as oft as hee purpoſeth to giue reliefe vnto his Church.

Verſ. 16. *And I haue put my words in thy mouth, and haue defended thee in the ſhadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heauens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and ſay vnto Zion; Thou art my people.*

HE returns againe to the doctrine by him propounded before; namely, that God, who comforts his Church, and ſaith I, euen I am hee that comfort you, verſ. 12. affirms heere, that hee hath put *his words* into the *mouthes* of the Prophets, which they haue in charge to deliuer. Hence we may gather, that theſe things proceeded not from man, who commonly is mutable; but from God, that cannot lie. The Lord ſpake to all the Prophets: firſt, to *Iſaiab*, then to others ſucceſſiueſly; but at laſt we muſt come to Chriſt: and yet we need not reſtraine this to *Iſaiab*, nor to Chriſt; but to extend it to all the Prophets. Moreover, it is the Lords meaning that wee ſhould hearken as diligently to the conſolations of the Prophets, as if he taught them vs in his owne perſon: yea, he ſaith heere, that

it is hee which ſpeakes by their mouthes. Hence wee gather, that others neede not draw neere to giue comfort to the Church, but ſuch as by *whoſe mouth* God ſpeakes: for wee ought to reiect all ſuch as broach their owne inuention, albeit they ſhewd themſelues neuer ſo much with the title of Gods name.

But let vs a little ſee into the Prophets meaning. For hauing ſhewed that mens conſciences alwaies wauer, till the Lord haue ſecured them; it teacheth vs to hold this principle, that it is God, who ſpeakes by his Prophets: for otherwiſe our conſciences would remaine in doubtings and perplexities ſtill. There is alſo great weight in theſe words, in that he recites the commandement of God: for by the authoritie heereof, he was ſtrengthened on to performe his office.

And haue kept mee in the ſhadow of mine hand.] Though this was ſaid in Chap. 49. 2. yet was it no needleſſe repetition. For hence wee learne, that God will vndoubtedly defend his Miniſters at all times, that ſo being upheld by his ſuccour, he may fit them to paſſe thorow the pikes. Now that we may be covered *in* this ſhadow, two things are required: Firſt, that wee be well aſſured that we publiſh nothing to the people but Gods word: ſecondly, that we doe this at Gods command: for ſuch as raſhly intrude themſelues, may well crake of the title of teachers, but to no purpoſe; for they ſhall turne their backs, when it comes to the triall indeed. But if we haue the teſtimonie of a good conſcience, to witneſſe with vs that we are called of God, then may we reſolue our ſelues aſſuredly of Gods aid and proteccion, and that in the end we ſhall haue the victory.

The end of the ambaffage is added; *that I may plant the heauens*, ſaith he: that is to ſay, that I may bring all things into their right order. I grant this is diuerſly expounded: but the moſt natiue ſenſe, as I thinke, is, that *heauen* and *earth* are renewed by the doctrine of ſaluation; becauſe in Chriſt (as *Paul* ſpeakes) all things both in *heauen* and *earth*, are gathered together in one: Eph. 1. 10. For in regard that ſince the fall of the firſt man, we ſee nothing heere but ſuch horrible confuſions as burthen the very inſenſible creatures, and make them as it were to beare the puniſhment of our ſinne: Rom. 8. 22. this diſorder can no way be repaired but in Chriſt. Seeing then that the whole face of the earth is diſfigured by this wofull deſolation, it is not ſaid without cauſe, that the faithfull teachers doe renew the world, euen as if God did caſt *heauen* and *earth* into a new mould againe, by their hand. By this let vs take a taſte of the grieuouſneſſe of ſinne, ſeeing ſuch an horrible downfall hath ſucceeded in the nature of things. It is ſaid then that the *heauens* are planted, and the *earth* ſet vpon her *foundations*, when the Lord eſtablisheth his Church by the miniſterie of his word. This hee doth by the hands of the Miniſters, whom hee directs by his holy Spirit, and defends them againſt all the furie and plots of their enemies, that they may effectually accom-

Acts 28. 15.
Heb. 1. 1.

God will al-
waies protect
his Mini-
ſters.

1

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The world
renewed as it
were by the
the Goſpel
preached.

plish the worke imposed vpon them.

Lastly, he shewes that this ministerie tends to an higher end, then to the visible forme of this world, which suddenly vanisheth away; to wit, that hee will raise vp and nourish in the hearts of the faithfull, the hope of the blessed life. For the true restauration of the Church, and of the world, consists in this, that the elect may be gathered into the vnitie of faith, and that they all with one accord may aspire vnto God, seeing he so louingly allures them by these words, *I am thy God*. By this we may see what account God makes of his Church, and the saluation thereof, in that he not one-lie preferres it about the whole world, but shewes that the stabilitie of the world depends vpon it. We are also to obserue what word it is which God will haue preached: for in it we haue the rule of a godly life preferred; and besides, it testifies vnto vs our adoption, wherein especially consists our saluation.

Verse 15. and in this verse, Thow are my people.

Verf. 17. *Awake, awake and stand vp O Ierusalem, which hast drunke at the Lords hand the cup of his wrath: thou hast drunke the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.*

IN regard the Church was to sustaine and indure many afflictions, the Prophet furnisheth her with consolation, and meetes with a difficultie that might come betwene; namely, the enemies tyrannizing ouer the poore Iews, when as in the meane while, they felt no fruit of these promises. His meaning is then, that the Church should be restored and shall recouer her full strength, though now she be afflicted, and tossed vp and downe with diuers tempests. And by the word *awake then*, he raiseth her from death, and as it were out of her graue. As if he should say; No ruin can be so wofull, nor any desolations so horrible, that can let God from effecting of this restauration. Such a consolation doubtlesse was of singular vse: for when sorrow hath seized vpon our hearts, wee by and by thinke that the promises bring nothing at all vnto vs. It is very needfull then that wee be often put in mind of this, and may also haue it euer our sight; namely, that it is God who speaks and thus calles, not such as are in a flourishing estate, but those that are brought low, yea and dead: for these hee can *awaken* notwithstanding, and raise vp by his word: for this doctrine of saluation is not ordained for those that are in good plight, but for the *dead*, which haue lost all hope.

Which hast drunke, &c. The cup of *wrath*, is taken two waies: for sometimes it is said, that the Lord giues vs a cuppe of *wrath* to drinke, when hee finites vs with giddinesse, and deprives vs of sense: and thus wee see often befalls men in their affliction. Sometimes also it is taken simply for the bitter and smart blowes, wherewith hee corrects his children in wrath: in which sense, this word ought to be taken in this place, as it appears, because the relatiue *this*, is therunto added. Neither

doth this crosse that which is said; to wit, that the Church was amazed and *drunke*: for this happened in regard the Lord chastised her so seuerely. Now this is a similitude much vsed in the Scriptures, by which the Lord calles his rod, wherewith he corrects his children, a *drinke* or potion, diuided to euery one. Notwithstanding when it speaks of the elect, this word *cup*, serues to set forth the measure which God keeps in his iudgements: for he fauours his blow, though hee chastiseth his people sharpelie. See Chap. 27. 8. Ier. 30. 11.

I take the word *Tarata*, for anguish, or trembling, wherewith men are seized, when they feele themselues oppressed with grievous afflictions. Wee may also say they be *drunke*, in regard they haue swallowed all that was in the cup; so as their calamitie and miserie is growne to the height; and to this belongs the word *pressing*, or wringing out. Besides, the Church is heere aduertised, that all her calamities whatsoever which befall her, proceeded from Gods immediate hand; to the end shee should not imagin that shee was wrongfully afflicted, or that her miseries fell out by chance: for the Prophets drift is to let the people see, that they be iustly punished for their iniquities. Neither can a man euer be raised vp, vnlesse hee confesse first of all that he is fallen; nor rid out of his miserie, except he acknowledge himselfe miserable by his owne faule. In a word, what haue we to doe with consolations, vnlesse the doctrine of repentance goes before?

The *dregs*, then are not to be taken in this place, as they are in Ieremy 25. 15. where he speaks of the reprobates (whom the Lord chokes and stifles with the drinke of this cup) but for a iust and ample punishment, which yet the Lord meant somewhat to moderate. After he hath chastised vs then after his own will, and is purposed to put an end to our miseries, he saith; *the dregs are drunke up*: as wee haue seene, Chap. 40. 2.

Verf. 18. *There is none to guide her among all the sonnes whom shee hath brought forth: there is none that taketh her by the hand of all the sonnes that shee hath brought vp.*

THE Prophet heere describes a pitifull estate wherein the Church was: for what greater grieft, then when the *children* which shee had *brought forth*, would not yeelde her any reliefe, or comfort at all? But he sets forth this her miserie in this wise, to teach her to wait for consolation from God, albeit she were in this pitifull plight, because God will neuer forsake his seruants, no not although they were plunged into the depth of hell. The doctrine is then, that albeit the Church be forsaken of men, yea of her owne children, who she hath nourished vp in her lap, yet God will assist her. A mother cannot be more pinched at the heart, then to see her children to *abandon her*, of whom she *expects loue for loue*. This ingratitude and inhumanity

The Church oft times findes least reliefe of those that come out of her owne bolome.

cuts her much more then the cruell rage of her enemies: for why doth ſhe nurse and bring vp children, but that they may be a ſtaffe vnto her in her age? But when children neglect their durie, what can the eſſe imagin but that ſhe hath loſt her coſt and labour? Thus then, howſoever the Church had performed the office of a *Mother*, and had *brought forth*, and *brought up* her children to mans eſtate, notwithstanding *Iſaiah* pronounceth, that there is *no ſupport nor ſuccor* to be looked for at the hands of the vngratefull.

And yet the Prophets ſpeech hath a further ſcope, to wit, that the children that will not relieve their mothers neceſſities, are baſtards and degenerate, that ſo ſhe might the more quietly beare their deſtruction. It was a very heauie and dolorous thing to ſee the Church ſtripped of all her *ſpring*, and to be left a widow. *And yet this beſell her*. But the Prophet deſerteth not the Church, that her children deſerue not to be bewailed of her, but that ſhe ſhould rather deſire to haue others in their ſtead, as it is in *Psal. 102. 18.* that the people which ſhall be borne, ſhall praife the Lord.

Moreover, that miſerie which the Prophet here deſcribes belongs whollie to our time. Many now brag that they are the children of the Church, but which of them takes the miſeries of their mother to heart? Who laments her ruines? Who feels his ſpirits ſo moued thereat, as to put his ſhoulders to vndergoe the burthen with her? How many are there which betray; and more cruellie perſecute her vnder this title, then the open & ſworne enemies? And therefore after all the reſt of her miſeries this comes in at the laſt to make vp the meaſure of them to the full. Again, thoſe which will be reputed the pillars of the Church, and not only brag that they are *children*, but brag that they are her *ſhepherds*, are euen they who cowardly and treacherouſly haue forſaken her when ſhe called them to ſuccor her. What maruell is it then if God cut them off, that he may hereafter giue his Church *naturall children* which may aſſiſt her.

Verſ. 19. *Theſe two things are come vnto thee: who will lament thee? Deſolation and deſtruction, and famine, and the ſword: by whom ſhall I comfort thee?*

The Prophet ſeth the like words in a manner touching Babylon in Chap. 47. *Theſe two things ſhall come to thee ſuddenly in one day, the loſſe of children, and widowhood.* But here the Prophet promiſeth a better iſſue and end to the Church, becauſe the Lord will draw her out of this bottomleſſe gulph of miſeries: yet he threatens an extreme miſerie, that ſhe might fit the faithfull for patience, and that in the middes of their anguiſhes they ſhould not ceaſe to liſt vp their prayers and ſupplications vnto God. The ſumme is, that the Church ſhall be ſo oppreſſed vnder all ſorts of calamities, that ſhe ſhall ſeeme euen to be overwhelmed with them. How ſo? Without, the was to look for many ſharpe af-

ſictions: ſecondly, ſhe ſhould receiue no comfort nor reſt from her owne children, verſ. 18. Theſe are the two great euils whereof the Prophet ſpeakes. But yet this diuiſion ſeemes not to agree, for after he hath mentioned one euill, to wit, that none ſhall giue the Church comfort or coſolation, he names *four* kinds of euils, *deſolation, ſorrow, or breaking, ſword, and famine*. Some expound that the Church was *famiſhed* within, and *reued* without by her enemies, but I am of another opinion, as I haue already ſhewed. For it is a phraſe of ſpeech (to ſpeake by an interrogation) much frequented among the Hebrewes, when they purpoſe to deny a thing abſolutely. And this hath its elegancie among them, though it hath not ſo much grace in another language. *Iſaiah* then mentions theſe two euils, the one *outward*, in regard ſhe was waſted and deſtroyed with *warre* and *famine*, which he hath ſignified by the *four* former kinds. The other *inward*, in that ſhe ſhall be left deſtitute of coſolation, and none would lament her. For by the *interrogation* he ſhewes that ſhe ſhould haue no coſolation. This verſe then answers to the former, where we haue already told you to what end the Prophet deſcribes theſe ſo lamentable and woeful an eſtate of the Church.

Verſ. 20. *Thy ſonnes haue fainted, and lie at the head of all the ſtreetes as a wild bull in a net. and are full of the wrath of the Lord, and rebuke of thy God.*

HE ſets forth this ſorrowfull condition of the Church at large, when he ſaith, that her *ſonnes* lie *proſtrate*. What ſorrow is more bitter to a naturall mother then to ſee the throates of her children cut, and not only one or two of them, but the *ſtreets* to be paved with the multitudes of them thus ſlaine? He adds a ſimilitude taken from a Beare, or from ſome other wilde beaſt, thereby ſhewing, that the ſtrongeſt among the Lewes were ſnarled as it were in the *nets*.

A miſerie to a mother to ſee her ſonnes ſlaine, from whom ſhe expects ſuccor.

In ſaying that they were *full of the wrath of the Lord*, it is to aduertize them, that it came not to paſſe by fortune. For he would not haue them impute this worke to chance, neither yet to accuſe God of hard dealing, in that they were afflicted ſo ſore. Why ſo? Becauſe his iudgements are alwaies iuſt and right: which he ſhewes further, in telling them, that this plague proceeded from Gods *rebuke*, or threatening. But withall, we muſt note his meaning, which I haue touched before, namely, that the faithfull ſhould not caſt away the hope of their ſaluation, notwithstanding their many miſeries and deſolations daily ſolicited them thereunto.

Verſ. 21. *Therefore heare now this, thou miſerable and drunken, but not with wine.*

NOW he ſhewes more plainly, why he hath ſpoken of the calamities of the Church,

Who takes the miſeries of the church to heart?

*Or, bringing.

The Church muſt make her account to meet not only with inward, but outward calamities alſo.

I

A mitigation of the Churches sorrow in this and in the next verse. Quest.

Church, namely, that the faithfull should not doubt of the Lords readinesse to comfort them, though they indured many and great extremities. But wherefore calles hee the Church *miserable*? Is there any estate so blessed as to be in Gods fauour, especially seeing this blessednesse cannot bee taken from vs? For it is not said without cause in Psa. 144. 15. That the people are *blessed* which haue the Lord for their God. I answer, she is miserable onely in appearance. Also the Lord calles her not by this name in vaine, for himselfe is the helper of the *miserable*, and of those that be destitute of succour; as wee haue said before.

Anf. The Church miserable onely in appearance. Sec Hof 14 4

Where he calles her *drunken*; we must note that the faithfull doe not alwaies indure their afflictions with such patience and constancy, that they are not sometimes astonished: but notwithstanding their amazednesse, they ought to conceiue that the Lord chastiseth them iustly; and also to be assured, that hee will succour them. For he speaks not to the strong and valiant, but to the feeble, *miserable*, the humbled, and to such as resemble those that are *drunk*: to such hee promiseth comfort. To be short, by this word hee asswageth the Churches sorrow, and shewes that hee keeps a measure in the greatest afflictions, that hee may draw her out of perdition; as if he raised a dead and rotten carcase vnto life.

*Or, Thus saith the Lord, thy ruler and thy God, the protector of his people.

Verf. 22. *Thus saith thy Lord God, *even God that pleadeth the cause of his people; Behold, I haue taken out of thine hand, the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my wrath: thou shalt drinke it no more.*

IT is not without cause that hee adds three epithetes to the name of the Lord: First, that he is the *ruler*, or patron: Secondly, *thy God*: And lastly, the *protector* of his Church. For we must alwaies consider what acquaintance we haue with God, who is such a one as becomes vs to come vnto him in familiar maner; because in making himselfe one with vs by a perpetuall covenant, he manifests that hee hath once chosen vs to bee his people. The Iewes in their time no doubt, were encouraged in this preface, boldly to embrace that which is heere promised: and the new people, whom God hath now created, and receiued into his safegard and protection, as well as the people of old, haue no lesse cause to embrace the same promises with them.

Psal. 102. 13

Now the Lord attributes to himselfe the title of *protector*; to teach vs that when we see great dangers approaching, and that we suppose they will worke our ruine; euen then to run to this strong tower, namely, *that God is the protector of his people*. It ought also to bee a shield of defence vnto vs, as well against all Satans fierie darts, as against the assaults of our visible enemies.

Behold I haue taken.] He propounds vnto the matter of good hope, to wit, that God chastiseth

his Church *but for a time*. By which, the Iewes were to learne, that all the calamities which threatned them, were iust recompences of their transgressions: as also that the rod should bee tied to their backs, till God had received them to mercy. The summe is, that his wrath will be appeased in such wise, that he will mitigate their afflictions, and will cause the iudgements wherewith he had for the present visited his Church, to cease. In the seuenteenth verse wee haue spoken of the similitude of the *cup*: and this place doth sufficiently confirme that which was said there, God mentions the cuppe of his wrath then, which caused his Church to *tremble*, as if hee had bin smitten with giddines: notwithstanding the Prophet vseth the word *Tarata*, which some translate Anguish: others, Trembling. By the *dregs*, hee means that the measure of Gods vengeance shall be full; so as God, for the loue hee beares to his children, will be satisfied.

God afflicteth his Church but for a time. 1 2

Verf. 23. *But I will put it into their hand that spoile thee, which haue said to thy soule; Bow downe, that we may goe ouer: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the streete to them that went ouer.*

THIS is the other part of the consolation, where hee promiseth, that the Lord will not onely content himselfe to deliuer his Church out of so many euils, but will also send vpon her enemies, all the calamities wherewith shee was afflicted. Are wee pressed then, & persecuted? A time will come, wherein God will speedily turne our captiuitie, and our (enemies in their turne) shall be plauged to the vtmost. For it is iust with God (as *Paul* saith) to render affliction to those which trouble you, and to you that are troubled, rest with vs, when the Lord Iesus shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mightie Angels in flaming fire, rendring vengeance vnto the that know not God, nor obey not the Gospel of our Lord Iesus Christ: 2. 1. 1. 6. 7. 8.

God corrects his own first, but the wicked must keepe their turne next Prou. 11. 8. Hebr. 7. 10.

The temporall punishments then which God inflicteth vpon them in this life, are the beginnings of their endless torments in hell, to which at the last they shall bee adiudged. And the better to describe the insolencie and pride of their enemies, (the like wherof we taste at this day from our aduersaries) hee sets downe their *words*, in which they shamefully tyrannized ouer the children of God: for pride & crueltie are the inseparable companions of impietie: for as the true knowledge of God makes men lowly; so the ignorance of God makes men proud and cruell. Wee see how such as know not God, flatter themselves, and proudly doe they insult against the Lord, and against his faithfull seruants. I grant this is a thing ful of misery, and a great indignitie; but seeing he is pleased to suffer his name to be exposed to the outrages of the wicked, let vs not much be moued, if we be wronged for his names sake: for wee are not

Bow downe, &c. True knowledge makes vs lowly; ignorance makes vs proud and cruell.

John. 13.16. not beter then hee; neither muſt we expect better vſage from our aduerſaries now, then the Church of old had from theirs. *Dauid* ſeeth another ſimilitude, when hee reſembles the Church to a field that is plowed and dref-

ſed many waies: 119.3. Whereby hee ſignifies, that ſhe muſt be often afflicted and trampled on; to teach vs, that we muſt looke for no better meaſure heere.

THE LII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Arise, arise, put on ſtrength O Zion; put on the garments of thy beautie, O Ieruſalem, the holy Citie: for henceforth there ſhall no more come vnto thee, the vncircumciſed and the vncleane.*



He confirms the former doctrine, that he might the better awaken and rowze vp the peoples mindes, which were drenched in grieſe & anguiſh: for it was neceſſarie this ſhould be added to the former, as a ſpurte to quicken them vp, and to make way for this doctrine, that it might the more eaſily enter into their amazed and inſenſible hearts. He ſpeakes to the Church, as to one aſtoniſhed and in a ſlumber, and bids her *ariſe* to gather new forces, and to reſume her ſoule a freſh. Which hee repeates *ariſe*, and not without cauſe: for it is very hard to awaken, and to cauſe ſuch to take heart againe vnto them, that are ſmitten; nay, laid flat vpon all four with the feeling of Gods wrath.

Put on thy ſtrength. As if hee ſhould ſay; Thou haſt hitherto wallowed thy ſelfe in duſt and aſhes, as one forlorne, by reaſon of thy anguiſhes: but now *ariſe*, and fit thy ſelfe to receiue that happy eſtate into which the Lord is purpoſed to ſet thee. Hee oppoſeth *ſtrength* then to ſaintheartedneſſe, with which we are vſually combred, when things grow deſperate; and the *beautiful* or *glorious garments*, to ſilthineſſe and naſtineſſe.

Then he adds the reaſon; to wit, that God will henceforth ſuffer the wicked *no more* to take their ſwinge, as they haue done in waſting and ſpoiling his Church at their pleaſures. She hath now cauſe therefore to reioice, being rid out of the tyrants hands: and alſo for her ſafetie, wherein there is plentifull occaſion of ioy and gladneſſe miniſtred vnto her for the time to come. But herewith *Iſaiah* ſummons vs to a common and generall reioicing, when the Church is receiued againe into Gods fauour: for queſtionleſſe, if there bee any ſparke of true godlineſſe in vs, wee ought to be exceedingly moued at her happineſſe, and to *laugh* and *ſing* for ioy when ſhe flouriſheth, and to *vveepe* with her when ſhe is perſecuted. In a word, ſhe ſhould be the very fullneſſe of our ioy: according as the *Plaſmiſt* ſaith; Let my tongue cleaue to the rooſe of

my mouth, if I preſerre not Ieruſalem to my chiefe ioy: *Plaſ. 137.6.*

By the word *comes*, hee means that which we ſay commonly, To haue entrance: for the Lord ſhuts vp the paſſage againſt the wicked, that they cannot range abroad at their pleaſures vnpuniſhed, as they were wont. By *uncircumciſed* and *uncleane*, hee means all ſuch prophane ones, as corrupt the pure ſeruite of God, and oppreſſe mens conſciences by their tyranny. They are wont to call all them *uncircumciſed*, who were ſtrangers from Gods Church, who had the ſigne of circumciſion; for with that all the faithfull were marked. But in reſpect that many bare this badge of the covenant, who were no whit better then the reſt; to remoue all ambiguitie, he adds, *the vncleane*. For the cutting away of the foreſkinne, was nothing in it ſelfe; and is by *Saint Paul* accounted as *uncircumciſion*, if the puritie of the heart bee not ioined therewith: *Rom. 2.25. Gal. 3.6.* Thus the Prophet ſhewes then, that ſuch kinde of perſons ſhall haue no place in the Church; that *all corruptions* being aboliſhed, and the true worſhip of God reſtored, ſhe may inioy a perfect and happy eſtate. In the meane while, I conſent to thoſe who reſeſt this to the open enemies of the church, whom the Prophet brands with theſe odious names; that the ſeueritie of this chaſtiſement might put the Iewes in mind of the greatnes of their iniquities.

Auoir entree.

The ſigne of circumciſion auails nothing, vneſſe the puritie of the hart doth concurre therewith.

Verſ. 2. *Shake thy ſelfe from the duſt: ariſe, and ſit downe, O Ieruſalem: looſe the bands of thy necke, O thou captiue daughter Zion.*

The Prophet deſcribes the Churches deſertion more at large, and ſets it forth in very excellent termes. In bidding her *ſhake off the duſt*, and to *ariſe*, let vs not by and by gather, that wee haue free will in our ſteues to uſe it when we thinke good: for it belongs to God onely to *pull vs out of the duſt*, and to ſet thoſe that are fallen, *upon their feet*, and to *let looſe* the priſoners, by taking off, or breaking aſunder their *bands* and fetters. But wherefore doth the Prophet then inioine vs that, which ought not (as it ſeemes) to be required of vs, ſeeing it is not in our powers to performe it? I anſwere, that to ſpeake in this commanding ſort, hath much greater force in it to awaken vs, then if he had onely ſaid in naked termes, that we ſhould doe this or that: and therefore he pronounceth, that God hauing ſet her into her firſt libertie, ſhe ſhould now come forth of the mire.

An amplification.

No free will in vs to that which is good.

Queſt.

Anſ.

Rom. 12.15.

A confirmation of the former doctrine.

The word *to sit*, signifies a flourishing estate, and is opposed to the verb *to lie*, whereby is meant an extreme miserie. I grant, that sometimes *to sit downe*, signifies to be made low: as when it is said to Babylon, *Sit thou in the dust*, Chap. 47. 1. But it is here taken in another signification, for hauing commanded her to *arise*, he by and by addes, *and sit downe*, meaning, that she should no more lie along, but should be restored to her former estate, and should no more afterwards be troden downe by her enemies.

Verf. 3. *For thus saith the Lord, ye were sold for nought, therefore shall you be redeemed without money.*

It will be as e. fit for God to redeeme his Church, as it was for him to suffer her to be sold.

This verse hath bin ill expounded by many, who haue descanted here too subtilly, for they haue inuented many things besides the Prophets purpose. Now this agrees with that which he hath said in the 50. Chapter verf. 1. where he asketh for the creditor to whom he sold them: and here he saith in like maner, *you were sold for nought*: as if he had said, that he tooke no money, neither was he engaged to any creditor at all that could challenge them by right of sale. This serues greatly to cōfirme the promise: for the Iewes might doubt touching the truth of this promised freedome, in regard the Chaldeans the mightiest of all nations, held them prisoners a long time. But the Lord preuents this doubt, saying, *I neither sold, nor pawned you*. You were sold for nought, and therefore I may require you againe, and claime you as mine owne. Stand not so much then whether the matter be hard to compass or no, seeing I haue promised you libertie, neither dispute you too and fro of the matter by your carnall reason, for y^e Chaldeans haue no right at all to keepe possession, neither can they be able to hinder your passage. To conclude, euen as in the place before alleaged he cleared himselfe from the imputation of an vnchrist, who is compelled to make sale of, or to pawne his children for debt, so in this place he shewes that they were taken from him, and were let go of him gratis, for no other cause, but in regard they had prouoked him therunto by their iniquities, Chap. 50. 1. Therefore there is no more difficultie to redeeme them, then there was in parsing from them.

Some expound this more subtilly, that we are redeemed freely by Christ. The doctrine no doubt is true: but it agrees not with the Prophets intention (in this place) for his meaning is to correct the diffidence of the Iewes, that he might assure them of their freedome. Let it suffice then that when God is purposed to redeeme his Church, he will not stand much about beating the price with the Chaldeans, whom he will easily chase from their vniust possession, and that whether they will or no.

Verf. 4. *For thus saith the Lord God, My people went downe afore time into*

Egypt to sojourne there, and Assur oppressed them without cause.

The expositors soare aloft heere, and in the meane while come nothing neere the matter. The Iewes forge three captiuities heere. The Christians differ from them, in supposing that it is spoken heere of the third captiuitie vnder Antichrist, frō which Christ shall deliuer them. But in my judgement the Prophet hath a farre other meaning, for he argues from the lesse to the greater, and allegeth the captiuitie vnder Pharaoh, from which the people in old time were deliuered by the wonderfull power of the Lord. His argument stands thus then: If the Lord punished the Egyptians because they dealt so barbarouslie with his people, much more will he be reuenged on the Chaldeans, who no lesse cruellie tyrannized ouer them. For Pharaoh had much more shew of reason to domineere ouer the Iewes then the Chaldeans had. For Iacob going downe into Egypt with his familie, subiected himselfe therby vnder Pharaohs power, who in thankfulness for the good seruice which Ioseph had done him and the kingdom, assigned out to his father and brethren a very large countrie, fit to nourish their cattell in for their abode. The successors of Pharaoh prouing vnthankfull, and forgetting the benefits receiued by Iosephs meanes, they afflicted all Iacobs posteritie diuers waies. Neither was the Lord behind hand with them in recompensing this vnkindnes and ingratitude with a swift and seuerer vengeance. But the wickednes of the Chaldeans was farre worse, and more insupportable, in that they cast the Iewes out of their countrie, vnto which they had a iust title, to leade them away captiue. If the Lord then could not endure the ingratitude, nor the vniust taxes which the Egyptians laid vpon the Israelites, though they might claime a iust possession, how much lesse would he suffer this violence and crueltie of the Chaldeans, who had no right at all to retaine his people, but oppressed them by force and tyrannie?

See Chap. 49. 24. 25.

By *Assur*, he meanes the Chaldeans, who were ioined vnder one Monarchie with the Assyrians: but he names the *Assyrian* especially, because he was the first who greatly afflicted Iudeah, and made a way to this captiuitie.

Verf. 5. *Now therefore what haue I heere saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought, and they that rule over them make them to howle, saith the Lord? and my name all the day continuallie is blasphemed?*

HE prosecutes, and confirms that which I haue said, namely, that he hath no reason to suffer his people to lie any longer vnder this seruitude: in these words therefore he doth as it were blame his owne delay. As if he should say, Shall I not manifest my power? Shall I not defend my people? If Pharaoh who

who was ſo lawfull a poſſeſſor, could not reſiſt me; ſhall theſe thieves and robbers bee ſtronger then he?

In the next place he recites the cauſes that ſhould moouſe him to call backe their captiuitie. But we muſt heere ſupply a cloſe oppoſition in the word *taken*: for the Egyptians led not *Iacob* captiue forcibly: hee went downe thither willingly when ſamin preſſed him; and yet his poſſeſſion was let free. How much more ſhall they bee violently plucked out of their hands, who forced them out of their owne Country; to ſubdue them as ſlaues againſt their will?

Afterwards, to augment the indignitie of the fact, he ſaith his people were conſtrained to *bowle*, or *cry*, without ceaſing. Some expound it otherwiſe: but I thinke it is ſaid to augment the fault, in regard hee expreſſeth what violence and oppreſſion the Chaldeans exerciſed ouer the Iewes: for they contented not themſelues to vſurpe an vniuſt dominion ouer them, but they handled their priſoners cruelly. Moreouer, to *cry* or *bowle*, argues a deeper miſeric then when we ſigh or weepe. Doubtleſſe there is appearance that the sorrow is violent, when the ſame extorts yellings and pittifull cries. It is indeede a ſimilitude taken from wilde beaſtes, which ſhewes an extreme deſpaire.

And that my name ſhould be expoſed all the day long to blaſphemies. This is the third and principall reaſon why the Lord will deliuer his people; namely, that his name may not alwaies be made a ſcorne, nor laid open to the outrages of the wicked; for hee reſpects his owne honour, and therefore conſerues his Church, and the worſhip of his name: but when the Church is ſcattered, then the wicked by and by take occaſion to belch forth their blaſphemies, and offer proud contempt euen againſt the higheſt Maieſtie. It is rightly ſaid then, that in deliuering his people, he will defend his own cauſe. I will neither ſtand to recite nor confute the diuerſities of expoſitions vpon this place, becauſe I thinke it ſufficient that I haue briefly touched the nauie ſenſe of the Prophets words.

Verſ. 6. Therefore my people ſhall know my name: therefore they ſhall know in that day, that I am he that doth ſpeake: behold* it is I.

*Or, I will be preſent.

The concluſion.

The Prophet concludes that from this verſe, which hee touched in the two former verſes; namely, that the people ſhould in the end bee deliuered by the Lord, who will not be found contrary vnto himſelfe. For if hee hath redeemed their fathers: and if hee hath alwaies aſſiſted his Church (in former times) he will neuer ſuffer their ſucceſſors to be ouerwhelmed, whom he hath adopted. We are diligently to obſerue the verb *Shall know*: for the knowledge of the name of God, conſiſts firſt, in reiecting all ſuperſtitious: ſecondly, to know him in his word, which is his liuely image; and thirdly, by his works. We muſt not forge a god after our owne fantaſies & luſts;

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but ſo comprehend him, as he hath maniſteſted himſelfe vnto vs. Thus the Lord concludes then, that he will effectually aſſiſt and accompliſh whatſoeuer hee hath promiſed; that the people may know their expectation is not in vaine, and may heereby bee more and more conſumed in the knowledge of his name.

But we muſt remember what we haue ſaid heerebefore touching that experimentall knowledge, which ſubſcribes to the authoritie of the word. Moreouer, Gods ſpeaking is to bee referred to his promiſes, and his preſence to his actual power. As if he ſhould ſay; Albeit you heare nothing now but the ſound of words, in which I promiſe you things almoſt incredible, yet heereafter you ſhall ſee the performance thereof: for I purpoſe really to act that which I haue promiſed. Hence we may gather a generall doctrine; namely, that the promiſes and the execution thereof, are knit together with an inſeparable bond. As oft as Satan then ſolicites vs to diſtruſt, as if God had quite and cleane reiected vs; let vs remember this point, and let vs truſt boldly in the name of our God, who neuer promiſeth ought in vaine: and if it falles out that he performs not the ſame forthwith, yet he will doe it in conuenient time.

Expe imen- tall know- ledge.

The promiſes and the execu- tion thereof, in- ſeparably knit toge- ther.

Verſ. 7. How beautifull vpon the mountaines are the feete of him that declareth and publiſbeth peace! that declareth good tidings, and publiſbeth ſaluation, ſaying vnto Zion; Thy God reigneth.

The Prophet confirms the faithfull againe in the certaintie of Gods word: Firſt, to giue them certaine aſſurance of being reſtored to their firſt freedom: and next, that hee might in the meane while ſuſtaine their hearts in good hope, during this ſore bondage. Hee ſpeakes elegantly in the commendation of this meſſage, that the faithfull might content themſelues in this calamitie, with the offer of the hope of their ſaluation to come. For indeed, they were to imbrace this conſolation propounded vnto them, that being fortified therewith, they might quietly and patiently expect an happy iſſue of the promiſe. That the faithfull then might bridle their deſires by patience, he adorneſ the word of God with excellent ſtiles. (As if hee ſhould ſay) Can you be ſo vnthankfull, as not to content your ſelues with this inſeſtimable treaſure of God word, which brings ſo many commodities with it? Will you let looſe the raines to your vnbriſled affectiones? Will ye indeede complaine of God? For his meaning is to call backe the people from their diffidence, who were ouercarried through diuers allurements, and would not reſt ſecurely vpon the truth of Gods word. For this cauſe hee extolles the excellencie of his doctrine, and ſhewes, that the Lord will giue much more by it, then wee can aſke or thinke.

Another confirmatiō.

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Besides, it is plaine that hee speaks not heere of euery kind of doctrine, but of that onely which is fit to yeeld consolation. Hee shewes then that the *seete* of such as bring glad tidings from Gods mouth, are pleasant and desirable. Why so? Because this consolation serues not onely to assuage our sorrows, but brings with it inestimable ioy: for he speaks heere of the doctrine of saluation; and therefore he saith, that by it, *peace, good tidings, and saluation is published.* By the word *peace*, hee vnderstands an happy and prosperous estate: but wee haue heereofore intreated at large touching the signification of this word.

Saying *to Zion, &c.*] Hence we gather what the beginning of this doctrine is, which *Isaiah* published, and what it is wee ought principally to desire; namely, that the *kingdome* of God may be established amongst vs: for if he reigne not, all things must needs fall to ruine, and so by consequence, our estate must be miserable. As on the contrary, the onely way to *saluation* is, when God vouchsafes to take the care of vs: and it is also the meanes whereby we obtaine *peace*, how confused or desperate soeuer things otherwise are.

Let vs also remember that this message appertaines to *Zion*; that is to say, to the church. For what haue the prophane and ignorant sort to doe with it? The Apostle *Saint Paul* alleageth this place, *Rom. 10. 15.* to prooue that the preaching of the Gospell is of God, and not of men; and that it is hee who sends the Ministers, which bring the glad tidings of saluation. Now he vseth this gradation; *Who soeuer shall call on the name of the Lord, shall bee saved: but vve cannot call upon him whom vve know not?* For what giues praiser entrance but faith, by which, hauing embraced God for our father, we may familiarly discharge all our cares into his bosome? But whereupon is this faith grounded? Vpon the doctrine of the Gospell, whereby the Lord manifesteth his loue vnto vs: and for this end vseth the labours and ministry of men. In conclusion therefore, the Apostle addes, that none is fit to preach this word, *vnlesse he be sent of God.* But it seemes as if *Saint Paul* wrested these words of the Prophet, to serue his owne turne: for hee speaks not heere of Gods sending forth of Ministers, but rather how welcome their coming ought to be vnto vs. I answer, that the Apostle hath held this resolu'd principle; namely, that we must desire none, but such as are *sens of God.* But from whom comes this saluation? Comes it from men? No such matters: for a benefit so excellent, can come to vs from none but God himselfe. He rightly concludes then, that this *saluation* proceeds from God, and not from man.

Verf. 8. *The voice of thy watchmen shall bee heard: they shall lift vp their voice, and shout together: for they shall see eye to eye when the Lord shall bring againe Zion.*

A continuation of the

HE continues on his speech, shewing, that the restoration of the people shall be

such, as the messenger shall boldly publish it. former confirmation.

By the *lifting up of the voice*, he signifies the same that he spake of before touching these words, *upon the mountaines*: for the thing shall not be done in a corner, but it shall be so manifest and apparant, that all shall be smitten with astonishment. Those who speake of things doubtfull, mutter them out betwene the teeth, and dare not *lift vp their voice*: but this shall be no perplexed or doubtfull matter. The Prophet borrowed this similitude from *watchmen*, whom they were wont to place in Cities: though all the Prophets indeed are called by this name, because they are placed in the watch-tower to watch for the peoples safetie. Hab. 2. 1. Chap. 2. 1. 1.

When hee saith, they should *lift vp their voice*, it is to shew, that during the captiuitie, there should be silence; because the tongues of the Prophets should then cleaue to the roofof their mouths: for albeit they admonished euery one priuately, yet they should not haue liberty to preach publicly. In which respect also, *Jeremiah* saith; *I will put my mouth in the dust: Lam. 3. 29.* But when the Lord shall cause the captiuitie of his people to returne, then the *watchmen* which were dumbe before, should haue their mouths opened to *publish* their freedome: for they should not speake in hugger mugger, neither should they content themselves to giue some priuie token of this consolation; but should boldly proclaim this *saluation* vpon the *mountaines*: *verf. 7.* Which also appears by that in *Chap. 40. 1, 2, 3.* where wee haue handled this matter more fully. Eze. 3. 16.

Eye to eye.] That is to say, plainly and openly. These things are indeed to be extended to our spirituall conuersion. I grant wee are to tie our selues to the literal sense; yet so, that we are to comprehend vnder the same, that sauour which God shewed to this ancient people: for these things were accomplished when he set the Iewes free; and for this end hee vsed the ministrie of *Zerobabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah.* But yet wee must stretch the same euen to Christs coming, at which time the Church was gathered from all the parts of the world; yea, more then that, euen to Christs last coming, in which all things shall be set into their perfect estate.

Verf. 9. *O yee desolate places of Ierusalem, bee glad and reioice together: for the Lord hath comforted his people: he hath redeemed Ierusalem.*

HE exhorts the faithfull to thanksgiving. But his speciall drift is to confirme their hearts in the expectation and assurance of this *saluation*, as if the inioying of the thing called them presently to thankfulness. For the truth is, we are too little affected when the Lord protests that he will assist vs: yea, wee thinke he doth but mock vs, vnlesse he effect that which he hath promised. The Prophets therefore are wont to insist very much vpon this point, namely, in confirming the peoples hearts, & in setting their deliuerance as it were before An exhortation to reioice. Why the Prophets insisted so leag in pressing the promises before

before their eyes. Now howſoever it ſeemes aike and abſurd to call to ſong of ioy in the time of heauines, as in Pſal. 137. 4. yet wee haue formerly ſhewed, that this manner of ſpeech is very fit to awaken ſuch as grone vnder the burthen of care, feare, or ſorrow. He mentions the deſerts, or *deſolate places of Ieruſalem*, to the end they ſhould hope for the re-edifying thereof, notwithstanding the now lay in the duſt: for this title agrees better for the removing away of feare, then if he had called her an happie or flouriſhing citie. From the time then that ſhe fell into this moſt miſerable eſtate, they would haue thought theſe promiſes had concerned them nothing at all, vnleſſe the miſeries againſt which they were to encounter had bin manifeſted vnto them. It alſo taught them to wait for this reſtauration in aſſured hope, though they now ſaw nothing but horrible ruins, and deſolations.

For the Lord hath comforted.] The Lord turned the peoples mourning into ioy, and of captiues, ſet them free. Some may obiekt that this was not yet come to paſſe. But in Gods promiſes we muſt behold thoſe things plainly, which as yet appeare not to our ſenſes, how farre ſoever they ſurpaſſe the reach of our reaſon.

He hath redeemed his people.] Here wee ſee that the deliuerance of the Church is the proper worke of God. And if this ought to be affirmed in regard of that deliuerance out of Babylon, which was but a figure or ſhadow, what ſhall we ſay of our ſpiritual deliuerance it ſelfe? Can that be attributed to men, without offering great wrong vnto God? Let vs conclude then, that as it appertaines to God only to deliuer his Church, ſo none but he can preſerue her free eſtate.

Verſ. 10. The Lord hath made bare his holy arme in the ſight of all the Gentiles, and all the ends of the earth ſhall ſee the ſaluation of God.

Arm made bare.] This is a ſimilitude taken from men of armes, who turned vp their ſceues when they prepared themſelues to the combate. Though to *make bare* here ſignifies not ſo much the making of the arme naked, as the *maniſteſting* of it, and ſtretching it forth. For when wee ſit ſtill, our armes are lightly folded one in another, or wee couer them: ſo in regard of our ſenſeleſnes, we imagine that God ſits idle, as men are wont to do, vntill he maniſt his power.

He calles it *the arme of his holines*, in regard that he ſhould diſplay his power for the ſaluation of the people: for there is here a mutuall correſpondencie betweene God and his Church, which is conſecrated vnto him. I grant that his arme is *made bare* in the gouernment of the whole world: but it is neuer called the arme of *his holines* (as in this place) but when he giues ſome ſpeciall reliefe vnto his Church. The power of God muſt be conſidered two waies: firſt, generally, in the conſeruation of all the creatures: then, ſpeeci-

allie in the protection of his Church, for the care he hath thereof is patticular, and not common to others.

In the ſight of all the Gentiles.] His meaning is, that this deliuerance ſhall be worlde of ſo great admiration, that euen the blind themſelues ſhal ſee it. Whereas this noble ſpectacle is manifeſted to the *ends of the earth*, we there in perceiue that ſy Prophet ſpeakes not only of the *bringing againe of Zidon*, as in verſ. 8. which ſhould happen ſome few yeeres after, but of the generall reſtauration of ſy whole Church both of Iewes and Gentiles. The Rabbins therefore do maliciously reſtraine this to the deliuerance out of captiuitie from Babylon. And the Chriſtians on the other ſide vnaptly to our ſpiritual deliuerance, which wee obtaine by Chriſt: for we muſt begin at the deliuerance vnder *Cyrus*, and goe on ſtill euen till our owne times. Thus then the Lord beget to maniſt his *arme* among the Medes and Perſians, but afterwards he made it appeare in the ſight of *all nations*.

Verſ. 11. Depart ye, depart ye: go out from hence, and touch no vnclene thing: goe out of the miſt of her: be ye cleane, that beare the veſſels of the Lord.

HE now exhorts the people to be alwaies *readie to depart*, and yet in the meane while patientlie to indure their miſeric: for as the ouer-great haſte of the people to be looſed deſerued to be reſeſed, ſo their droulines was to be quickned, in reſpect that before their deliuerance euery ones deſire was wonderfullie kindled to returne; but when the time was expired, their *long expectation* had abated their heate, and had deſerued them not only of all hope, but of all will or deſire to returne, ſo as the number of thoſe that came back againe into Iudea was very ſmall. They were mingled amongſt the Babylonians, who had ſo enticed and corrupted them, that they made little or no reckning at all of their cuntry. It was very needfull therefore that they ſhould be awakened and quickned vp to be of good courage in this their long attendance, and that they ſhould not ſuffer themſelues to be ſtained with the filthineſſes of the Babylonians.

The ſecond member wherein he forbids them to *touch any vnclene thing*, doth better confirme that I was about to ſay. For he commaunds them to keepe themſelues pure and cleane fro the pollutions in which the Chaldeans plunged themſelues, becauſe there was danger that they might be corrupted with heatheniſh ſuperſtitions, to which vice wee are by nature too much enclined, and are therefore eaſily miſed by euill examples. He exhorts them then notwithstanding their captiuitie, not to yeeld to any thing whereby to pleaſe their cruell Lords, in hope to mend their condition: not to be drawne away by any allurements from the pure worſhip of God; nor to deſile themſelues with Babylonian Idolatries: that they ſhould not ſo much as in outward ſhew bow downe to the Idols,

An exhortation, encouraging the Iewes to depart out of Babylon

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God diſcouers his arme
two waies.

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To what temptations captiues are subiect, that are oppressed vnder Tyrants.

nor consent to false religion, for this is that accursed *pollution* which the Lord exhorts them heere to auoid. Such temptations as these aforesaid, are incident to poore prisoners that are oppressed vnder Tyrants, which sometimes to faint, that they giue themselues leaue to doe many wicked and vnlawfull things, vnder pretence that they would thereby assuage the furie of Tyrants. But in this place we see how frivoulous their excuses be. For the Prophet not only requires this puritie of the Lewes when they shall be set free, but also during the time of their slauerie and bondage, yea, though it were with the losse of their liues in the very place.

Doubtlesse these aduertisements also belong vnto vs, who by S. Paul are exhorted to purge our selues from all impuritie both of body and minde, 2. Cor. 7. 1. Moreover, *Isaiah* directs this exhortation particularly to the *Priests* and *Leuites*, who were to shew themselves most constant, in regard they were the standard-bearers: not that it was lawfull for others to defile themselves, but he speaks principallie to them, that they might giue good example to those ouer whom God had placed them as Captaines and Leaders. We are also to remember what we haue seene heretofore, which *Isaiah* also will repeate againe in the end of his booke, namely, that there should be a new Priesthood planted out the redeemed people. And yet I willingly consent, that the *Leuites* & *Ministers* of the Temple are heere mentioned by way of excellencie, for all the people. Thus this doctrine then appertaines at this day not only to the *Ministers* of the word, but to all *Christians* in generall, who are also called a royall Priesthood, 1. Pet. 2. 9. and are not only appointed to beare the vessels of the temple, but are also themselves the temples of God, 1. Cor. 3. 6. For this cause *Ezechiel* hath foretold, that in the restauration of the Church, the *Leuites* should be high *Priests*, and all the people should be put in the place of *Leuites*. Seeing then that the Lord hath aduanced all vnto so high a degree and dignitie, it necessarilie followes, that this puritie is required of all without exception, and therefore S. Paul applies this place to the whole Church, 2. Cor. 6. 17.

Verf. 12. For ye shall not goe out with haste, nor depart by fleeing away: but the Lord will goe before you, and the God of Israel will gather you together.

An amplification.

THE Prophet againe amplifies this benefit of their redemption, for they were all so swallowed vp with despaire, that they thought it a matter incredible. He especiallie speaks to them that were to goe into captiuitie, that they should not faint in being brought to such a wofull condition. But he promiseth them that this deliuerance shall not be by flight, as that out of Egypt was. For there is heere a close comparison betweene their deliuerance out of Egypt, and this out of Baby-

lon. For they fled by night out of Egypt, fainting as if they had only meant to haue gone three dayes iourney to offer sacrifice vnto God, Exod. 3. 5. and 8. 27. Afterward, they went forth hastily and with tumult, as it was enioined them, Exod. 12. 31. and then *Pharaoh* pursued them, thinking vterly to haue destroyed them, Exod. 13. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9.

But heere it is said, it shall be farre otherwise with the Lewes (at this time) for they shall goe forth like *Conquerors*, so as none shall dare to stop their passage. In a word, they should depart thence (as wee are wont to say) with banner displayed. This deliuerance then shall be much more excellent and admirable, then that of Egypt.

The Lord shall goe before you.] That is to say, hee shall leade you, and be your Captaine in the way. But will some say, Did not God also conduct the ancient people, when he brought them out of Egypt? It is true indeed; but he shewed not his maiestie so fully then as hee did heere. For now he brought out his people as a valiant Captaine doth his souldiers, after hee hath gotten the field of the enemy. To this appertaines the word, *shall gather*: for they should not be scattered one from another, as it falls out in some sudden astonishment; neither should they wander to and fro, but should march in troups in good array, as vnder their colours. It is as much then as if he had said, God will conduct you like an armie assembled by himselfe, one shall not follow another as it were by stealth, but being knit all together, you shall march boldly without feare, none shall hinder you, for you shall be gathered vnder the leading of God, to returne home into your countrie.

Verf. 13. Behold, my seruant shall prosper: he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

Isaiah hauing spoken of the restauration of the Church, comes now to Christ, in whom all things in heauen and in earth are gathered together, as saith the Apostle, Ephes. 1. 10. Some expound the verb *ascit*, Shall behaue himselfe prudentlie: but because it is by and by added, that he shall be *exalted*, the scope of the text requires it (as I think) that we should rather translate, *He shall prosper*, seeing the infinitiue, *Sacal*, signifies so much. Hee speaks then touching the *prosperous* estate of the Church. But because there was no such thing to be seene in outward appearance, he brings vs to the *sueraigne King*, who should set all things in their perfect estate, and bids them to wait for him. Now the oppositions which the Prophet heere vseth are diligentlie to be marked, for he opposeth the *highnes* of this King whom the Lord would *exalt*, to the poore and miserable condition of this people, who were almost brought into despaire. And he promiseth that this King shall be the head of the people, who shall flourish vnder so worthe a leader, though now they be afflicted and brought to the gates of destruction. Why so? Because all things shall prosper that their King takes in hand.

The restauration of the Church consisteth whollie in Christ.

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He calles Christ a *ſervant*, in reſpect of the office which God had impoſed vpon him. For Christ is not to bee conſidered of heere, as bearing the perſon of a private man; but with that office which the Father had committed vnto him, namely, that he might be this leader and conducer of the Church, and might reſtore all things. And let vs for our part know, that the things heere ſpoken of Christ, doe alſo belong vnto vs. Christ is giuen vs of God, and therefore haue wee intereſt in his office. For the Prophet might haue ſaid in a word, that he ſhould be exalted and be verie high: but in attributing to him the name of a *ſervant*, it is as much as if he had ſaid; Hee is thus exalted for your ſakes.

Vers. 14. *As many were aſtonied at thee, his viſage was ſo deformed of men, and his forme of the ſonnes of men.*

Hee vſeth this preuention, in regard this imitic and dignitie of Christ appeared not at the firſt bliſh: for which cauſe they might take occaſion to reiect him. Therefore the Prophet ſhewes, that Christ muſt firſt be humbled and made low. And thus he preuents the doubts which might haue cauſed them to ſtagger, in beholding his abieſt and deformed eſtate! As if he ſhould ſay, You muſt not deſpiſe this his baſeneſſe and deſormitic, for it brings with it forthwith eternall felicitie.

By men, I vnderſtand not this by way of comparison, as many expound it, to wit, More then men: or, Aboue that which fallies out among men: But I willingly accept of the plainſt ſenſe, namely, that Christ was deformed among men: or, that his beautie was defaced, in regard of the peruerſe iudgements of men.

All were aſtoniſhed.] Some take this aſtoniſhment for that admiration which men were in, when they ſaw the miracles which Christ did: and yet being brought to the Croſſe, they ſtraightway reiect him. But they come nothing neere the Prophets meaning: for hee ſaith, that Christ ſhall be ſo deformed, that all ſhall be aſtonied at him: his baſeneſſe of birth was ſuch, as all deſpiſed him; his glory was hid vnder the infirmitie of fleſh. And howſoeuer a maieltie worthy of the onely begotten Sonne of God, ſhined in him; yet men diſcerned it not: but they rather gazed vpon that his abaſements, which eclipsed and darkened his glory. See heere the true cauſe of this aſtoniſhment then, namely, becauſe he conuerſed among men, without any outward pompe. For the Iewes expected not a Meſſias of ſo meane an eſtate. Now at his crucifying this aſtoniſhment was augmented much more.

Saint Paul ſpeakes of this abaſement of Christ, and then of his exaltation, when hee ſaith; He being in the forme of God, thought it no robbetrie to be equall vnto God, but he humbled (or emptied himſelfe) by taking vpon him the forme of a ſervant, and was made like vnto

men, and was found in ſhape as a man. Hee humbled himſelfe and became obedient vnto the death, euen vnto the death of the Croſſe. Wherefore God hath alſo highly exalted him, and giuen him a name aboue euery name, that at the name of Ieſus, euery knee ſhould bow, both of things in heauen, and things in earth, and things vnder the earth: and that euery tongue ſhould confeſſe that Ieſus is the Lord, vnto the glory of God the Father. It was needfull the that Christ ſhould firſt be humbled and ſhamefully intreated, and that this glory into which hee was exalted, ſhould not appeare at the firſt. But after his humiliation vpon the Croſſe, came a glorious reſurrection, with a ſoueraigne degree of honour.

Christ humbled before he was exalted.

Vers. 15. *So ſhall hee ſprinkle manie nations: the Kings ſhall ſhut their mouthes at him: for that which had not been told them ſhall they ſee, and that which they had not heard, ſhall they vnderſtand.*

Others expound, Hee ſhall diſtill: ſo, vnder a figure, taking it To ſpeake. But ſeeing the verbe *Nafa* ſignifies to ſprinkle; and being ſo taken in the holy Scriptures, I had rather follow this interpretation. His meaning is, that the Lord ſhall ſpread his word among many nations. In the next place he addes the effect of this doctrine, in laying, that Kings ſhall ſhut their mouthes in ſigne of aſtoniſhment: but yet diuers from that which he mentioned before: for men ſhut their mouthes and ſtand aſtoniſhed, when the matter is of ſuch conſequence, that they are vnable to expreſſe it, becauſe they can finde no wordes wherewith to vtter the ſame.

They ſhall ſee that which was not told them.] The Prophet ſhewes that this aſtoniſhment ſhall not proceede from the bare ſight of Christs perſon, but rather from the preaching of the Goſpell: for though he roſe againe, yet all eſteemed him dead, if the glory of his reſurrection had not been publiſhed. The preaching of the goſpel therefore maniſteſted thoſe things which neither the eye had ſcene, nor the eare heard of before: as alſo in regard of the publiſhing of this doctrine came to Kings and nations farre off, euen to the ends of the world.

Saint Paul alleudgeth this text, and ſhewes that it was fulfilled in his miniſterie, reioicing that hee had preached the Goſpell to thoſe who had neuer heard of it: Rom. 15. 21. For this is the office of an Apoſtle, and not of euery Miniſter now. Thus then our Prophet ſhewes, that the kingdome of Christ ſhall not be ſhut vp in ſo narrow bounds, as within the end of Iudeah; but ſhould ſpread it ſelfe further off. The Iewes vnderſtood ſomewhat by the Law and the Prophets; but the Gentiles knew nothing at all. This therefore by conſequence belongs vnto them.

Shall vnderſtand.] By this hee ſhewes that ſaith conſiſts in certentie & in allured knowledge:

1. Cor. 2. 9.

The Apoſtles office.

Faith conſiſts in certentie of knowledge.

Chap. 9. 6.

Or, beautie.

Apreuention in this and the next ve. ſe.

Luke 9. 58.

thil. 2. 6. and he verſes following.

No faith without certaintie of knowledge.

ledge: for where this wants, there faith questionlesse is not. Whence we may discern how ridiculous the opinion of the Papists is, touching their *implicite faith*, in beleeuing as the

Church beleeueth: which indeede is no thing else but an absurd ignorance, or to say better, a meere circle and blinde imagination.

THE LIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Who will beleue our report? and to whom is the arme of the Lord revealed?*

An holy complaint in the person of all the Ministers of the Gospell.



He will not stand to speake of the diuision, or rather dismembring of this Chapter: for it should rather haue begunne at the 13. verse of the former Chapter. And this ought to be joined to that which was said a little before: for the Prophet staies heere as it were in the middle of his speech. For hauing said before, that the name of Christ should be published faere and neere, euen amongst strange nations; and yet that he shall be so contemptible, that these things shall in a sort be esteemed no better then fables, he now suddenly stops in the mid way as it were, and cries, *that none would beleue him*. And therewithall he also expresseth his griefe, to think that men should be so incredulous, as to reiect their owne saluation. This is an holy complaint then: for his will is, that all should know Christ, and yet he sees *but a few* which beleue the Gospell: which makes him to vtter this lamentable cry; *Who hath beleueed our reports?*

Vfe.

Let vs then sigh and complaine with the Prophet: yea, let vs be euen greued in our soules, if wee see little fruit to come of our labours, and let vs powre forth our complaints before God. For thus ought the faithfull seruants of God to be affected, if they meane sincerely to discharge their duties. *Isaiah* shewes then, that the number of those shall bee very small, that shall submit themselves to the Gospell of Christ: for when hee cries; *Who will beleue our preaching?* it is as much as if he had said; That of an hundred that heare the Gospell, scarcely one of them will proue a beleuer.

Neither speakes hee of himselfe onelie heere, but as one representing the person of all the faithfull Ministers. Although God send many of his seruants then, yet there are *but a few* that beleue: What shall become of them that inioy no preaching at all? shall we need to wonder much at their extreame blindness? If the earth that is well husbanded, brings forth but little fruit; what is to be expected from that that is vtterly barren; and vnhusbanded? But the Gospell loseth no whit of his excellencie, though it get but few followers: neither doth the small numbers of beleuers diminish the authoritie thereof, nor yet obscure the infinit glory of it: but rather so

If they that haue preaching continue blind, how miserable blind must they be that haue no preaching at all.

great is the mystery of it, that it can hardlie find any welcome in the world: for it is esteemed folly, 1. Cor. 1. 23. because it is far above the reach of their carnall reason.

In the second member *Isaiah* more clearly sets downe the reason why there are so few beleeuers. What is that? None can come vnto God, without the especiall illumination of his holy Spirit. But those are deceived in my iudgement, who thinke that *arma* heere signifies Iesus Christ. For it is a *rendring of the cause*, why the Gospell gets no more attendants; namely, they cannot comprehend the mysteries thereof by the dexteritie of their turall wit. This is a very worthy sentence therefore, and it is alleaged both by Saint *Iohn* and Saint *Paul* to this very purpose: *Iohn* saith; that albeit Christ had done so many miracles, yet they beleueed not: that the word which *Isaiah* had spoken might bee fulfilled; *Lord, who hath beleueed our reports? and to whom is the arme of the Lord revealed?* *Iohn* 12. 37. And Saint *Paul* saith; *But all haue not obteied the Gospell for Isaiahs saith; Lord, who hath beleueed our preaching?* Rom. 10. 16.

Both of them shew, how we are not to wonder if that which was so long since foretold, doth still come to passe, that so they might remoue that scandall which otherwise would remaine, in regard of this peoples revolt, who in stead of acknowledging and receiuing Christ when he came, did obstinately resist him. And yet *Isaiah* meant not to tax his own Countrymen alone with this sinne, but comprehends all those that shall succeede them to the end of the world: for as long as Christ shall haue any kingdome on earth, this propheticke must be daily accomplished. And therefore the faithfull ought to be confirmed with this testimonie, against such an offence. Moreover, this refutes their ignorance, who imagine that faith is in euery mans power, because the word preached is common to all. For though all be called to saluation by the ministry thereof, yet the Prophet expressly affirms, that the outward voice which calles, profits nothing, vnlesse the particular grace of the holy Ghost concurre therewith. But whence is this difference? Onely from Gods secret election, who referues the cause thereof hid in his owne counsell.

Th's inwarditie common both to Iewes and Gentiles.

Many called, but few chosen.

Verf. 2. *But hee shall grow up before him as a branch, & as a roote out of a dry ground: he hath neither forme nor beautie: when we shall see him, there shall be no forme that we should desire him.*

This senteuce hath reference to verf. 14. where it was said, that at the first appearing

Wee must not iudge of him.

Chriſtes glorie by outward appearances, but according as the Scriptures deſcribes him vnto vs.

ring of Chriſt, he ſhould haue no forme nor beautie in mens eyes; but before God, he ſhould be highly exalted into a ſoueraigne degre of honour, and greatly eſteemed. By which wee are taught, not to iudge of Chriſts glory according to outward appearance, but by faith; ſo to apprehend him, as the holy Scriptures haue deſcribed him. And therefore this particule *Before him*, is oppoſed to humane reaſon, which cannot comprehend this his admirable greatneſſe.

He vſeth almoſt ſy very ſame ſimilitude with that in Chap. 11. 1. where he ſaid, that a roſe ſhould come forth of the ſtock of *Iſſaſ*; for the houſe of *Dauid* was then like a withered ſtock of a tree, which had no ſap nor any appearance of beautie left. And therefore in that place hee nameth not the *houſe royal*, but of *Iſſaſ*, whoſe name was then little renowned. Onely the Prophet addeth heere, *a dry ground*; thereby ſignifying, that Chriſt ſhould take no force from the moiſture of the earth, to cauſe him to *grow as trees doe*: but ſhould increaſe after a ſupernaturall manner. Thoſe who allegorize heere, and thinke that the *Virgin Mary* is called *a dry ground* in this place, becauſe ſhee conceiued by the holy Ghoſt, and not by the ſeed of man, doe miſſe their marke: for the queſtion is not heere touching Chriſt his birth, but of his whole kingdome.

Now the Prophet ſaith that he ſhall be like a *branch* iſſuing out of a *drie ground*, which in appearance will neuer grow to any ſtature. For indeed, if wee ſhall conſider by what meanes Chriſt hath eſtabliſhed his kingdome, and what perſons he hath vſed; the weake beginnings; and the numbers of aduerſaries that reſiſted him, we ſhall eaſily perceiue that all things came to paſſe as *Iſaiab* foretold. What were his Apoſtles, that they ſubdued ſo many Kings and Nations by the ſword of the ſpirit? May they not well be compoſed to *little ſprigs*? Thus the Prophet ſhewes then by what meanes Chriſtes kingdome ſhould be erected and eſtabliſhed, that we ſhould not iudge thereof as of a worldly kingdome. The *deformitie* whereof he ſpeakes in the next place, is not only to be referred to Chriſtes perſon, which being contemptible and deſpiſed of the world, was at laſt adiudged to a ſhamefull and curſed death; but alſo to his whole kingdome, which hath *no forme*, beautie, nor glorie at all in the eyes of men: in a word, no appearance at all to procure any great admiration in the eyes of worldlings. For albeit Chriſt roſe againe, yet the Iewes alwaies eſteemed him a man crucified, and full of reproch, ſo as they proudly diſdained him.

Verſ. 3. *He is deſpiſed and reiected of men: he is a man full of ſorrowes, and hath experience of infirmities: We hid as it were our faces from him: he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not.*

This preſent verſe tends to the ſame purpoſe with the former; namely, that men

ſhould reiect Chriſt, becauſe nothing was to be ſeene in him but *ſorrowes* and infirmities. The Iewes needed to haue this often repeated vnto them, that they might not conceiue a falſe opiniõ of Chriſt, nor of his kingdome: for he that wil rightly ſee his glory, muſt paſſe from his death, to his reſurreccion. Many are offended at his death, as if he had been overcome and overwhelmed of ir. But they muſt paſſe forwards to that diuine power and maiesty which ſhined in his reſurreccion: Rom. 1. 4. Yet if any ſhall begin at his reſurreccion, hee ſhall not follow the order heere preſcribed by the Prophet, neither ſhall he comprehend the mightie power of the Lord.

We almoſt hid our faces from him. It is not without cauſe that hee vſeth this word *we*: for thereby he ſhewes, that thus all men ſhall iudge of him. Neither ſhall any man be able euer to conceiue otherwiſe, vneleſſe the Lord correct and reforme his judgement by the holy Ghoſt. And how ſoever he ſeemes heere to taxe the Iewes principally, who ſhould diſdainfully reiect the Sonne of God promiſed and offered; yea and puts *himſelfe* in the number, as being a member of that body: yet let vs learne from this place notwithstanding, that the whole world is heere taxed and condemned of ingratitude, for contemning of Chriſt; becauſe they iudge him vnworthy, the *looking vpon*; may they *turne their eyes* from him, as from an abominable thing.

Verſ. 3. *Surely hee hath borne our infirmities, and carried our ſorrowes: yet we did iudge him as plagued, and miſtaken of God, and humbled.*

The particule *Surely*, is not onely an affirmatiue, but alſo ſerues for an expoſition; to wit, when any thing is brought to light that ſeemes ſtrange and vnwonted. For is it not wonderfull, nay monſtrous, that hee to whom God hath giuen ſoueraigne power ouer all creatures, ſhould be thus abaſed and humbled? So then, if the cauſe were not rendered heere, all would eſteeme this no better then a fable. Why was Chriſt thus couered ouer with dolours and infirmities? Surely becauſe he bare *our ſorrowes*. Saint *Matthew* alleadgeth this propheticke, after he hath told how Chriſt healed diſeaſes of diuers kinds: Chap. 8. 17. And yet it is moſt certaine, that he was appointed rather a Phyſician of mens ſoules, then of their bodies. Adde alſo that the Prophet ſpeakes of ſpiritual *ſorrowes*. But in the miracles ſhewed in the healing of mens bodies, Chriſt manifeſted a plaine prooſe of that power hee had to heale the ſickneſſes of their ſoules. This healing then whereof *S. Matthew* ſpeakes, extended further then to their bodies: for he was ordained a Phyſician of ſoules: *Matth. 9. 11, 12.* And this is the cauſe why *Matthew* attributes that to the ſigne, which agrees to the thing ſignified.

In the ſecond member the Prophet ſhewes the greatneſſe of this peoples ingratitude and peruerſitie, in that they did not ſee the cauſe why Chriſt was thus ſare humbled

with the former.

He that wil take a right view of Chriſtes glorie, muſt paſſe from his death to his reſurreccion.

Now the Prophet ſerues downe the cauſe why Chriſt was thus ſare humbled.

Job. 18. 36.

This deformitie is not only to be referred to Chriſtes perſon, but to his whole kingdome.

The doctrine of this verſe is all one

aud afflicted, but did rather iudge that hee was smitten of God for his owne finnes : and yet they knew well enough that hee was an innocent; yea the Iudge himselfe testified it: Matth. 27. 24. Luk. 23. 4. 14. 22. Iohn 18. 38. Since then they saw well that hee being not guiltie, bare the punishment of finnes which hee neuer committed, wherefore did they not conceiue some rare excellencie to be in him? But in regard they saw him smitten and despised, they neuer stood to examin the cause, but iudged onely by the euents, as the foolish are wont to doe. And for this cause *Isaiah complaines of the forwardnesse of mens iudgements*: which considered not of the reason why Christ was so greatly afflicted. And especially he bewailes the senselesse of the Iewes, in esteeming God the *sworne enemy of Christ*, without thinking of their owne iniquities, which by this meanes were done away.

Verf. 5. *But hee was wounded for our transgressions, hee was broken for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was vpon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

*Or, in his wounds is our medicin.

A repetition of the cause, lest any should be offended at Christs abatement.

HE once again repeats the cause of these so great afflictions of Christ, to present the scandall that might arise: for *vs* spectacle of the Crosse drues many farre from Christ. That is to say; whilst they onely consider of that which is present before their eyes, not looking whereunto the same tends. But all offence is removed, when they see that by his death, he hath not onely done away our iniquities, but hath also obtained saluation for vs.

Some thinke that *chastisement*, is here called the chastisement of peace; because men were growne senselesse, and hardened in their finnes: and therefore it was needfull Christ should suffer. Others referre this *peace* to the conscience; namely, that Christ hath suffered, to giue our consciences rest. To which purpose Saint *Paul* saith; Being iustified by faith, *wee haue peace with God*: Rom. 5. 1. But I take this word simply for *reconciliation*; because Christ bare the chastisement which was due vnto vs. And thus the wrath of God iustly inflamed against vs, is appeased, and the peace made betwene God and vs, by meanes of this mediator, so as wee are now reconciled.

A generall doctrine.

Hence wee gather a generall doctrine; to wit, *that wee are freely reconciled vnto God, because Christ hath paid the ranfome of our peace*. The Papists will confesse thus much I grant; but by and by they restraine this doctrine to originall sinne: as if after baptisme, free reconciliation had no more place; but that we are to satisfie for the rest by our workes and merits. But our Prophet deales not heere with one kind of remission onely, but extends this benefit to all the parts of our liues: so as it cannot bee lessened nor restrained to one certaine time, without committing horrible sacrilege. And by this also it is easie to overthrow the friuolous distinction of the Sophisters, touching the remission of the pu-

A friuolous distinction of Sophisters,

nishment and the fault: for they will not haue the punishment remitted, vnlesse it be abolished by *satisfactions*. But the Prophet plainly shewes, that the *punishment* due to vs for our finnes, is laid vpon Christ. What doe our Papists then but make themselues ioint redemptors with Christ, attributing vnto themselues the same power with him?

touching the fault and punishment, answ. cd.

And *with his stripes wee are healed*. Hee brings vs againe vnto Christ, that wee may haue recourse to his wounds, if euer wee meane to recouer life: for the Prophet heere opposeth him to vs, in respect that there is nothing to bee found in vs, but death and damnation; and in Christ onely life and saluation. It is he alone that hath procured vs a plaister; yea, by his *sickness* hath he giuen vs health, and by his death, life: for he alone it is, who hath pacified and reconciled the Father with vs. I confesse heere is ample occasion afforded mee to speake of many things touching the fruits that come to vs by the passion of our Lord Iesus Christ: but my purpose is now rather to expound, then to preach. Let vs therefore content our selues now with this short and plaine exposition. And I wish every one by himselfe to gather consolation from hence, and to apply the fruit of this doctrine to his particular vse: for these matters doe as well concerne all in generall, as euery one in particular.

Verf. 6. *All wee like sheepe haue gone astray: wee haue turned euery one to his owne way, and the Lord hath laid vpon him the iniquities of vs all.*

THAT he might the better imprint the benefit of Christs death in our hearts, hee shewes how necessarie this *healing* is, which he mentioned in the latter end of the former verse. For if we acknowledge not our miserie and pouertie, wee shall neuer know how desirable the remedie is, which Christ hath brought vs; neither shall we euer hunger or thirst after the same, with such a longing affection as we ought; but being acquainted with our owne forlorne estate, then feeling our wants, we will runne with greedinesse to receiue the remedie, which otherwise we shall lightly esteeme. That Christ then may bee receiued as hee deserueth, let euery one consider and examine himselfe, and acknowledge that he is lost, vntill Christ seeke him out.

The necessitie of this healing described.

Luke 19. 10.

We see heere that none are excepted, seeing the Prophet comprehends all: for all mankind had been vtterly lost, if Christ had not wrought our saluation. No, he excepts not the Iewes, who yet were puffed vp with a false opinion of their dignitie; but hee euen wraps them vp in the same condemnation. Now he compares them to *sheepe*, not to lessen their fault, as if themselues for their parts were harmlesse: but the more plainly to shew that the proper office of Christ, consists in gathering from among the dispersed, those who resembled brute beasts.

None excepted out of this lost condition.

In adding afterwards *euery one*: he descends from

The Prophet
deſcends to
the generall,
to every one
in particular.

from the generall in which hee comprehended all, to the particular: to teach every one a part, whether it be not ſo indeede: for a ſentence generallly propounded, moves vs not ſo much, as when every man conſiders that it belongs to him in ſpeciall. Let every one then awaken vp his owne conſcience, and let him preſent himſelfe before the iudgement ſeate of God, confeſſing his miſery.

In the next place the Prophet ſhewes wherein this *ſtraying conſiſts*, namely, that every one hath followed his owne way: that is to ſay, *hath lived after his owne pleaſure*. And thus he ſhewes that there is but one way to walke in; out of which, if any one turnes, he can doe nothing but wander and loſe himſelfe. Neither ſpeakes he of *ut ōtes* only, but of our very nature, which cauſeth vs all to go aſtray. For if we could recouer the right way againe, and deliuer our ſelues from error, either by the inſtinct of nature, or by our owne wit, Chriſt had died in vaine. We are all loſt thou till Chriſt hath deliuered vs: and the more wee ſhall relie vpon our owne wiſdome or induſtry, the more ſhall we draw perdition downe vpon our owne heads.

Thus then the Prophet ſhewes in what eſtate we are, till we be regenerated by Chriſt: for all are wrapped vp in the ſame condemnation: there is none righteous, no nor one: there is none that vnderſtands, there is none that ſeeketh God. They haue all gone out of the way, they are all become vnprofitable: there is none that doth good, no nor one: *Pſal. 14. 3. & 53. 4.* As *S. Paul* alſo manifeſts it more fully, *Rom. 3. 10, 11, 12.*

And the Lord hath laid vpon him. Heere is a goodly oppoſition: for in our ſelues wee are ſcattered, in Chriſt we are gathered: by nature wee erre, and iud headlong into deſtruction; in Chriſt we find the way by which wee are directed to the haue of ſaluation: our finnes preſſe vs downe to hell; Chriſt diſchargeſ vs of them, ſo lay them vpon his owne backe: whileſt we were loſt then, and ſo eſtranged from God, that we runne poſt haſte to hell, Chriſt tooke vpon himſelfe all our ſilthineſſes and iniquities, that hee might deliuer vs from eternall death. But we muſt refer this only to his condemnation and puniſhment: for hee was no way guiltie, otherwiſe then by imputing of our finnes vnto him. Let every one of vs then make a diligent examination of his own iniquities, that ſo he may bring himſelfe to a true taſte of this grace, and may feele the fruit of the death of Chriſt.

Verſ. 7. Hee was oppreſſed, and hee was afflicted; yet did hee not open his mouth: hee is brought as a ſheepe to the ſlaughter; and as a ſheepe before her ſheerer is dumbe, ſo opened hee not his mouth.

Or, lambe.

Chriſts obedience com-
mended.

HE here praiſeth Chriſts obedience which he ſhewed, when he was to ſuffer death; for had hee not done it willingly, hee might haue ſeemed not to haue ſatisfied for our dif-

obedience. As by the diſobedience of one then, all were made guiltie, (as *Paul* ſaith) *Rom. 5. 19.* ſo by the obedience of one, many were made righteous. And in another place; Hee was obedient to the death, euen to the death of the Croſſe: *Phil. 2. 8.* This is the cauſe why he held his peace before *Pilate* iudgement ſeate, *Mat. 27. 12. 14.* though hee might haue pleaded his juſt defence. But in regard hee had bound himſelfe to ſuffer for vs, hee willingly ſubmitted himſelfe to an vnjuſt iudgement, *withont vniſering one word*; that wee *with full mouth* might reioice, in being freely juſtified by faith, and ſo acquitted from the righteous ſentence of our condemnation;

And heere alſo by the way wee are exhorted to patience and meeknes, that by Chriſts example wee may be readie to indure reproches, iniuries, wounds, and torments for his ſake. In which ſenſe, *Saint Peter* allegeth this place, *1. Pet. 1. 22, 23.* ſhewing that wee ought to be conformed to our head Chriſt, that ſo wee may follow him in patience and modeſtie.

In the word *lambe*, there may bee an alluſion to the ſacrifices vnder the Law: in which ſenſe hee is called the Lambe of God: *Iohn 1. 29.*

Verſ. 8. Hee was taken out of priſon, and from iudgement: and who ſhall declare his age? For hee was cut out of the lande of the living: for the tranſgreſſion of my people was hee plagued.

THIS place is diuerſly expounded. Some thinke the Prophet proſecutes the argument which hee beganne to handle, verſ. 6. namely, that Chriſt was ſmitten with Gods hand, and afflicted for our finnes. The Greeks tranſlate; And in his abaſing, his iudgement appeared. Others, He was lifted vp without delay. Others expound; That he was lifted vp vpon the Croſſe: that is to ſay, Chriſt was led to the place of execution, immediately after his apprehenſion. For mine owne part, I rather agree with thoſe who thinke that the Prophet paſſeth into the glory of his reſurrection, hauing before ſpoken of his death: and by this meanes, meant to meeete with mens perplexed thoughts, which might trouble and greeue the hearts of many.

For when wee ſee nothing but stripes and ſhame, we remaine aſtoniſhed: mens natures abhoire ſuch ſpectacles. The Prophet then teacheth, that Chriſt was lifted vp: that is to ſay, deliuered from priſon, and from iudgement or condemnation; and afterwards was exalted into a ſoueraigne degree of honour, leſt any ſhould iudge that hee was overcome, or ſwallowed vp by this horrible and ſhamefull kind of death. Truly hee triumphed over his enemies in the miſt of death it ſelfe: yea, he was ſo condemned of it, that now himſelfe is ordained the ſoueraigne Iudge of all, as it well appeared in his reſurrection. *Iſaiah* then keepes the ſame method that *Paul* doth, who hauing in *Philip. 2.* ſpoken of Chriſts humilia-

Chriſts patient ſufferings, our example.

For the further explication of this and the verſe following, reade his Comment vpon Act. 8. 32, 33.

Hauing ſpoken of Chriſts death, he paſſeth to his reſurrection.

Pauls method agrees with Iliahs in this place.

tion even to the death of the Crosse: addes, that for this cause, he was advanced to an high exaltation; hauing now obtained a name, vnto which euery creature in heauen, earth, and vnder the earth, must bow their knees, and yeelde their obedience.

Arians. Heretikes must be conuincd not with shewes, but with plaine euidence of truth.

As touching the exclamation following, it hath been tacked and rent by diuers expositions. The ancient Fathers abused this place to confute the Arians, who denied the eternal generation of Christ. But they should haue contented themselues with plaine and manifest proofes of the holy Scriptures, that so they might not haue made themselues a scorn to heretikes, who by this meanes oftentimes take occasion to grow the more impudent; for they might haue replied, that the Prophet had no such meaning. *Chrysostom* referres it to Christs humanitie, because he was miraculously coeieued in the virgins wombe, without the vse of mans helpe: but he rones

Chrysostom.

farre off from the Prophets meaning. Some others thinke that the Prophet cries out vpon them that crucified Christ. And some againe refer it to the posteritie which should succede; to wit, that Christs Inage or offspring should greatly increase, though himselfe died. But seeing the word *Dor*, signifies Age, or lasting; I doubt not but I.e. speaks of Christs age, namely, that notwithstanding the sorrowes wherewith he was ouerpressed, hee shall not onely be freed from them, but shall also haue a *flourishing age*, yea such a one as should indure for euer. For hee shall not resemble those that are deliuered from death, and yet must die neuertheless afterwards, because hee rose againe to liue eternally. For as *S. Paul* saith, *Rem. 6.9.* *Hee can die no more, death can haue no more dominio ouer him.* And yet we must remember that the Prophet not onely speaks of Christs person, but comprehends vnder it, the whole body of the church, which must neuer bee separated from her head. Wee haue here then a notable testimony touching the perpetuity of the church: for as Christ liues for euer, so will he not suffer his kingdome euer to perish: *Iohn 14. 19.* In the next place wee are to appropriate this *immortalitie* to euery member in particular.

Psal. 102. 24. 27.

Christ can die no more.

For hee was *cut off*. It may seeme strange at the first blush, that the death of Christ should bee the cause and *well spring* of life. But in regard hee indured the punishment due to our offences, all the ignominie which appeared in the Crosse, ought to bee laid and charged vpon vs. And yet in the meane while we may see a wonderful goodnesse of God shining in Christ, who hath so manifestly discovered his glorie to vs, that we ought to be carried into a wonderful admiration of it.

A note touching the perpetuity of the Church.

For this cause hee once againe repeates, that he was *plagued for our transgressions*: that wee might diligently consider how hee suffered for vs, and not for himselfe: for he bare the torments which wee had deserued; and should for euer haue borne them, had not this ransom and satisfaction come between. Let vs acknowledge then that the fault is ours, whereof hee bare the punishment and

condemnation, by offering himselfe to his heauenlie Father in our name; that in his condemnation wee might receiue our absolution.

Verf. 9. *And hee made his graue with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no wickednesse, neither was any deceit in his mouth.*

Saint Ierom translates; And hath giuen the wicked for buriall; as if the Prophet spake of the punishment, whereby the body will auenge himselfe of those which crucified Christ. But he rather speaks of Christs death, and of the fruits of it, and toucheth not this vengeance. Others thinke that the particle *Et*, signifies *As*; and they translate, *Hee hath made his graue as that of the wicked.* Some againe translate *Vnch*; and by the *rich*, vnderstand *Ioseph of Arimathea*, in whose sepulchre Christ was buried: but this exposition is constrained. Where he addes, and *to the rich*: I thinke the singuler number is put for the plurall, according to the custome of the Hebrewes. I see no reason why *Oecolampadius* hath translated; *Hee hath exposed his high places to the rich.* By the *rich*, vnderstanding tyrants and proud men; for they are wont to wax insolent and intemperate, in regard of their riches, which they abuse to play the *Tarmogants*.

Saint Ierom.

Christ seemed to be buried as he were in the hands of the wicked.

Oecolampadius.

Thus I thinke that by the *wicked* and *rich*, he vnderstands one and the same thing. *Iasabs* meaning is then, that Christ was subiect to the contumelies, insolencies, and lusts of the wicked. For the Scribes and Pharisees on the one side rushed vpon him with a desperate fury: and on the other side, the factious people cried nothing but crucifie him, crucifie him: *Matth. 26. 66.* *Pilats* contrary to all equity & law, gaue an vnjust sentence of death vpon him, though hee were informed of his innocencie: *Marke 15. 14.* And the Roman souldiers greedy of any pray, put the cruell and wicked sentence cruelly and wickedly in execution: *Iohn 19. 16.* Who would not haue thought now, but that Christ had been *utterly overwhelmed, and buried amongst the bloody hands of these cruell murderers*? For I take the *graue* heere by a metaphor, in regard the wicked and their executioners had almost ouercharged him. And if any obiekt that Christ was buried honourably; I answer, that this burall was the beginning of his glorious resurrection. But heere hee speaks of his death, which is often signified by the *graue*. This then I take to bee the true meaning: and yet I giue euery man leaue to iudge as it pleaseth him.

Scribes and Pharisees.

The factious people. Pilat.

The Roman souldiers.

Obiect. Anf.

Though he had done none iniquitie.] The Prophet sets Christs innocencie heere before vs, not so much to defend him against the slanders of the wicked, as to recom-mend vnto vs the fruit of his death, lest wee should imagin that he suffered at aduerture. He was innocent and suffered by Gods decree, *not for his iniquities*, but for ours: for he bare the punishment due to vs. Now in two words he expresseth Christs

Chriſts perfect innocencie; to wit, that hee ſinned neither in *word* nor *deed*. Surely euerie one will confeſſe that this cannot be affirmed of any mortal man: it follows then, that it appertaines to Chriſt onely.

Verſ. 10. *Yet the Lord would breake him, and make him ſubiect to inſirmities: when hee ſhall make his ſoule an offering for ſinne, hee ſhall ſee his ſeede, and ſhall prolong his daies; and the Will of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.*

BY this we may the better diſcerne of that which I haue briefly touched; to wit, that the Prophet propounding Chriſts innocencie, had a further drift then to defend him againſt the contumelies and reproches of the wicked. The make hee aims at then, is to make vs looke vnto the very cauſe, that ſo we might feele the effect thereof in our ſoules: for God neither ordaines, nor executes ought at random. Whence it follows, that the cauſe of Chriſts death was lawfully vndertaken. The expoſition alſo is ſtill to be remembered of vs, which we touched in verſ. 6. There was no ſinne in Chriſt: but why would the Lord then haue him ſuffer? Euen becauſe hee ſuſtained our perſon and cauſe: for there was nothing at all that could ſatiſſie Gods iuſtice, but the death of his only begotten Son.

The word *Aſham*, ſignifies ſinne, and oblation for ſinne; and ſo oftentimes it is found in the latter ſignification in the Scriptures: Exod. 29. 14. Ezech. 45. 22. For the beaſt ſacrificed, was ſo offered, as that bearing the puniſhment and curſe of the ſinne, it alſo blotted it out. And the Priests ſignified ſo much by the impoſition of hands; euen as if they had laid vpon the beaſt the ſinnes of the whole people: Leuit. 4. 4. And if any priuate man had offered, he alſo put his hands vpon the head of the beaſt; as if hee had thereby tranſlated his ſinne from himſelfe, vnto it: Leuit. 4. 27. 29. And therefore Saint Paul calles Chriſt the curſe, or execration, ſaying; *Chriſt hath redeemed vs from the curſe of the law being made a curſe for vs*: Galat. 3. 13. And in another place; *Hee made him to be ſinne for vs, vt which knew no ſinne*, that wee might be made the righteousneſſe of God in him: 2. Cor. 5. 21. Alſo in Rom. 8. 3. For that which was impoſſible to the law, in that it was weak by reaſon of the fleſh, that hath God done by ſending his owne Sonne in the ſimilitude of fleſh, ſubiect to ſin; and for ſinne, hath condemned ſinne in the fleſh, that the righteousneſſe of the law might be fulfilled in vs. The Prophet then by this word *Aſham*, ſignifies the ſame, which Paul calles *curſe*, and *ſinne*, in the places formerly alleadged.

Now heere the fruit of Chriſts death is expreſſed, in regard that by his ſacrifices, ſinnes are done away, and God is pacified towards man: for the vertue of this word *ſacrifice*, muſt be referred heereunto. Hence it follows, that the abolishing of ſinne, and ſatiſfaction for ſinne, is no where to be found, but in

Chriſt. Now that we may the better remember theſe things: firſt, wee muſt note that we are all *guiltie* before God; ſo as we are accuſed and lothſome in his preſence. Will wee then bee brought againe into his fauour? *Sinne muſt be taken away*. But this cannot bee done with purgations deuſed by man. How then? We muſt reſort to *Chriſts death*, becauſe wee cannot otherwiſe make ſatiſfaction to God. In a word, *Iſaiab* teacheth that ſinnes cannot be pardoned, vnleſſe wee flee to this death. If this language ſeemes harſh, and not ſeemly for the perſon of Chriſt, let ſuch a one enter into his owne heart, and conſider in good earneſt, how feareful and terrible Gods iuſtice is, when nothing is able to appeaſe it but the ſacrifice of Chriſt. And ſo the ineffimable grace, which ſhines in the curſe of Chriſt, will eaſily remoue all offence.

Hee ſhall ſee his poſteritie.] The Prophets meaning is, that it ſhall bee ſo farre off, that Chriſts poſteritie ſhall be diminiſhed by his death, that contrariwiſe, it ſhall be the means to raiſe vp ſeed vnto him. For in quickening the dead, he begs a people which he aſterward will cauſe to multiply exceedingly. Neither is there any abſurditie at all in it, to call the faithfull the *poſteritie* of Chriſt (though they bee his brethren) for they bee his offspring.

Where hee addes; *Hee ſhall prolong his daies*, ſome ſupply the relatiue *Aſter*, Which: ſaying, that the *poſteritie* ſhall indure long. But I expound it more ſimply; that the death which Chriſt ſhall ſuffer, ſhall not cut off the length of his daies: that is to ſay, from liuing eternally.

Some departing out of this life, doe leaue children which ſhall ſeruiue them; yet vpon condition that their fathers be firſt dead. But Chriſt ſhall haue his children with him: for he dies not as men doe, but obtains eternall life both for himſelfe and his. And thus the Prophet ſhewes, that both the head and the members ſhall liue eternally.

The will of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand.] This word *hand*, is often taken for miniſtrie: as where it is ſaid, that the Lord gaue the Law by the hand of Moſes: Numb. 36. 13. Alſo the Lord did this by the hand of David: 2. Sam. 3. 18. meaning, that he vſed his ſeruiſe. In this ſort alſo ſhall the will of the Lord proſper in the hand of Chriſt: that is to ſay; the Lord will cauſe Chriſts miniſtrie to bring forth his fruit, that it may not ſeeme he was expoſed to ſo many cruell torments in vaine. Vnder theſe foure or ſue words, is comprehended a very large and ample doctrine, which euerie one may collect by himſelfe: for wee will content our ſelues now with expounding the text onely.

The will of the Lord, is taken in the ſame ſenſe heere, as it was in the former member: for he vſeth the word *Keptis*, which ſignifies a frank and liberal affection, full of mercy. This text then ſets two benefits of God before vs: Firſt, that hee ſpared not his owne Sonne, but deliuered him vp for our ſakes, to redeeme vs from death: Rom. 8. 32. Secondly, that he juſtly was this his death to be fruitleſſe, and unprofitable; but cauſeth vs to fruitifie very largely: for vnto

The fruit of Chriſts death expreſſed.

Obiect.

Anſ.

No laſt ſentence can be made to ſound for our line, but by Chriſts death.

Two benefits before vs in this verſe.

benefit should we reape thereby, vnlesse wee felt the power and efficacie thereof in our selues.

Verf. 11. He shall see the trauaile of his soule, and shall bee satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous seruant iustifie many; for hee shall beare their iniquities.

The former argument further prosecuted.

Isaiab prosecutes the same argument. For he shewes that after Christ hath suffered death, he shall reape the fruit thereof, from the saluation of men. To the words *shall see* therefore, must be supplied the fruit and efficacie. Surely these things containe wonderful consolation in them: for *Isaiab* could no way better expresse Christs infinit loue to vs, then in shewing that hee takes a singular pleasure in the worke of our saluation: and doth herein as it were refresh himselfe, as with the fruits of his owne labours. Euen as one that reioiceth to see that which about all things hee desired to inioy, as if nothing but that could content him.

In the next place he shewes the meanes by which we may feele the vertue and power of Christs death; to wit, by his knowledge. This word *knowledge*, or doctrine, may be read in a double sence; to wit, in the actiue, or passiue: but in whether of them you reade it, we shall easilie see the Prophets meaning. Neither shall the lawes be able to caull so impudently, but wee will force them to confesse that which is heere said; to wit, *that Christ is the onely Doctor and author of righteousness*: for the Prophet manifests so much by the effect, saying; *that he shall iustifie many*. Thus then men shall not only learne in the schoole of Christ, to define what this righteousness is, but themselves also shall be made iust, really and effectually thereby.

Note.

The difference betweene the righteousness of the law, and that of faith.

And heere behold the difference between the righteousness of the law, and that of faith. For albeit the law shewes what it is to be iust; yet *Saint Paul* shewes it is impossible to obtaine righteousness by it. Which he proues by experience, in regard the law is but a *looking glasse*, serving to manifest vnto vs our owne *unrighteousnesse*: Rom. 3. 9, 10. But the doctrine to obtaine the righteousness which Christ sets before vs, is nothing else but a *knowledge of him*; to wit, *faith*: that is, when we accept the benefit of his death, and doe wholly rest our selues therein.

Philosophers.

The Philosophers giue many goodly precepts, wherein they thinke *all iustice* is comprehended: but they were neuer able yet to make any man righteous by them. For where is he that had euer yet the power to liue according to their rules? It is a small matter to know wherein true iustice consists, vnlesse therewithall we taste the benefit of it. But to let the Philosophers passe, we see the law it selfe, which contains a perfect rule of a godly life, is not able to conferre righteousness (as we haue said): Not because there is any want in it, for *Moses* testified and protested that hee did set before them in it, good and euill, life and death: Deut. 30. 19. But the law

The Law conferres righteousness to none.

is vnable to confer righteousness to vs, in regard of the corruption of our nature: as *S. Paul* well affirms, that this impossibilitie proceeds from our flesh, and not from the law: Rom. 8. 3. For our nature is enmity vnto it, and our lusts ouercary vs violently, as wild beasts, to rush against the commandement of God. And thus, *the law* ingenders vnto vs rather then righteousness: Rom. 4. 15. The law then condemnes all men, and hauing discovered their sinne, makes them without excuse. We must therefore seeke out another meane whereby to obtaine righteousness; namely, in *Christ* himselfe, whom the very law points vs vnto, as to the end of it: Rom. 10. 4. But what is that righteousness of the law? Doe these things, and thou shalt liue: *Leuit. 18. 5. Gal. 3. 12*. But none can doe them. Then you must seeke another righteousness, which *S. Paul* collects out of a place of *Moses*; The word is nere thee, in thy mouth, and in thine heart. This is the word of faith which wee preach: *Deut. 30. 14. Rom. 10. 8*. By this doctrine we are iustified: not as it is nakedly and barely propounded, but as it offers vnto vs *Christ* and all his benefits, by which our sinnes are done away, and we fet at peace with God: for if wee embrace this benefit by faith, we are reputed iust before him.

Christ our righteousness
1er. 23. 6. &
33. 16.

And our Prophet also expounds his owne meaning, in shewing wherein this knowledge consists; for these two members must be ioined together. *By his doctrine*, or *by the knowledge of himselfe*, he shall iustifie many; because he shall beare their iniquities. For as hee hath once offered himselfe for the purgation of all our iniquities: so now hee daily allures vs to receiue the fruit of his death, by the preaching of the Gospell. The publishing of which his death and passion, is the substance and foundation thereof, that by hearing of it, wee might be iustified. *Saint Paul* also accords verily well with this sentence of the Prophet. For hauing shewed that *Christ* was offered for the remission of our sinnes, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; hee addes, we are ambassadors for *Christ*, and do beseech you that you will be reconciled vnto God: 2. Cor. 5. 20.

My righteous seruant.] The Prophet teacheth that *Christ* iustifies vs, not onely as he is God, but also as he is man; in regard he hath obtained righteousness for vs in his flesh. For hee calles him not *My sonne*, but *My seruant*: that whilst we consider him as God, we may also apprehend his humane nature, in which hee yielded that obedience which absolues vs before God. This is the foundation of our saluation then, namely, that hee offered vp himselfe in sacrifice: as he testifies in the Gospell. And for their sakes sanctifie I my selfe, that they also may be sanctified through the truth: *Iohn 17. 19*.

Christ iustifies as he is both God and man.

The foundation of our saluation.

Verf. 12. Therefore will I giue him a portion with the great, and hee shall diuide the spoile with the strong, because hee powred out his soule vnto death, and

he

he was counted with the tranſgreſſors, and he bare the ſin of many, and praied for the tranſgreſſors.

Chriſt died not a common death. For that they might make him the more odious, they hanged theſe two theeves with Chriſt, and himſelfe in the miſt, as the Captaine. And thus Saint Marke alleadgeth this text to very good purpoſe, and according to the circumſtance of this place.

The victory that Chriſt obtained by his death.

Iſaiah ſhewes further, what iſſue Chriſts death ſhall haue : for it was neceſſary hee ſhould adde this doctrine touching the victory which he obtained by his paſſion; becauſe the knowledge of our reconciliation with the Father by his death, would not otherwiſe haue ſufficiently confirmed our hearts. Now hee borrowes a ſimilitude heere from thoſe who vsed triumphes. For hauing obtained the victory, they were gloriously apparrelled, and receiued with ſtately ſhewes : ſo Chriſt, as a valiant and noble Generall, triumphed after the conqueſt ouer his enemies.

He ſhall diuide the ſpoile vnto the ſtrong. It is the ſame with the former member, and a repetition much vsed among the Hebrewes: for thoſe which before be called *great*, now hee calles mightie and *ſtrong*. Thoſe who translate; I will giue him a portion with many; peruert the meaning of the Prophet, as I thinke. All the difference in the two members is, that God firſt ſhewes what he *gave* to Chriſt: and in the ſecond hee addes, that Chriſt inioiced this benefit. Now he inioines it not for himſelfe, but for vs: for the fruit of this victory is made ours. How ſo? Chriſt hath ſubdued death, the world, and the duell, for vs. In a word, the Prophet heere extolles this victory which Chriſt atchieued by his ſufferings, who though he died concerning to the infirmities of the fleſh, yet hee was raiſed againe by the wonderfull power of the holy Ghoſt: 2. Cor. 13. 4. and triumphed ouer all his and our enemies.

Heereunto appertaines the ſimilitude of ſpoiles, which the Prophet vseth. For hee aſcended into heauen, led captiuitie captiue, and gave gifts vnto men: Pſal. 68. Eph. 4. 8. And afterwards he addes, that the abſaling of Chriſt, was the beginning of his imperiall dignitie. As alſo S. Paul ſaith, that after Chriſt had taken away the hand writing which was againſt vs, he triumphed vpon the croſſe, Col. 2. 14. So far was it off then, that the reprochfull death which he ſuffered, did any thing diminifh his glory; that it was rather a meanes by which God his Father advanced him into an high degree of honour.

Iſaiah alſo expreſſeth the kinde of death: as S. Paul alſo, who hauing ſet forth Chriſts obedience, and ſhewing that hee humbled himſelfe vnto the death, addes by and by, that it was no common death, but the death of the Croſſe: that is to ſay, a ſhamefull and an accurſed death: Phil. 2. 8.

Now the Prophet minding yet to amplifie this contumelie to the full, ſaith, that Chriſt was counted among the wicked. But the greater the contempt was before men, ſo much the greater was the glory of his reſurrection. Saint Marke alleadgeth this place, when hee tells vs how Chriſt was hanged betweene two theeves. Mark. 15. 28. for then was this prophetic truly accompliſhed indeed.

But the Prophet ſpake generally, to ſhew that

He bare the ſinne of many. This is added by way of correction, left in hearing tell of the ignominie of this death, we ſhould conceiue ſomewhat that might redound to Chriſts indignitie. With which conceit our mindes being poſſeſſed, we might happily be deuiued of the victory which hee hath purchaſed for vs; to wit, the fruit of his death. The Prophet then ſhewes, that all this was done to the end hee might receiue the *burthen* of our ſinnes vpon himſelfe: as alſo, that when mention ſhould be made of Chriſts death, we might forthwith remember our owne purgation. This fruit (ſwallowed vp all the ſhame of his croſſe: ſo as his maieſtie & glory ſhined more fully, then if we had ſene him ſit in the heauens. Why ſo? Becauſe in him we haue a memorable teſtimonie of Gods loue, in that he was thus humbled, ſcorned, and miſuſed, with all the indignities that might be, that we who were appointed vnto eternall deſtruction, might with him inioy immortal glory and happineſſe.

I haue followed the common tranſlation in theſe words; he hath borne the ſinne of many: although by the Hebrew word *Rabbim*, we may vnderſtand the Great and Noble: and ſo the oppoſition would be the more manifeſt; namely, that Chriſt being accounted among the wicked, is appointed and offered as a pledge of the moſt noble and excellent, and bare the ſhame which thoſe that are in highest degree in the world had deſerued. But I leaue it to the iudgement of the readers to chuſe whether of both readings they like beſt. In the meane while I approve the common tranſlation; that hee alone hath borne the ſinne of many: in reſpect the condemnation of the whole world was laid vpon him. And the word *many*, is ſometimes taken for All: as it appears by many teſtimonies, eſpecially in Rom. 5. 19. For as by one mans diſobedience, many were made ſinners, &c.

And praied for the tranſgreſſors. Becauſe the purgation wherewith we are clenſed, that is, the death of Chriſt, was ratified and approved in regard of his *interceſſion* towards the Father, it was neceſſary this ſhould be added. For as in the old Teſtament, the high Prieſt, who neuer entred without blood, made prayers alſo forthwith for the people, Exod 30. 10. Heb. 5. 7. ſo that which was there prefigured, was accompliſhed in Chriſt. Firſt, he offered his body in ſacrifice, and ſhed his blood for the ranſome of our ſinnes: & then, that the purgation might be auailable, he performed the office of an *advocate* and *interceſſor* for all thoſe that embrace this his ſacrifice by faith: as it appears in that famous prayer which himſelfe hath left vpon record in Iohn 17. 20. *Fathers, I pray not onely for theſe, (that is, for my Diſciples) but alſo for all thoſe that ſhall beleeu in me through their word. If wee thea be of*

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Note.

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Chriſt conquered Satan, ſin, and death, not ſo much for himſelfe, as for vs.

The word Many ſometimes taken for All.

Chriſt ſuffered and prayed for tranſgreſſors.

that number, let vs know for certaine, that Christ hath suffered for vs, that now we might enjoy the fruit of his death, He makes expresse mention of the *trespassers*, to aduertise vs that it is our daries to runne with boldnesse to

the crosse of Christ, when the dread and horror of sinne affrights vs. For, for such is he an aduocate and intercessor: without which, our transgressions would hinder vs from approaching neere to the maiestie of God.

THE LIV: CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Reioice, O barren, that didst not beare: breake forth into ioy, and reioice thou that didst not trauel with child: for the * desolate hath no children then the married wife.*

*Or, widow.

From the doctrine of Christs passion & death, the Prophet turnes his speech to the Church, that she might teck the fruit and efficacy thereof.



Having handled the doctrine of Christs passion, hee now fitly turnes his speech to the Church; to the end we might seele in our selues the efficacy of his death. For we cannot perceiue it in Christ, if we consider him by himselfe: and therefore wee must come presently vnto his Church, which is his body, because hee suffered for it, not for himselfe. This order wee know is obserued in the articles of our Creed. For hauing confessed that *we beleeue in Iesus Christ, who suffered and was crucified for vs*, we adde, *I beleeue the Church*; which hath issued as it were out of his side: Gen. 2. 1, 22, 23. And therefore, after *Isaiah* hath deliuered the doctrine of Christs sufferings, of his resurrection, and triumph, he descends now in due season to mention the Church, which can neuer be separated from her head: to teach all the faithfull *from their owne experience*, that Christ hath not suffered in vaine. If he had omitted this doctrine, the faithfull could not so well haue confirmed their hearts in the hope of the restauration of the Church.

Now this exhortation to *reioicing*, plainly shewes, that after Christ by his death shall haue got the conquest ouer death, sinne, and hell, that hee shall not liue so much for himselfe, but that he therewithall will inspire life into the members of his body. He calles his Church *barren*, because shee seemed to haue none issue, whilst this wofull seruitude lasted. And indeed, if a man had onely looked vpon her outward estate, hee would surely haue iudged her neere to destruction. Moreover, besides the misery that appeared externally, there was nothing found within, all were corrupted and defiled with superstitions. They had also prophaned themselves with the idolatries of the heathen.

Neither contents hee himselfe to call her *barren*, but he also termes her a *widow*: although one of them had been sufficient enough to haue taken from her all hope of posteritie. But when both are ioined together, what was to be expected but an horrible desolation? Notwithstanding he exhorts the people to bee of good courage, in the

midst of so many miseries: for she that is *desolate*, shall haue more children then the *married wife*. This place may bee expounded two waies; either that the Church is compared to the *Gentiles*, which flourished like a woman that had an husband: or to the estate she was in before her captiuitie: both senses will agree well. But I had rather follow one kisse constrained: for I doe not thinke the Prophet makes a comparison heere betwene two estates. But it is rather a forme of speech vsall with him, to signifie the extraordinary fruitfulnessse of the Church, that so we should not iudge of her, according in the order of nature. Why so? Because God will worke in his behalfe wonderfully and miraculously. And yet I confesse that shee was then in widowhood; for long time before, God had put her away by his Prophets, and sued out a diuorce betwene him and his people, which was then effected; when he banished them out of their country. But the Prophet pronounceth that this iudgement shall bee temporarie, as wee shall more fully perceiue heere after.

Verf. 2. *Inlarge the place of thy tents, and let them spread out the curtains of thine inhabitation: spare not, stretch out thy cords, and make fast thy stakes.*

3. *For thou shalt increase on the right hand, and on the left: and thy seede shall possesse the Gentiles, and dwell in the desolate Cities.*

Hee prosecutes his argument vnder other figures, and promisseth that the Lord will not onely restore his Church, but will also dignifie her with a more excellent estate. Those who thinke that there is a comparison heere betwene the Church and the Synagogue, are deceiued, as I thinke. Neither doe they ought else heereby, then confirme the Iewes in their obstinacie, who perceiue well enough that violence is offered to the sense of this text, by such an exposition. For mine owne part, I doe indeede confesse that these things appertaine to the kingdome of Christ, and that they were then onely fulfilled, from the publishing of the Gospell. But it doth not therefore follow, that the Prophet should not also respect that time which went before Christs comming; for the accomplishment of this propheticie beganne vnder *Cyrus*, who gaue the Gospell leaue to returne: then it extended it selfe to the comming of Christ,

A prosecution of the former doctrine vnder other figures.

Barren.

A widow.

in whom it received the full accompliſhment. The Church then *conceiv'd*, when the people returned home: for at that time the body of the people was gathered, of whom Chriſt ſhould be borne; that ſo the pure worſhip of God, and his true religion might againe be planted amongſt them. I grant this *fruitfulneſſe* did not then appeare; for the conception was hid as it were within the mothers wombe, which outwardly could not be any whit diſcerned. But after the people multiplied; and after the birth, they were at the fiſt like a child: then they grew to mans eſtate, even till the publiſhing of the Goſpel. Which time indeed, was the true infancy of the Church. Afterwards, ſhe grew to womans eſtate, and ſhall ſo continue even till Chriſts laſt coming, when all things ſhall be ſet in their perfect eſtate. Wee muſt therefore comprehend all theſe things together, if we wil attaine to the true meaning of the Prophets words. And in this ſenſe it is that *Zachariſ*, *Malachi*, and *Haggai* doe encourage the people touching the hope of their eſtate to come, whileſt they thought they loſt ſo much time in reedifying the Temple: *Zach. 2. 5.* *Hag. 2. 7.* *Mal. 4. 2.* For they promuted that the glory of the ſecond Temple ſhould bee more glorious then the fiſt: but yet this was not perceiv'd. And therefore they extended theſe promiſes to Chriſt: for it was needfull they ſhould be ſuſtained with the expectation of him, and with the aſſurance of his coming, in the building of the Temple. This conſolation then was common both to the Jewes that lived vnder the Law, and to vs, who now ſee this reſtauration of the Church in Chriſt more evidently.

Of thy tents. This is a ſimilitude taken from Tabernacles which were commonly uſed in that country. The Church then is compared to *pavilions*, becauſe ſhe hath no ſetled habitation in this world: for ſhe ſeemes to be ſelecting, and a pilgrime, in regard ſhe is ſubiect to be often tranſported hether and thether, by reaſon of her diuers changes. And yet I doubt not but he aims at that fiſt delivrance, (according to the cuſtome of the Prophets) at which time, the Iſraelites dwelt vnder *tents* the ſpace of fortie yeeres: for which cauſe, they every yeere celebrated a ſolemne feaſt of Tabernacles by the commandement of God: *Leuit. 23.* from 33. verſe, to 43.

But ſome will object, that the building which the Miniſters of the word do reare vp, is ſo firme, that it ought not to be compared to tents. I anſwere, that this ſimilitude of Tabernacles is rather to be referred to the outward eſtate of the Church, then to her ſpiritual or inward eſtate: for the true building of the Church, is the very kingdome of God, which is not *vntable*, nor like vnto pavilions. And yet the Church ceaſeth not for all that, to be tranſported hether and thether, in regard ſhe can find no ſure reſting place in this world. But ſhe is more firme then a rocke touching her inward eſtate: for in reſpect ſhe is vpheld by the impregnable power & ſtrength of God, ſhee boldly contemnes as dangers. Shee reſembles *tents* alſo, becauſe ſhe is not built vpon riches nor earthly forces.

In the next place the Prophet addes the reaſon why he commands her to *reſt* and abroad *the cord*, to enlarge her pavilions; namely, becauſe a little place would not containe that great multitude of people which God would gather together in one, from all parts. Now in as much as Iudeah was waſted with ruines and deſolations which had befallen it: therefore hee ſaith, that the *deſolate Cities* ſhall be *inhabited*.

Verſ. 4. *Fear not, for thou ſhalt not be aſhamed; neither ſhalt thou be confounded: for thou ſhalt not be put to ſhame; yea, thou ſhalt forget the ſhame of thy youth, and ſhalt not remember the reproch of thy widowhood any more.*

HEE here confirms (as before) the hearts of the faithfull, and ſpeakes to the whole Church: for the calamitie was vniuerſall, and her eſtate was almoſt vterly ruinated. Now he bids her be of good cheere, and addes the reaſon; namely, that her delivrance ſhould be ſo famous, that ſhee ſhould not be *confounded*. As if hee ſhould haue ſaid; Though now for a while thy caſe be deſperate, yet thy matters ſhall ſucceed proſperouſly: for thoſe that truſt in the Lord, ſhall not be confounded: as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *Pſal. 25. 2.* Chap. 49. 23.

He repeats it twice, *be not aſhamed*: that is to ſay, Hope full, and truſt confidently. For ſuch *bluſh* for ſhame, who being fruſtrated of their hopes, are forced to *hang downe the head*. Then hee addes the like reaſon to the former, in the word *ſi*, for I rake it heere as before, for a particle rendering the cauſe: ſoas it is one and the ſame ſentence repeated in diuers wordes; vneſſe you will, that the fiſt member be referred to the inward affection, and the other to an outward cauſe. But the plaineſt ſenſe will be, that there is in both a promiſe touching an happy and ioyfull iſſue. As if hee ſhould ſay; Thy calamitie ſhall haue an end.

But thou ſhalt forget thy ſhame. This is a confirmation of the former member, by which he vnderſtands the calamities that ſhould befall the Church, when ſhe ſhould begin to grow: for the felicitie ſhee ſhould afterwards inioy, would vterly deſace the memory of them. Wee told you ere while, that ſhee is called a *Perſ. 1.* *widow*, in reſpect that at this time God had forſaken & put her away frō him: Chap. 50. 1.

Verſ. 5. *For hee that made thee is thine huſband (whoſe name is the Lord of hoſtes) and thy redeemer the holie one of Iſrael ſhall bee called the God of the world.*

*Or, all.

HEE here renders a reaſon why ſhee ſhall forget all the ſorrowes and afflictions which ſhe ſuſtained before; namely, becauſe God would accept her into his fauor againe: for the captiuitie was a kind of diuorce; as we haue ſhewed in Chap. 50. 1. Now he ſaith, hee that

Reasons by which he confirms the former conſolations.

I
2
The infancy of the Church.

The perfect eſtate of the Church.

Why the Church is compared to a tent.

Object.

Anſ.
The Church compared to a tent, rather in reſpect of her outward, then of her inward eſtate.

Creation
taken for
regeneratis.

that made thee, shall be thine husband: for so the words should be so construed. Hee calles himselfe the maker or creator of his Church, not onely because hee hath created her with the rest of the world, but in regard hee hath vouchsafed to adopt her for his spouse: which prerogative is as a new creation. Now albeit the Iewes were fallen from their excellencie, (in regard men are apt by and by to decline out of the right way, if they be not regenerated by the power of the holy Ghost) yet their spirituall creation was not wholly defaced, for the memorie of the covenant remained still, by meanes whereof, God also created them anew.

Where hee calles himselfe the Lord of hostes, it is to be referred to his power, in which we haue cause to reioice, if wee be his children: for the greater his power is, and the more renowned his name is, the greater is our glory, as long as hee accounts of vs as of his children; and that we boast not of such a title in vaine. Now the Prophet amplifies this benefit, when he shewes that God doth vs the fauour, to admit vs into the place of his wife; for so we may indeed lay claime to this his almightie power.

Thy redeemer.] He attributes this name to himselfe, that hee might the better confirme the people in good hope; and also to assure them, that notwithstanding the first deliuerance out of Egypt seemed to be abolished when they were now carried away captiue; yet they shall be so restored, that they shall well perceiue Gods grace shall not be fruitlesse. The verbe, *Shall be called*, may be either referred to the redeemer, or, to the *Holy one*; or to them both. For mine owne part, I willingly refer it to both; to wit, *The holy one of Israel shall be called thy redeemer, and the God of the whole earth.* Hee mentions all the earth, (that is to say, the whole world:) for before, the name of God was onely knowne in Iurie, P'sal. 76. 1. but after the publishing of the Gospel, the Gentiles were also called to one hope of saluation with them. God is now the God of the Gentiles, as well as of the Iewes: Rom. 3. 29. With whom he hath assembled vnder his dominion the Gentiles also, who before were farre off.

Verf. 6. *For the Lord hath called thee, being as a woman forsake n and afflicted in spirit, and as a young wife when thou wast refused, saith thy God.*

HE meetes with a doubt which might haue troubled the mindes of the faithfull, vnder this grieuous seruitude: as if they seemed to be so reiected of the Lord, as if they were to expect nothing but vtter ruine. The Prophet therefore admonisheth them betimes, not to quaille, though they were forsaken, because God accord^d ng to his wonted fauour, is inclined to be reconciled with them againe: yea, and to recouer them out of their graues.

Hee calles her a young married wife, or wife of youth; that by this similitude he might the

better confirme the peoples hope: for the new married couples are easilier reconciled, then those that haue dwelt long together. Young yeeres, and tender loue, allures young folkes to keepe amitie. And thus he shewes that God will be easilie pacified. As if he should say; I grant thou art now diuorced from me, but the diuorce shall not long hold, but the Lord will be at one with thee: yea, of his owne accord he will allure thee to be reconciled.

Simile.

Verf. 7. *For a little while haue I forsaken thee: but with great compassion will I gather thee.*

8. *For a moment in mine anger I hid my face from thee for a little season: but with euerlasting mercy haue I had compassion on thee, saith the Lord thy redeemer.*

THE Prophet now expounds the former sentence at large, and shewes the manner of this diuorce; to wit, that the Church shall be shortly restored to her first estate. Now he sets forth this mercy of God very excellently, and thereby allwageth the dolour which might pisse downe the hearts of the faithfull: for it was not enough to put them in hope of some kinde of restauration, vnlesse they were therewithall assured that God would also be quickly appeased. We are our of heart by and by, and quaille, if so be the Lord be not neer presently to reach forth his hand vnto vs. And therefore after *Isaiah* hath mentioned the Churches restauration, hee forthwith addes, that her reiectiō shall not long indure, but that God will haue compassion on her with euerlasting mercy.

An expō-
tion of the
preuention.

When he saith, he forsakes his people: it is as much as if he had confessed it to bee so: for God hath in such wife adopted vs, that mens disloialtie cannot frustrate the same. Why so? Because he is faithfull, and will neuer therefore finally reiect or forsake his elect. This reiectiō then, must be referred to our apprehension, and to our seeming in outward appearance: for wee thinke God hath cast vs off, when we neither feele his presence, nor protestiō. And yet it is necessary we should taste the bitteresse of Gods wrath, (as the wife whom her husband hath put away, laments her estate) that we may know he hath iust cause to deale so seuerely with vs. But on the other side, it is as needfull that we forthwith should drinke a deepe draught of his mercy, which being infinite and euerlasting, will make all our afflictions seeme light; yea, and of short continuance, in respect of that. As often then as calamities doe presse vs downe, let vs haue our recourse to this consolation.

God neuer
forsakes his
people: See
1. S. Jm. 1. 2. 22.
Lam. 3. 34. 32.

We may also note that this was said, and that truly, of the whole body of this people, who had made this diuorce by their iniquities: Chap. 30. 1. And howsoeuer God did not indifferently receiue them all to grace, but that remnant which he had chosen; yet there is no absurditie nor inconuenience at all in it, that he directs his speech vnto all. Hee re-
peates

A preuention
of obiection.

peates the same thing againe in the next verse, that it might take the deeper impression in the hearts of the faithfull: as also, that no aduersitie might too much dismay them. And had he iust cause to doe so? Yea doubtlesse: for in this horrible darknesse, the poore captiues could not easilie behold the louing countenance of the Lord. And howsoeuer that which is heere said, for a moment in mine indignation, is properly to be vnderstood, that God in fit season brought his banished home againe into Iudeah: yet thence wee may gather a generall doctrine, namely, that the afflictions of the Church are but for a short space, when we lift vp the eyes of our mindes to the eternall & blessed life. For we must remember the admonition of *Saint Paul*, to wit, that all the afflictions of the faithfull, are light to beare, and ought to be esteemed very short, if we looke to that eternall waight of glory which is laid vp for vs in heauen: 2. Cor. 4. 17. Rom. 8. 18. And if this comparison come not betwene; daies will seeme vnto vs as long as yeeres. Neither were there any reason to compare seuentie yeeres captiuitie to a moment, if the continuall progresse of Gods fauour were not opposed vnto it.

Verf. 9. For this is vnto mee as the waters of *Noah*: for as I haue sworn that the waters of *Noah* should no more goe ouer the earth, so haue I sworne that I will not bee angry with thee, nor reburke thee.

This may bee read two waies: first as wee haue translated, *This is to me as the daies of Noah*: but the matter is not great. The principall therefore is to haue an eye to the Prophets meaning: for the expositors haue but roured a farr off at it, as I thinke. They expound in generall termes; that the Lord by Gods promised *Noah*, there should neuer be any deluge againe, and that this oath should remaine for euer: for without this, the good man might haue trembled and feared death at the next shower of raine that had fallen, but that the Lord had sworne to him it should neuer come so passe. And thus, when afflictions are at hand, wee may iustly feare to be ouerwhelmed by them, vlesse the Lord had promised that his Church should bee preferred in safetie. But as I thinke, this should be restrained to the captiuitie of *Babylon*: for hee compares this captiuitie to the deluge, which then deformed the face of the whole earth; so as the Church seemed to be vterly wasted, the people were all in a manner carried away, and transformed into a strange nation, the kingdome and government were ouerthrowne, their bondage was extreame, and no man would haue imagined but that their memorie and name had been wholly blotted out. And questionlesse that which our Prophet said in the first Chapter, came to passe, namely, that if the Lord had not left a small remnant, they should haue been like to *Sodom* and *Gomorah*.

It is not without cause then, that he compares this captiuitie to the waters of *Noah*: that is to say, to the deluge. For which cause, I am of their opinion who read; For this is to me as the waters; because this reading seemes more solid, as I thinke: and all the Rabbines haue followed it. These words, *This shall be to me*, ought to be well weighed also, as I take it; which the expositors notwithstanding haue lightly passed ouer. For his meaning is, that this calamitie shall be vnto him as the deluge: that is, as he contented himselfe with one deluge, so as he will neuer send a seconde: so will he also satisfie himselfe with this onely waste of the Church, and he will neuer suffer it to be any more thus ruinated againe. Thus then I suppose this text ought to bee expounded and applied to the similitude, namely, that the ouerthrow of the Church shall bee the same now vnto God, as the deluge was, which happened in the daies of *Noah*: for euen as hee then swore, neuer to punish the finnes of men more with this so beaue a chastisement, so will he neuer consume the Church any more, as he hath done vnder the captiuitie of *Babylon*. And truly whatsoever waste there happened aiter, yet the Church alwaies stood, and continued in some forme, till Christ his appearing: for then the seed of the Gospell was sowne abroad euery where, that it might bring forth children to the Lord, out of all the nations vnder heauen. To conclude, the Lord promisseth heere after to mitigate his wrath, and neuer to punish his people so seuerely againe.

But some will obiekt, that since that time the Church hath indured wonderfull straits, so farr forth as in mans iudgement shee was welnie brought to nought: which being so, then haue not I giuen a right exposition of the Prophets words? I answer, God neuer afterwarde so afflicted his Church, that the whole face thereof was abolished, as it fell out when the people were caried away captiue into *Babylon*. For albeit *Antiochus* and others made terrible wastes, after which followed those reuolts which *Saint Paul* foretold, 2. Thes. 2. 3. 1. Tim. 4. 1. And that all the world in a manner was defiled with infinite persecutions, so as Christianitie was almost rased out: yet there euetmore remained some forme of a Church, though much disfigured. Neither was the building so defaced, but some relikes thereof remained vnwasted aboue the deluges, that so this oath of God might stand fast.

So haue I sworne.] This must not be barely vnderstood as it is in it selfe, but by way of comparison, for he opposeth this member to the former, promising neuer to correct his people so seuerely againe, but that hee will both mitigate and moderate his stripes. Although tyrants then play the wilde beafts in running vpon vs with a desperate furie; and that Satan on the other side leaues no plot vnattempted to bring the Church to destruction; and that God for our vnthankfulnes lets loose the raines vnto them, yet will he neuer suffer it to be vterly swallowed vp of ths.

Verf. 10. For the mountains shall remore,

If we set not the eternall weight of glory against our momentary afflictions, daies will seeme to vs as long as yeeres.

As God satisfied himself with one deluge, so hee will satisfie himselfe with this last waste of hee Church.

Obiect.

Ans.

Antiochus.

roue, and the hills shall fall downe: but my mercie shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace fall away, saith the Lord, that hath compassion on thee.

A confirmation of the former sentence.

HE confirms the former sentence, and shewes, that heauen and earth shall passe and come to nought, before his mercie shall faile. Some are so fond to demand here how mountaines can remoue, or, how hills shall fall downe? But they deserue none answer, for it is a comparison taken from things that seeme to be fast and firmly rooted, thereby signifying, that the Church is much more stable and vnuoueable. The mountaines are very firme and strong; neither doe earthquakes happen so often there as in plain and champion countries. The Lord then pronounceth, that though these great and huge mountaines should remoue, or that heauen and earth should meet, Psal. 46. 2. yet his covenant shall stand inuoueable, and his mercie shall be perpetuall towards his Church.

And to this purpose it is said in Psalm. 93. 1. That the Lord shall reigne, and that the world shall be stablished that it can not be moued. And in Psal. 102. 26. 28. The heauens shall perish, but the Church of God shall remaine for euer. In the word *mercie* we are to note what the foundation of this covenant is: for we can haue no acquaintance with God, vnlesse he freely receiue vs by pardoning our sinnes.

Peace, taken for all prosperitie.

The covenant, is by him called the covenant of peace, because the Lord therein offers vs all that which belongs to our chiefe good: for vnder this word *peace*, the Hebrews vnderstand all happines and prosperitie. Seeing this covenant then conteines a firme and stable blessednes, it must needs follow that all those are miserable which are excluded out of it. In that he saith, it is he who hath compassion, he againe confirms that which we haue said, namely, that he hath no other reason to shew mercie, but because he is pitifull, and readie to forgieue, Chap 55. 7.

Verf. 11. *O thou afflicted and tossed with tempest, that hast no comfort: behold, I will lay thy stones with the Carbuncles, and lay thy foundation with Saphires.*

The glorie of the second Temple greater then the first, in this and the next verse.

HE prosecutes the same argument, and promiseth, that the Lord will put the Church into her first glorie; yea, that he will cause her to shine exceeding clearly, in that she shall be more gloriouslie beautified then before, euen as if she were whollie built with pretious stones. *Haggai* in Chap. 2. 10. shewes the same in a word, when he said *that the glorie of the second temple should exceed the first.*

Wee neede not stand to decipher out the qualities of these pretious stones, which *Isaiah* here mentions, seeing the Hebrew expofitors themselues agree not together in this behalfe. It is enough that wee haue the sense of the place. Now this maner of speech

hath great weight in it to asswage the sorowes of the faithfull: for it is as much in effect, as if he had set the little barke of the Church cleare off the sands, when it was now in danger of drowning. As oft therefore as we see her ride in boisterous waues, and pressed with infinite calamities, yea, and deprived of all consolation, let vs remember that these miseries are meanes to prouoke God to giue her succor.

Verf. 12. *And I will make thy windows of Emeraudes, and thy gates shining brasse, and all thy borders of pleasant stones.*

BY these similitudes he shewes, that the estate of the Church shall be more excellent then it was wont to be, as we haue noted before. The Church is here compared to a building, a similitude which we often meet withall in the holy scriptures, and therefore the Prophet layes downe a platforme of a stately and sumptuous building. But wee are to note, that God is here made the master workeman of this building, for the whole worke must be attributed vnto him.

Some may aske what the Prophet meanes by Carbuncles, Saphires, verf. 11. Pearles, and other pretious stones: for *S. Paul* hath noted out the doctrine of the Gospell by a like similitude: *I haue laid* (saith he) *the foundation* as an expert master-builder: and if any build vpon this foundation, gold, silver, pretious stones, wood, hay, or stubble, euery mans worke shall be made manifest, 1. Cor. 3. 10. 12. 13. I answer, the verse following will shew whether the Prophet meant the same thing here or no.

Verf. 13. *And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and much peace shall be to thy children.*

Hence wee may easily collect, that *Isaiah* spake not in the former verses of doctrine but of men, whereof the spirituall building of the Church is compact. I grant, the Church is builded by doctrine, but that is done in gathering men in, and by fitting them to be liuely stones in this building, 1. Pet. 2. 5. See the difference now betweene *Paul* and *Isaiah*. *Paul* referres pretious stones to doctrine, and *Isaiah* to the gifts of the holy Ghost, where-with men are enriched and endued, that of them a Church may be reared vp. But the diuersitie of gifts wherewith the Lord adorne his seruants are to be obserued. For all are not Saphires or Carbuncles: the Lord distributeth to euery one his measure according to his own wil, 1. Cor. 12. 11. Eph. 4. 7. 11. Whence wee also are to remember, that whatsoever serues for the adorning of the Church, proceeds only from the meere grace of God. For if wee be Carbuncles and Saphires because wee are taught of God, then it follows that wee get not this honor by nature.

Now the Lord teacheth vs two waies, namely, by the externall ministrie of man, and by the secreet reuelation of the holy Ghost. Iesus

Christ

Chriſt ſhewes in Ioh. 6. 45. which of theſe teachings the Prophet heere ſpeakes of: for he alledgeth this text, and therefore we neede not ſecke for a better expoſitor. It is written in the Prophets (ſaith he) *And they ſhall be all taught of God.* Whoſoever then hath heard and learned of the Father, commeth vnto me. If this place then ſhould be vnderſtood of the *externall preaching*, that which Ieſus Chriſt concludes hence would not be firme enough. For this is no good conſequence, The Goſpell is preached, therefore all beleene: for many reſiſt it, others openly ſcorne it, and ſome are hypocrites. The elect only who are choſen to eternall life become teachable, to whom properly it belongs to be accounted in the number of Chriſt his true diſciples. The Goſpell I grant is preached indifferently both to the elect & caſtaways, but the elect only come to Chriſt, becauſe they are *taught of God*. Hence let vs conclude then, that the Prophet ſpeakes in this place of them, and of none other.

By this we may ſee, how and by what meanes we are made liuing and precious ſtones to ſerue in the building of the Lords ſpiritual temple, to wit, *when the Lord hath ſquared and poliſhed vs by his holy ſpirit: and to the outward preaching of his word, iouines the inward power and efficacy of the ſame ſpirit.* And thus we are alſo taught how great the peruerſitie of mans vnderſtanding is, in that it can not be bowed nor reformed, vnleſſe the Lord worke vpon the ſame mightily by the powerful operation of his bleſſed ſpirit.

Our Prophet hath conioined theſe two maners of teaching together, to wit, both the inward, and the outward. For he calles thoſe the *children of the Church*, who are taught of the Lord: if they be *children*, then haue they bin conceiued in her womb, and nureed vp in her lap, firſt with milke, afterward with ſtrong meate, 1. Cor. 3. 2. Hebr. 5. 12. 13. 14. vntill they grow vp, and become perfect men in Chriſt Ieſus, as Paul ſpeakes Ephes. 4. 13. The outward miniſtrie of the word then is required if we will be his diſciples.

Whence it appeares, how abſurd and blockiſh the raising of thoſe fantaſticall ſpirits is, who peruert this teſtimonie, to ouerthrow the preaching of the word, and the miniſtrie of the Church. For children of the Church can they not be, vnleſſe they will be nourished vp in her lap. Let them goe then with their ſecret revelations; for the holy Ghoſt teacheth none but ſuch as ſubmit themſelues vnder the Churches miniſtrie. Well may ſuch be the diſciples and children of Satan, but not of God, ſeeing they contemne the order which hee hath eſtabliſhed. For theſe two points, to wit, *the children of the Church, and the ſchollers of God*, are ſo lincked together, that thoſe who reſuſe to be taught of the Church ſhall neuer be Gods diſciples. I grant they muſt be aply diſtinguiſhed, euen as Iſaiah alſo doth, leſt that be attributed to men which only belongs to the power of the holy Ghoſt. And yet they muſt be ſo lincked one to the other, that we muſt know that in this worke God will ſerue his turne by man.

Moreover by this verſe we are taught, that Gods calling works with efficacy in his elect. *S. Auguſtine* hath prudently pondered this place, and very ſlicie applies it againſt the Pelagians, who extolled mans free will againſt the free grace of God. Theſe Heretiks I grant ſeemed to attribute ſomewhat vnto Gods grace, but in ſuch fort, that they left it to the free will of man either to chuſe or reſuſe: which our Papiſts do at this day, who affirme that euery one may reieſt or receiue this grace. But *all*, ſaith *S. Auguſtine*, ſhall be *taught of God*. His diſciples therefore are taught with efficacy, and follow his calling, Ioh. 10. 27. He alſo alledgeth that ſixth of Iohn by vs cited before, whence it manifeſtly appeares that it proceeds not from any free election that man hath in himſelfe, to be able to bow his will which way him liſteth.

We are alſo to note hence what account the Lord makes of his doctrine, whereby he fits vs for this building, to the end we may be Pearles, Saphires, and Carbuncles. For thoſe that goe about to erect a Church without the preaching of the word, ſhall rather build a Stie for Hogs, then a Church for God. By this alſo we may learne what to iudge of that inſolded faith wherof y Papiſts tattle ſo much: for thus they would make men to differ in nothing from brute beaſts, that ſo they might play the Merchants with them openly, without controule. But I trow, if we be *taught of God*, it is no reaſon we ſhould reſemble vnreaſonable beaſts.

It may be demanded, whether the Patriarks, Prophets, and other of the faithfull were *taught of God vnder the law* or no? Certainly they were. But our Prophet ſpeakes heere by way of compariſon. For vnder Chriſt the Lord ſpake *ſo euidentlie*, that he openly manifeſted himſelfe to be the *teacher* of his Church, and after he gathered to himſelfe a great number of diſciples. Moreover, this place accords with that of Ieremiah, Chap. 31. 34. And they ſhall teach no more euery one his neighbour, nor euery man his brother, ſaying, Know the Lord, for *all ſhall know me from the leaſt of them to the greateſt*, ſaith the Lord. Wherefore if it were of neceſſitie that all the children of God in old time were the diſciples of y holy Ghoſt, much more ought we to be ſo in theſe times, ſeeing this prophetic properly belongs to the kingdome of Chriſt.

And there ſhall be abundance of peace. By the word *peace*, he meanes felicitie, that is, all good things. Hence we are to gather wherein mans chiefe happines conſiſts, namely, in hauing our minds illuminated of God, to comprehend that ſaluation which is manifeſted to vs in Chriſt. For as long as wee be ſtrangers to this knowledge wee are the vn-happieſt people vnder heauen; for ſo the very bleſſings of God are turned into curſings, Mala. 2. 2. till they be ſanctified vnto vs by faith.

Verſ. 14. *In righteousnes ſhalt thou be eſtabliſhed, and be farre from oppreſſion,*
Ccc for

S. Auguſtine.

Pelagians, Heretiques.

The Papiſts become Pelagians.

Thoſe that will build a Church without the preaching of the word, ſhall rather build a Stie for Hogs, then a Church for God.

Queſt.

Ans.

Peace, taken for felicitie.

Mans chiefe felicitie.

Chriſt the beſt expoſitor of this place.

I
2
3

The maner how we become precious ſtones, fit to ſerue Gods ſpiritual building.

Anabaptiſts call reuelations taxed.

Whoſoever reſuſeth to be taught of the Church, ſhall neuer be Gods diſciple.

for thou shalt not feare it: and from feare,
for it shall not come neere thee.

As God is
the teacher of
his Church,
so will he be
her prote-
ctor.

His meaning is, that God shall bee the workeman and Master builder of his Church. I am not ignorant that others expound it otherwise and take *righteousnesse* for good workes: which exposition hath some shew of reason in it, because the Prophet hath before spoken of the doctrine of faith: and wee are taught, to the end we should liue holily and righteously. But the Prophet hath another scope, namely, that the Church shall bee restored vnder the conduct of God, who would bee her protector and defender. For heere hee opposeth *righteousnesse* to that violence and oppression, whereby the Church was ruined: or rather, by this word he notes out the firmnes and stabilitie of it. As if hee should say; This shall be no building of stones nor timber, which may haue some faire glosse set vpon it for a time, because God will faithfully maintaine the worke of his owne hands: and in regard heis *in*, he will cause her, being restored to her perfect estate, to stand for euer. Let men conspire what they will then to worke the ruin of the Church, their practises shall all come to nought; because God will preterue her by his *righteousnesse*. Wee haue seene the like speech heereofore. This plaine interpretation therefore contents me, though the other may seeme more plausible to many.

Reade the
exposition of
the verse fol-
lowing, for
the better
vnderstanding
of this.

Verf. 15. *Behold, the enemy shall gather himselfe, but without me: whosoever shall gather himselfe in thee, against thee, shall fall.*

The Church
must not
promise to
her selfe any
secure re-
fuge place in
this world.

The summe is, that albeit many rise vp to ouerthrow the Church, yet shall all their plots and assaults be defeated, and vanish into smoke. Yea, it seemes that God not onely promiseth helpe against the open enemies, but also against them *vnto him*: for many creepe into the bowome of the Church, as if they meant to be her children: but afterward, they fall like vipers to eate out the bellie of their mother. Some translate; In assembling, he shall assemble against thee: vnderstanding this of all the enemies of the Church in generall. This is the most receiued interpretation: neither doe I reiect it, provided that wee therewithall comprehend the wiles, ambushes, and treasons wherewith the Church is assailed. And no doubt but that is heere expressed, which is contained in the second Psalm; to wit, the tumults and conspiracies against Christ and his Church: for not one, but many nations rise vp against her, and yet it is very likely that the Prophet heere expressly ioines the domestike enemies, and those from without, who creepe in to assaile her in her owne bowome as it were. For it is said, *in thee, against thee*: that is to say, they shall set vpon thee from within, yea euen in the midst of thee.

To bee short, his meaning is, that the Church shall neuer inioy such *abundantie of peace*, but she must looke for many *aduersaries* that will assaile her. But how agrees these

Oblect.

things together, may some say? for in the former verſe he ſaid thee ſhould be ſarre from oppreſſion, and from feare, for it ſhould not come nigh her: And now he ſhewes ſhe ſhall haue *intertine* conſpiracies. But the Prophet hath added this in very fit ſeaſon, leſt the faithfull ſhould promiſe vnto themſelues a ſecure reſting place in this world, as if the wicked and hypocrites ſhould no way moleſt her. The Church then you ſee, is ſo deliuered from reproches and oppreſſion, that ſhe is perpetually to incounter with open and ſecret enemies: for Satan wil euey day be raiſing vp of new alarmes againſt her, ſo as by his good will, ſhe ſhall not haue a minute of reſt. This therefore is a correccion as it were of the former ſentence, teaching the faithfull to be alwaies vpon their watch, and neuer to promiſe themſelues any truce. But for our comfort, the Prophet addes a promiſe; namely, that *the Lord will protect her in the miſt of all dangers.*

Anſ:

Without God, ſignifies as much, as in vaine, or without any good ſucceſſe. For his meaning is, that the plottings of the wicked ſhall come to nought, though they buſie all their wits, and doe the worſt they can. They ſhall caſt themſeltes headlong into an headleſſe rage, but the *only hand* of the Lord ſhall giue his people an happy euafion and iſſue. Now hee alludes to that which was ſaid before, namely, that the Chaldeans ſhould come vnder the conduct of God, to deſtroy the land of Iudeah. The people were then deſtroyed becauſe God was their enemy: but now the enemies coming to aſſaile the Church *without God*, that is to ſay, without his fauour, they ſhall ſce and be confounded.

The plots of
the wicked
ſhall be all
brought to
nought: and
why?

Which hee better expreſſeth by and by after, ſaying; *Hee that ſhall gather himſelfe in thee, againſt thee, ſhall fall.* That is, whatſoeuer hee hath imagined againſt thee, ſhall fall vpon his owne head: yea, though the whole world ſhould riſe vp againſt thee, yet ſhould it cruſh and ouerwhelme it ſelfe by the owne burthen.

The particule *in thee*, is to bee noted: for when the Lord driues our enemies farre off from vs, then we grow confident: but if they approach and draw neere, then wee are out of heart. Therefore he ſaith, though they pierce euen to thine *inward parts*, yet will the Lord deſtroy them, and deliue thee.

Verf. 16. *Behold, I haue created the ſmith that bloweth the coales in the fire, and him that bringeth forth an inſtrument for his worke, and haue created the deſtroier to deſtroy.*

The Lord ſheweth how eaſie it is for him to deliue his Church from the wicked enterpriſes of his enemies: for they can accompliſh no more then that which hee permits them to doe; yea he vſeth them as his inſtruments to chaſtiſe his children withall. Now this may as ſuly, bee referred to the Chaldeans, as to the reſt of their enemies, which afterward moleſted the choſen people of God: If wee receiue the firſt ſenſe, God plainly

God knowes
how to worke
well by euill
inſtruments.

plainly ſhewes, that in a moment hee can chaſe them away, whom he hath brought together; and bring them downe, whom hee hath exalted. And if we referre it to *Anſuchus*, and his like, the ſenſe will not be much different; to wit, that euen thoſe ſhall not hurt as they would; for they ſhall not ſo much as remoue their leaſt finger without Gods leaue.

But doth not the Prophet ſeeme to contradict himſelfe? For in the former verſe hee ſaid, that the wicked ſhould aſſaile the Church *without the Lord*: and here hee ſhewes that they fight as it were vnder his colours, and that vnder his conduct and authoritie, they waſte and deſtroy the Church? I anſwere, we muſt conſider the oppoſition; namely, that the Lord had raiſed vp the Babylonians to ſcatter the Church: for wee are to note the ſimilitude of the deluge, mentioned in the ninth verſe, whereby he ſignified an vtter deſtruction: ſo as the Church was then in a manner cleane waſted by the Babylonians, whom he vſed for that ſeruice. But he there proteſts to moderate his indignation: ſo as he will neuer ſuffer the enemy to abolith his Church againe, though for a time he giue the ſame ouer to be chaſtiſed by their hand. Indeed that is the enemies drift; for they employ the vtmoſt of their power and force, to bring the Church to confuſion and vtter ruine, but the Lord repreſteth their rage, in regard they doe it without him, verſa 5. that is to ſay, *without his commandement*.

Some expound, that the *Smith* is created for his worke: that is to ſay, to praſtife his owne death: and the *deſtroier* to deſtroy himſelfe. But I thinke the firſt ſenſe is more ſimple, where the Lord ſaith, that hee createth the *deſtroier*; it is not onely referred to their nature, as they are borne men, but to the act of deſtroying: and yet wee muſt not lay the blame vpon God, as if he were the author of the vniuſt crueltie which remains in men: for God conſents not with their wicked will, but diſpoſeth of their indeuors by his ſecret prouidence, and vſeth them as the instruments of his wrath. But we haue handled this matter in another place.

Verſ. 17. *But all the Weapons that are made againſt thee ſhall not proſper: and every ſongue that ſhall riſe againſt thee in iudgement, thou ſhalt condemne. This is the heritage of the Lords ſeruants, and their righteouſneſſe is of mee, ſaith the Lord.*

HE againe repeates that which was noted before; namely, that the wicked ſhall loſe their labours, let them plot as much as they will: for their violent determinations are conducted and held ſhort by the ſecret counſell of God. Now he vſeth the particl *All*, ſignifying that the wicked ſhould haue meanes of all ſorts, and in great number, to worke the Churches ouerthrow: but *all* ſhould vaniſh like ſmoke, becauſe the Lord would repreſſe

them, God indeede permits them to worke their wils for the triall of the faithfull: but after patience hath had her perfect worke in them, he ſtrippeh the wicked of all the force and power in which they truſted. Now hauing ſpoken in generall of the *weapons* and instruments of warre, wherewith the vngodly inuade the Church; hee names the *ſongue* expreſly, which is the moſt peſtilent and deadly weapon of all: Iames 3.8. For the wicked content not themſelues to rent and teare the ſeruants of God by outrages and ſlanders, but they alſo labour as much as in them is, to extinguish the truth of God, and to alienate mens mindes from the loue of it: and this ought more to pierce and wound our hearts, then if we were to loſe our liues an hundred times. Adde alſo that good men are more deeply wounded with falſe imputations, then with the deepeſt gath that can be giuen them with a ſharpe ſword: and therefore we muſt not ouerpaſſe this mortall and deadly *weapon of the ſongue*.

^{the ſongue}
a peſtilent
enemie.

Afterwards when hee addes, that theſe *ſongues* riſe vp in iudgement: it is to ſhew that the wicked ſhall be ſo bold and inſolent, that they ſhall maliciously prouoke and moleſt the children of God; yea they ſhall doe it *in iudgement*: for they couer themſelues vnder goodly pretences, that they may make the world beleaue their cauſe is exceeding good. As when the Papiſts call vs dogs, heretikes, and ſchiſmatickes; they plead againſt vs in iudgement (as you would ſay) and will be eſteemed the defenders of the Catholike faith, though they onely be the vpholders of idolatry and lies. And yet their accuſations are painted ouer with ſuch colours, that ſo they may make vs the more odious among them, who are ignorant of our iuſt cauſe: But admire they aſſaile vs with open violence by the *ſmitings of the ſongue*, Ier. 18. 18. or with any other weapon, yet let vs not doubt but we ſhall be more then conquerours, as this prophecie witneſſeth: for the victorie is heere promiſed vs. Seeing therefore we may be bold to relye vpon the truth of it, let vs buckle our ſelues to the combat, with a ſtout and inuincible courage.

This is the heritage.] Hee ſhewes that the Lord hath giuen this to his ſeruants as it were by the right of their inheritance, wherof they ſhall not be defrauded: for as there is no title ſo ſure as that of an inheritance, ſo he alſo ſhewes, that the *ſeruants of the Lord* ought to aſſure themſelues of this priuiledge aboue any thing in the world beſides, namely, of his protection and perpetuall ſafeguard, by which he defends and keepes all his, from all dangers whatſoouer.

Righteouſneſſe is heere taken for that which we commonly call, Their right. To conlude, his meaning is, that the Lord will themſelfe the protector of his Church, that he may maintaine their innocencie. As oft then as men offer vs any violence, let vs learne to run ſtraightway to God: for in regard we ſeeke to other helpes, it comes to paſſe that wee are deſtituted of his defence and protection.

Leur droit.

THE LV. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and ye that have no siluer, come, buy, and eate: come I say, buy wine and milke without siluer, and without money.*

A generall
summons.



THE Prophet here greatly magnifies and extols Gods goodnes, which should be spread abroad largely, and in greater abundance then was wont vpon the Church, vnder the kingdome of Christ, vnto whose custodie all the treasures of Gods graces are committed, for in him God giues himselfe wholly vnto vs. So as the saying of *S. Iohn* is truly accomplished, namely, that of his fulnes we all haue receiued grace for grace, *Ioh. 1. 16.* I grant the fathers vnder the law felt this goodnes and spirituall liberallitie of God, which is here mentioned: Oh how great saith *Dauid* is the goodnes which thou hast laid vp for them that feare thee! *Psal. 37. 19.* notwithstanding this goodnes was much more fullie and liberallie shed abroad vnder Christ. Behold heere then a singular commendation of Gods grace, which is set before vs in Christes kingdome. The Prophet then not only teacheth that which should be once done, but that also which is dayly effected when the Lord summons vs by his doctrine to the inioying of all these benefites.

Some referre the word *waters* to the doctrine of y^e Gospell, others to the holy Ghost: but both (as I thinke) are deceived. For those that vnderstand it of the doctrine of the Gospell which they oppose to the Law (whereof the Iewes suppose the Prophet speaks in this place) do only comprehend one part of that which *Isaiah* meant to say. For the others, who referre it to the holy Ghost, they haue a little more colour, and they alleage that place of *S. Iohn*: If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it were that saith vnto thee, Giue me drinke, thou wouldst haue asked of him, and hee would haue giuen thee *waters* of life; *Iohn 4. 10.* And a little after, it seemes that Christ expounds this text of the Prophet, when he saith, *Whosoever shall drinke of this water shall thirst againe; but, he that drinks of the water that I shall giue him shall neuer be more athirst; but the water that I shall giue him, shall be in him a well of water springing vp into everlasting life, verf. 13. 14.* Yet I doubt not but *Isaiah* vnder these words *waters, milke, wine, and bread*, heere comprehends whatsoever is necessarie to the spirituall life: for they are similitudes taken from that ordinarie foode wherewith we are dayly sustained. Looke then how we are nourished with bread, wine, milke, and water, so also let vs know that our soules are fed and sustained with the doctrine

of the Gospell, with the holy Ghost, and with the other gifts of Christ.

Now the Prophet makes a loude exclamation, and cries *Ho*, for men are rocked so fast asleepe, that they can hardly be wakened: they feele not their pouertie though they be affamished, neither do they desire that meate whereof they haue great neede. This drouzines of men therefore ought to be rouzed with great and continuall cries. The carelesnes then of such as are deafe at this exhortation, is so much the more hatefull and detestable, and the slothfulnes of such as flatter themselues in their sloth, albeit they haue bin spurred to the quick.

Moreouer this is a generall summons. For who is he that stands not in neede of these *waters*, or, to whom Christ can not bring much profit? for this cause he calles *every one*, without exception of persons. But men are so wretched, that notwithstanding they feele well enough what neede they haue of Christ, yet they seeke out meanes which way to deprive themselues of such a benefit: and doe rather giue credit to Satan, who furnisheth them with sundrie impediments, then to giue eate to this so gracious and gentle *call*.

We are to know then wherein the true preparation consists to receiue this grace, which he exprelleth in saying, *he has thirsteth*: for such as are swollen vp with a vaine confidence, and are full gorged; or, who being bewitched with earthly delights, feele not the pouertie of their soules; neither will they giue place vnto Christ. Why so? Because they feele no relish in the sweetnes of this spirituall grace: They may well be compared to sick folks that haue neede of good nourishment; but because they are filled with winde, with disdain they reiect their meate; or, being catted with some fond imagination, they feede vpon their owne dreames, as though they stood in neede of nothing at all. And in this sort, such as are swollen with pride, or with a false persuasion of their owne righteousness; or, possessed with the allurements of the flesh, do either despise, or reiect this grace of God. It is then required that we be *athirst*, that is to say, to haue an ardent desire; that we may be fitted to be partakers of so great benefites.

Buy, without siluer.] The Prophet meanes not that there are any which haue *siluer* in abundance: but it must be thus resolved; Notwithstanding you be extremely poore and needie, yet the way is open for you to come vnto Christ, through whom these gifts are freely guen. But will some say, How can a man be said to buy, *without paying ought*? I answer, That the meanes whereby we obtaine any thing, is heere improperly called *buying*. The verb *to buy* heere then, is taken for to get, or obtaine. And the *price*, for the labor or industrie; or, any other way where-

Why the
Prophet is
saine to
make this
exclamation.

Obiect.
Ans.

by

by men obtaine any thing. He ſhewes then that we are vtterly poore and beggerly, hauing nothing in the world to get this grace of God, but are heere gently allured to receiue all things of his hand freely, without any reconpence on our part.

Verſ. 2. Wherefore doe yee lay out ſiluer, and not for bread? And your labour without being ſatisfied? Hearken diligentlie vnto mee, and eate that which is good: and let your ſoule delight in fatneſſe.

HEe complaines of mens folly and ingratitude, who either reiect or diſdaine Gods bountie, in offering them all things liberally: and yet in the meane while, wearie themſelues much in following after ſundry toles, which can bring them no profit at all. For the diuell hath ſo bewitched them, that they had rather erre in their forlorne by-paths, yea and to kill themſelues for nothing, then to reſt vpon that grace which God preſents before them. The experience of the time in which we liue ſhewes ſufficiently, that the Prophet tooke not vp this complaint onely againſt them of his owne nation, but againſt all men, of what time or age ſouer. For all the ſucceſſors of *Adam* are caried away with this rage, namely, that whileſt they pretend to ſecke the way to eternall life, they whollie erre and goe aſtray, and rather follow their vaine opinions then the voice of God. The Prophet then complaines not onely of their ſlothfulneſſe, who hauing vtterly forgotten both God and themſelues, haue no care at all of the ſpiritual life of their ſoule, (the numbers of which kind of perſons are very many) but of thoſe who ſeeme to deſire life, and yet neither keepe nor obſerue the way or means to attaine vnto it, but wander in their owne crooked paths.

Heere then are condemned all ſuch means to obtaine ſaluation by, as men haue forged vnto themſelues, without Gods word; and are therefore called *unprofitable coſts*. For by *ſiluer*, he vnderſtands all induſtrie, ſtudie, and paines of men: not that God eſteemes a ruſh of all that which wee offer him in vaine to ſerue him; but in regard the ſenſe of the fleſh eſteemes thoſe labours very precious, which we haue fooliſhly taken vp.

By the word *bread*, hee vnderſtands that which he ſaid before touching *vvaſters*: and by *labour*, that which he called *ſiluer*. As if he ſhould ſay; Men wearie themſelues much for nothing. For when they follow their inuencions, they muſt looke for no reward, though they vex and martyr themſelues neuer ſo much. Therefore the Prophet ſaith, that thoſe who labour *inconfiderately*, ſhall *neuer be ſatisfied*. For if they forſake God, to ſecke out new meanes of ſaluation, they ſhall neuer be filled; becauſe, as *Hoſea* ſaith, they are fed with wind: Chap. 12. 1. They may well ſeeme to be full, whileſt a vaine conceit blindfolds them; but they ſhall be like thoſe, who being

ſwollen with wind, ſeile not their hunger. And yet it were much better for them to bee ſo pinched with hunger and thirſt, that they might thereby be prouoked to cry eaſteſtly vnto the Lord to be filled: according to that in *Plalme* 63. 2. *My ſoule thiſteth for thee, like ſhe dry ground.* But bread or water alone, would not ſuffice to fill vs, neither can our life bee ſuſtained with one of them. That is the reaſon then why the Prophet hath vſed *diuers* words, to ſhew that God furniſheth vs with all things abundantly, that are neceſſary to preferue life, leſt we ſhould vſe any vnlawfull ſtrife to ſuccour our felues elſewhere.

But becauſe euery one ruſheth himſelfe into error by his owne counſels; and all hauing forſaken God, doe vaniſh away in their owne peruerſe imaginations, the Prophet heere adds a remedy, namely, that we whollie depend vpon the *mouth of God*. For whoſoeuer ſubmits himſelfe vnto *his word*, needs neuer feare that hee hath miſpent his time. And heere wee ſee a wonderfull goodneſſe of God, in that he offers his grace, though men be vnthankfull and vnworthy of it.

Yet notwithstanding he adds a *condition*, for the entrance into life, cannot be made, vnleſſe wee giue *care* vnto him. And as the cauſe of our ruine is, that we ſtop our eares againſt Gods word: ſo the way to heauen is open vnto vs, if wee *hearken vnto him diligentlie*. He repeats the ſame admonition againe, the better to moue our affections: and redoubles the word, *Hear, in hearkening*. And that hee might the better win vs with ſweete allurements, he proteſts the faulte to be our owne, if we be not fully ſatisfied with all ſorts of good things.

Verſ. 3. Incline your eares and come to mee: heare, and your ſoule ſhall liue: and I will make an euerlaſting covenant with you, euen the ſure mercies of David.

BY this heape of words wee may the better conceiue of that which I haue ſaid before, namely, that God omits no meanes to awaken and correct our dulneſſe: and yet heere is a reprehention. For it muſt needs be granted that ſuch are too drowzie headed, who being ſo louingly called, doe not forthwith yeelde their obedience. An excellent place: which ſhewes that our happineſſe conſiſts in that obedience which wee ought to yeeld vnto the word. Now when he ſpeakes thus, his meaning is, to bring vs to ſaluation: and therefore the fault reſts wholly in our felucs; for wee contemne this ſauing & quickening word. Moreouer, if God ſhould otely command vs to doe that he hath inioined vs, hee ſhould therein ſhew vs the way indeede how to obtaine life, but yet without any profit to vs. For the law, as it comes forth of Gods mouth, is the miniſter of death, 2. Cor. 3. 7. but when hee *calls vs to himſelfe*, and adopts vs for his children, when he promiſeth remiſſion of ſinnes and ſanctification; this cauſeth them which *heare*, to receiue life of him. We are the

The ground
of Gods co-
uenant.

to consider what kinde of doctrine it is that hath life in it, that we may therein seeke our saluation.

From this place also we gather, that there is no hope of saluation, vnlesse we be obedient to God and his word; and by this all men are conuincid, so as they can pretend no cause of ignorance; for he that vouchsafes not to *heare*, shall neuer be able to allege one found reason for his owne defence. But, as I haue said, these repetitions set forth the patience of God in calling vs. For he summons vs not for once only; but if he perceiue that we be slow, he admonisheth vs the second, yea, the third time, that he might overcome our stubbornnes. He rejects not those then at the first which disdain him; but after he hath many times allured them.

The nature of faith.

Furthermore heere is expressed the nature of faith, when he commands vs to come vnto him: for wee must so *heare the Lord*, that the fruit thereof may also follow. Those also who receiue the word of God in faith, do cast away their lusts, and reiect the world wherewith they were fast bound, that they may willingly draw neere vnto God, and that with much joy and gladnes of heart. Yet faith can not be conceiued without hearing, Rom. 10. 17. that is to say, without vnderstanding of the word, and therefore he commands vs to *encline our eare* before we come. When mention shall be made of faith then, let vs remember that it must be ioined to the word, in which it hath her foundation.

Gods word the ground of faith.

Quest.

Where he addes, and I will make a *covenant*: some demaund, whether God had not made a perpetual covenant with the Iewes before: for he seemes to promise a new and vnaccustomed thing heere. I answer, he promiseth no new thing, but that which God had before contracted with the people, and therefore it is but a renewing and a confirmation of the covenant, to the end the Iewes should not thinke that Gods promise was abolished, though they saw thescilues so long banished. For whilst they were driuen out of that countree which was promised and giuen them, being without the Temple, and without the sacrifices, and had no marks at all left, but the coucnant of Circumcision; who would not haue thought but that God had vtterly shaken them off? *Isaiah* then hath fitted this phrase of speech as you see to the capacite of the people, that they might know how the coucnant of God made with their fathers was firme, stable, and eternall, and neither mutable nor temporarie.

Anf.

Coucnant, and mercie, must alwaies be matched together.

He signifies the same thing by the *mercies of David*: but by this clause he shewes, that the coucnant is free, because it hath its foundation laid in nothing but in the *meete goodnes* of God. As oft then as wee meete with this word *Coucnant* in the Scriptures, wee must therewithall call to minde the word *mercie*, or *grace*.

Now he pronounceth he will be *faithfull* therein: and forthwith he signifies, that he will be found true and constant, so that none shall be able to charge him with double dealing, as if he had broken his coucnant. Nay,

the Iewes themselues rather were become trecherous and disloyall, in regard they had reuolted from him: for, he for his part can not repent himselfe touching the promise or coucnant, which he had made.

He calles them *mercies of David*, because this coucnant which was now so solemnly confirmed, was made in *Dauids hand*. True it is that the Lord made the coucnant first with *Abraham*, Gen. 15. 5. and 17. 7. and afterward confirmed it by *Moses*, Exod. 3. 15. and lastly he established and ratified it in the hand of *Dauid*, 2. Sam. 7. 12. that it might continue for euer. When the Iewes then thought of the redeemer, that is to say, of their saluation, they were to remember *Dauid* as the mediator, representing the person of Christ. For *Dauid* must not be considered heere as a private man, but with that title & person aboue mentioned.

Dauid, a figure of Christ.

The time also is to be noted, for the dignitie of the kingdom being extinct vnder this captiuitie of Babylon, and the royall title obscured and prophaned, it might seeme that the truth of God was abolished in the ruine of this familie. He therefore commands them by *faith* to looke vnto that *royall seate of Dauid*, which for a time was throwne downe.

See Psal. 89. 38. &c.

Verf. 4. Behold I gaue him for a *wisdomnes* to the people, for a *Prince* and a *master* vnto the people.

* Or, a Leader.

Now the Prophet explanes that yet better which he briefly mentioned before touching *Dauid*, to wit, because the promise of the redeemer was made to him; and that this speech therefore was fitlie applied to his person, in regard he was the pledge of the coucnant: for he was not placed in that office to performe his owne affaires, but was set there as the mediator betwene God and the people. Notwithstanding, it is certaine that *Isaiah* brings vs directly vnto Christ, to whom wee may easily descend from *Dauid*: as if he should say, *this successor of Dauid shall come*, by whose hand perfect saluation and felicitie is promised. And in calling him a *uincine*, he signifies that the coucnant by him contracted shall be ratified & established in Christ. There is great weight in this word *uincine* then: for the Prophet shewes, that this coucnant shall be approued in Christ, through whom Gods truth shall be manifested, because he shall testifie that God is true.

An explanation of the former verse in this, and the verse following.

Wee must descend from Dauid, to Christ.

A witness.

But this testimonie consists in doctrine, for without it we should receiue but little profit by Christs coming, in which sense it is said in Psal. 2. 7. *I will preach the decree*. And in the same sense *Isaiah* in Chap. 49. 2. saith, *that Christs mouth should be like a sword, or, an arrow*. For this cause also he calles him a *Leader*, and a *Master*, that to him and to his doctrine audience might be giuen: for if we *heare* him not speake, nor with certaine affiance embrace that which he saith vnto vs touching the good will of his Father, his power is abolished. For after this sort the name of Christ makes a great found among the Papiests: but seeing they will not receiue him for their *Doflar* and *Master*,

A Leader.

A Master.

A testimony touching the vocation of the Gentiles.

Maſter, but onely acknowledge him in name, their brags which they make thereof, are but vaine and ridiculous.

These words, *to the peoples*, are added by way of amplification: for the Church could neither bee established in her first dignitie, nor get increase, but by the vocation of the Gentiles. It was therefore necessary that the voice of Christ should sound thorow all the quarters of the world, because he is ordained to be the *uiziter, conductor, and teacher* of all mankind.

Vers. 5. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not; and a nation that knew not thee shall runne vnto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and the holie one of Israel: for he hath glorified thee.

Isaiah expounds that now at large, which he touched before but in a word: for he shewes that Christ shall be the conductor, not of one people onely, but of *all*. To call heere, notes out the possession: so as there is a correspondencie betweene the word *To call*, and, to answer, Christ then being called by authority, as hee which is furnished with a soveraigne power, hee *calles* the nations to bring them in order touching their duties, and to subiect them to the word. Now he saith they shall be readie to obey, though they were not *knowne* of him: not that the Sonne of God who created them, knew them not what they were, *Psal. 94. 9.* but it is spoken in regard they were reiected and despised, vntill they beganne to haue a place in the Church: for God had particularly called the Iewes; and the Gentiles seemed to be vtterly excluded, as if they had nothing at all appertained vnto them. But now, speaking to Christ, he promisseth that he shall constaine them to obey, though before they were wholly estranged from vnder his dominion.

Afterwards, he declares this more plainly in the progresse of the text, where indeed he vseth the plurall number, that he might the better shew that the Church shall be gathered out of diuers nations: so as those who were separated and scattered, should now be assembled into one body: for the word, *shall runne*, is to be referred to the consenting of faith.

Moreouer, he saith heere, that the Gentiles *haue not knowne*: but it is to be takē otherwise then that which he said before, namely, that Christ *knew not them*: for ignorance is properly attributed to the prophane and vnbeleeuers, in regard they are deprived of the heauenly doctrine, without which we shall neuer know God. And howsoever this knowledge is naturally ingrauen in the hearts of all; yet it is so obscure & confused, and wrapped in so many errors, that if the light of the word bee not added therunto, whilst they know God, they shall be ignorant of him, and not know him at all, but shall miserably erre in darkness.

We haue heere an excellent testimonie then touching the *vocation of the Gentiles*: for whom Christ is ordained a redeemer, as well as for the Iewes. Whence also we gather, that God hath now care of vs, if wee will submit our selues vnder his gouernment: so as hee will not onely watch ouer vs, as he doth ouer the rest of his creatures, but as a father that is vigilant ouer his children. The word *shall runne*, doth better expresse the efficacy of this vocation: for the end thereof is, that we may obey God, in yeelding our selues teachable with a ready and glad heart in his presence, and willingly to receiue from his mouth, the least of his commandments. For as *S. Paul* saith, *Rom. 1. 5. and 16. 26.* Obedience is the end of our vocation. But because the Gentiles were farre estranged from God, it was necessary they should valiantly inforce themselves to breake thorow all impediments, to draw neere vnto him.

Because of the Lord, *Iſaiah* shewes from what fountaine this willingnesse and cheerefull alacrity shall spring, namely, the Gentiles shall know they haue to doe with God. For if we consider Christ as man onely, his doctrine will not much moue vs: but if we apprehend God in him, we shall be inflamed with a wonderfull affection. Now he is heere described vnto vs as a Minister, ordained of God to perfect his worke. For in taking vpon him our nature, he therewithall tooke vpon him the forme of a seruant: and in this behalfe it is no disparagement to him to see him subiected vnto the Father, as one of vs.

Moreouer, we are to remember that which we haue often touched before, touching the coniunction of the head with the members. For that which is said of Christ, appertaines to his whole body: and therefore glorification is common to the whole Church. I grant that Christ alwaies holds the soveraigne degree: for being highly exalted, he rules ouer the whole world, to the end all nations may runne vnto him. To conclude, the Prophet shewes that men yeeld obedience to Christ, and submit themselves to his doctrine, because God hath exalted him, and would that his excellencie should bee acknowledged of all men: for otherwise, the preaching of the Gospell would profit very litle, vnlesse God gaue efficacie to the doctrine, by the power of his holy Spirit.

Vers. 6. Seeke the Lord whilest hee may be found: call ye vpon him whilest he is neere.

Having spoken of the fruit of the Gospell among the Gentiles, who were before estranged from Gods kingdome, he now pricks forward the Iewes, that they may be ashamed to sleepe whilst others *raue*: for seeing they were first called, it were a shame for them to come lag. This exhortation therefore properly belongs to the Iewes, before whom *Iſaiah* sets the example of the Gentiles, that hee might prouoke them to follow them: which the Lord also had forctold, namely,

The Gentiles set before the Iewes, to prouoke them to follow them.

that he would prouoke the Iewes to ielousie by a foolish nation: Deur. 32. 21.

The time *To find*, is not taken altogether in the same sense heere, as it is in the 32. Psalm: but for that time wherein God offers himselfe; as in other places he hath set down a certaine limited day, within the compass whereof his fauour and saluation shall be found. And yet I grant that *Isaiah* also notes the time wherein necessitie presseth vs to aske helpe of God: but we must principally remember that *God vs sought in a fit time; vpon himselfe comes forth to meete vs; for it shall be in vaine for the drowzie and sleepe to bewaile the losse of that grace, which themselves haue wittingly reiected.* The Lord beates with our slothfulness for a tyme, and patiently waits for vs; but if he gets nothing by it, hee will leaue vs, and bestow his grace vpon others. Christ therefore admonisheth vs to walke whilest it is day, because the night will come, in which wee can walke no more forward: John 12. 37.

Hence wee are to gather a singular consolation, namely, that we are heere assured not to lose our time in seeking God: *Secke*, saith Christ, and you shall *find*; *knocke*, and it shall be *opened*; *aske*, and you shall *receiue*: Matth. 7. 7.

The word *call*, may be taken heere generally: but I thinke hee notes out a particular seeking of God, such an one as is principall aboue others: as if he commanded vs to haue recourse vnto him by prayers and supplications. Now hee then shewes himselfe to be *neere*, when hee summons vs familiarly vnto him, in opening the gate, or presents himselfe before vs; to the end we should not wander hither and thither to seeke him.

Whilest he is neere.] Saint Pauls distinction is to be noted; who saith, the preaching of the Gospell is signified by these words: Rom. 10. 10. The Lord is *neere*, and offers himselfe vnto vs, when the voice of the Gospell sounds in our eares. Neither ought we to seeke him a far off, nor to fetch many circuits, as the vnbelleeuers doe: for he presents himselfe vnto vs in his word, to the end wee for our parts may draw *neere* vnto him.

Verf. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his waies, and the vnrighthouse his owne imaginations, and returne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue mercie vpon him; and to our God, for he is very readie to forgine.*

How God is said to be neere vnto vs.

Abundant in pardon.

A confirmation of the former sentence.

HE confirmes the former sentence: for hauing called men to receiue Gods grace, he at large describes the way how to recouer the same. We know how the hypocrites yell and cry with open mouth after God, when they would be succoured in their miseries, and in the meane while they harden their hearts through a wicked obstinacie. That the Iewes then might not disguise themselves in seeking of God, *Isaiah* exhorts them to true pietie. Whence wee gather, that the

doctrine of repentance ought perpetually to be ioined with the promise of saluation: for men can neuer taste Gods goodnesse, vnlesse first of all they bee displeas'd in themselves for their sinnes, and haue both *renounced the world, and themselves also*. For no man will euer in good earnest desire to be reconciled vnto God, nor to obtaine remission of his sinnes, vnlesse he be touched with a true and sound repentance.

The Prophet describes the nature of repentance three waies, or by three phrases of speech; *Let the wicked forsake his waies, and the vnrighthouse his imaginations; and then, let him returne vnto the Lord*. Vnder the word *vvaies*, he comprehends the whole course of our liues; and thus hee requires that they bring forth fruits of righteoufnesse, to shew their newnesse of life. In adding *thoughts*; he signifies that it is not enough to correct the outward actions, but that wee must begin at the heart. For though according to mens iudgements, we haue as it seemes, changed our life from worse to better, yet wee haue indeed made but a weak beginning, if the heart be not first changed. Repentance therefore obtaines in it the change of the whole man. Wherein wee haue first to consider the *imagination*, then the *deliberations*, and lastly, the *outward actions*. Men see the actions: but the roote from whence they proceed, is hidden within the heart: it behoueth therefore that it bee first reuolued, that afterward from thence there may flow forth fruitfull workes. First, the *understanding* must be clenid from all the filthinesse that is in it: and then must we cast off the wicked *affections and lusts*; that from thence, outward testimonies may afterward manifest themselves. If any one boast that hee is changed, and yet liues a disorder'd life; his reioicing is vaine: for these two things must be required together, to wit, the *conversion of the heart, and the change of the life*.

Besides, God calles vs not to *turne* to him, till the former reuolt be amended. For hypocrites would be well enough contented that that which they doe should be praised, so they might still bee suffered to rot in their filthinesse: but we can haue no acquaintance with God, vnlesse we come forth of our selues, especially when we haue estranged our selues from him, by a wicked backsliding: wherefore the renouncing of our selues, goes before our reconciliation with God.

And he will haue mercie.] This knitting together of the text ought to be diligently noted. For it shewes that men can neuer be brought to repentance, but by setting before them the assurance of the remission of sins. Whosoever preacheth the doctrine of repentance then, without mentioning Gods mercie, and the free reconciliation, he loseth his labour. For we see how our Popish Doctors thinke they haue wel discharged their duties, when they haue long insisted vpon the former point: and yet in the meane while, they doe but babble and lie in preaching this doctrine. Yea, though they should teach the true way to repentance, yet would it bee to small purpose, seeing they omit the foundation

The doctrine of repentance must alwaies be ioined with the promises of saluation.

The nature of repentance described.

Note

The conversion of the heart, and the change of the life must go together.

The renouncing of our selues, goes before our reconciliation with God.

Remission of sinnes must not be separated from the doctrine of repentance.

tion of free remiſſion of finnes which only appeaſeth conſciences. Truly the guiltie ſinner will alwaies flee the preſence of God (as we haue ſaid in another place) as long as he ſhall be hald before his Iudgement ſeate to yeeld an account, neither will he euer be humbled to obey, nor feare, till his conſcience be at reſt. Now becauſe it is a difficult matter to quiet terrified conſciences, *Iſaiah* drawes an argument from the nature of God, ſaying, that he will be mercifull, and *abundant in pardoning*. The holy Ghoſt inſiſts long vpon this point of doctrine, becauſe wee alwaies doubt whether God will pardon vs or no. For howſocuer we haue ſome opinion of his mercie, yet dare we not perſwade our ſelues ſo aſſuredly that it belongs vnto vs as wee ought. You ſee it is not without cauſe that the Prophet addes this member, becauſe he thereby labors to diſpoſſeſſe our minds of that trembling which is incident vnto vs, as oft as we ſtand in doubt of his infinite mercie towards vs.

Verſ. 8. *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your waies my waies, ſaith the Lord.*

9. *For as the heauens are higher then the earth, ſo are my waies higher then your waies, and my thoughts above your thoughts.*

FOR my thoughts.] This place is diuerſie expounded. Some thinke that mens conuerſation is here condemned in generall, to the end they ſhould not pleaſe themſelues therein, nor flatter themſelues in their vices, becauſe there is no acceſſe vnto God, vntleſſe we be emptied of this vaine opinion of our own rightcouſnes. For none will ſecke after the Phyſition, but ſuch as feele themſelues vehemently ſick, and that deſire both the remedie and their health. And therefore they compare this place with that in Luk. 16. 15. That which is highly eſteemed before men, is an abomination in the ſight of God. But I thinke the Prophet hath another meaning. Thoſe therefore who thinke that Gods affection is heere diſtinguiſhed from humane affections, expound it beſt (as I thinke.) For men are wont to meaſure God by their owne ell (as they ſay) and becauſe themſelues are irreconcilable, and can not be pacified but with much adoe: they in like manner thinke that God can neuer be appeaſed, after they haue once offended him. But the Lord ſhewes that he reſembles them: nothing at all. As if he ſhould ſay, I am not a mortall man that I ſhould be ſo ſeuere, and an enemy to you for euer: no, my thoughts are farre vnlke yours, for though it be impoſſible for you to be pacified, and that it be an hard matter to bring you to be reconciled with thoſe which haue offended you, yet it is not ſo with me, I will not ſhew my ſelfe ſo inhumane towards you. To this agrees very well that place of *Dauid*, *Pſal. 103.* where deſcribing Gods mercie, hee ſaith, *that is in height when the heauens are about the earth:* and though the application be to

another purpoſe there, yet the ſenſe is all one with this. In a word, there is none ſo gracious, or ſo inclined to mercie as the Lord is, and therefore we muſt impute it to our owne diſſidence, if we obtaine not pardon of him.

Now there is nothing which troubles our conſciences more, then when we thinke God reſembles vs, for this makes vs afraid to draw neere vnto him; nay, we rather flee from him as our enemy, and can neuer be in any reſt. So thoſe who meaſure God according to that which they conceiue of him, doe indeed conceiue a flat Idoll direſtly contrary to the nature of God, neither can they do him a greater diſhonor then this. Are not men who are corrupt, and ſtuffed full with inordinate luſts aſhamed to compare the moſt pure nature of God with theirs? and to impton him that is infinite within ſo narrow bounds, wherein they feele themſelues miſerable enthralled? For in what more noyſome dunceon can any of vs be incloſed, then within our owne inſidelitic? I take it that this is the Prophets true and naturall meaning; and yet I denie not but he had ſome reſpect to mens maners, namely ſuch as he hath deſcribed them in the former verſe.

To be ſhort, his meaning is, that men muſt forget themſelues when they meane to turne to God, becauſe there is no impediment ſo dangerous as when we thinke him to be irreconcilable. Let vs remove this falſe imagination then out of our minds.

Besides, by this place it appeares how farre they are out of the way, which abuſe Gods mercie to take the greater libertie to ſinne. For ſee how the Prophet argues; *Repent; forſake your wicked waies, becauſe Gods mercie is infinite.* When men doubt or deſpaire whether they ſhall obtaine pardon or no, this makes them more wicked and ſtubborne; but the feeling of mercie drawes and conuerts them. It follows then that ſuch as neither forſake their leaud life, nor change their minds, haue no part in this mercie.

Verſ. 10. *Surely as the raine commeth downe and the ſnow from heauen, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may giue ſeede to the ſower, and bread vnto him that eateth.*

HAving ſpoken of the tender affection and incredible loue which God beares vs, he again placeth promiſes in the middle, that ſo being grounded vpon them, we might be aſſured to paſſe ſafe and ſound through all dangers. For it would ſerue to little purpoſe that one ſhould deſcribe vnto vs the nature of God, or informe vs of his ſecret counſell, if therewithall wee were not brought to the word, wherein the ſame is maniſeſted: but God ſpeakes plainly and familiarly vnto vs, ſo as we haue no neede to enquire further. We muſt therefore come to the word, which plainly opens his will vnto vs, if ſo be we wil containe all our ſenſes within the bounds of it, for otherwiſe we ſhall alwaies remaine

We muſt impute it to our owne vnbelicfe, if we obtaine not pardon at Gods hand.

Verſ. 7.
Verſ. 8.

To the commendation of Gods mercifull nature, he addes a promiſe that our faith might be the more ſurely ſetled.

Gods nature deſcribed.

Why the holy Ghoſt inſiſts ſo long vpon this doctrine.

Gods affection diſtinguiſhed from ours.

in suspence, and doubt what shall become of vs, though the Lord should tell vs an hundred times that he resembles men nothing at all. And yet men (if they would confesse the truth) do desire to be certaine of their saluation, and to know what should befall them afterward. We are therefore to obserue this order well which the Prophet heere keeps. And thus *Moses* brought the people to the knowledge of the word, saying, Aske nor who shall ascend vp into heauen, or who shall descend into the deepe, for the word is neere thee in thy mouth and in thine heart, Deut. 30.12, and this is the word of faith (faith *Paul*) Rom. 10. 10, which we preach.

Now the Prophet borrowes a similitude here from a thing ordinarie amongst vs, and it is exceeding fit for his purpose: for if wee see so great efficacy in the raine which waters and fattens the earth, much more will the Lord manifest his power in his word: for the raine vanishest, and is subiect to corruption, but the word is immortal, immutable, and incorruptible, and cannot consume away as the raine doth.

But that we may the better vnderstand the Prophets words, wee are to search out his drift. Men doubt whether God will accomplish that which hee hath promised in his word; for wee thinke his word hangs in the ayre without any effect: but by the *very order of nature* hee shewes, how detestable this opinion is. For it is too absurd a thing to attribute *life* to the word, then to an insensible creature; and therefore hee teacheth, that *the vord is neuer vpon him his effect*. Some vnderstand it, as if the preaching of the Gospell were neuer in vaine, but that it alwaies brings forth some fruit. Which I grant to be a truth, for the Lord workes by his Spirit, & giues increase, 1. Cor. 3. 7. that the labour of his Ministers may not be in vaine. But the Prophet meant another matter, namely, that God casts not the seede of his word vpon the ground, without effect, neither scatters hee his promises in the ayre, but we shall gather the fruit thereof, if so be wee resist him not by our owne incredulitie. Now hee mentions two effects of the raine, which makes the earth fruitfull by falling vpon it: First, that men may thereby haue plenty of food to sustaine them: secondly, seed so sown: the benefit whereof, is to be reaped the yeere following. If then Gods power bee so great in things transitorie, how much more effectuall may wee thinke his word is?

Vers. 11. *So shall my word bee, that goeth out of my mouth: it shall not returne vnto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I will, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

God speaks to vs by men.

The vord goes so out of Gods mouth, that it also goes forth of the mouches of men: for God speaks not from heauen, but vnto men as his instruments to declare his will by their ministrarie. But the authoritie of the promises is better confirmed vnto vs, when wee

heare that they proceede out of the sacred mouth of God. Although then that hee vfe witness on earth, yet hee testifies, that whatsoever they shall promise in his name, shall bee ratified and confirmed afterwards, before him. And that he might the better ingraue in mens mindes, the power and efficacy of preaching, he aduertiseth vs that hee scattereth not this precious seede at random, but hath ordained it to a certaine end; in regard whereof, no man is to doubt of the effect. For there is nothing whereunto men are more inclined, then to iudge of God according to their owne fantasies, that so they may reiect his word. It was needfull therefore that this doctrine should bee often repeated and beaten into our heads, that wee might know how God will surely performe that which he hath once said. As of then as wee heare of Gods promises, let vs consider what his meaning is in them: as when hee promiseth free remission of finnes, let vs assure our selues of reconciliation through Christ. But as the word of God is powerfull to saue the faithfull, so hath it also his efficacy to condemne the wicked: which Iesus Christ himselfe affirms, Iohn 12. 48. The word which I haue spoken, that shall iudge in the last day.

We must haue an eye to Gods intention in his promises.

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Vers. 12. *Therefore shall yee goe out with ioy, and bee led forth with peace: the mountaines and the hilles shall breake forth before you into ioy, and all the trees of the field shall clappe their hands.*

Now the Prophet concludes the argument of this Chapter: for that which he hath spoken touching Gods mercy, tended to assure the Iews, that God would deliuer them. Now he applies his discourse touching Gods infinite goodnesse to his purpose, and shewes, that his *thoughtes* are nothing like to the thoughts of men. Take a paterne heere then of a right order of teaching, namely, when we apply generall doctrines, to the present vfe.

The conclusion in this and the vfe following.

A right form of teaching.

Lastly, *Isaiah* speaks of the peoples restitution, which depended vpon the free mercy of God.

By *mountaines* and *hilles* he signifies, that all stumbling blocks which should lie in the way, should notwithstanding serue to aid those that should returne vnto Ierusalem. These are similitudes then whereby hee shewes that all creatures are at Gods becke, and are ready to employ themselves to set forward his worke: yea and reioice to doe it.

He alludes to the deliuerance out of Egypt, according to the custome of the Prophets: for so it is written in Psal. 114. The *mountaines* leaped like *Rammes*, and the *hills* as *lambs*: What ailed thee O sea, that thou fleddest backe? O Iordan, why wast thou turned backe? For in regard that the restitution of the church is as it were a reuening of the whole world, it is said, that heauen and earth are changed, as if they had quite altered their ordinarie course.

All creatures at Gods becke.

course. All this depended vpon the former prophecies, by which they had a promise touching their returne.

Verſ. 13. *For thornes, there shall grow ſyre trees: for nettles, shall grow the mirrhe tree; and it shall bee to the Lord for a name, and for an everlasting ſigne that shall not bee taken away.*

A Gaine hee extolles Gods power, which should appeare in the peoples deliuerance: for he teacheth that there shall be such a change, that the way shall bee made verie easie for their returne. Some expound this allegorically; and by *thornes*, vnderstand that such as inducours to hurt and hinder others, should now become *ſyre trees*: that is to say, bearing fruit, and bringing profite to their neighbours: but this expolition is too curious. I denie not but these things indeed appertaine to Christs kingdome, and therefore ought to be spiritually vnderstood. For the Prophet beignes at the returne from Babylon, and comprehends the whole estate of the Church, vntill the manifestation of Christ to the world. But it doth not therefore follow that this allegorie is any thing to the purpose, because *Jſaiah* speaks of the peoples

returne into Iudea, For, that they might the better passe, the Lord promiseth to remove all impediments out of the way, and would furnish them with all things necessaric, that so they might bee free from all annoyances.

And so, when Christ promiseth the benefit of our redemption, he therewithall takes away whatsoever thing might hurt or hinder the same: nay, he turnes it wholly the contrarie way, that out of euery euil we might draw some good: for all things turne to the best (as *Paul* saith) to them that loue God: *Rom. 8. 27.* And thus God vseth the most hurtfull and dangerous euils, as remedies to purge the faithfull, that they may not giue ouer themselues to the loue of the world, but may bee made the more liuely, and ready to performe the will of their Master.

All things fall out for the best to them that loue God.

When he addes that this shall be for a name to the Lord; it is to shew the end of the Churches restitution; namely, that Gods name might bee the more praised among men, and that the memory thereof might flourish, and bee conserved. And therefore hee addes, for a ſigne: that is to say, for a testimonie, or for a perpetuall memoriall. Although the Church floate then, and bee diuersly tossed among these waues and tempests, yet seeing the Lord is purposed that the memorie of his name shall last for ever, hee will both defend and maintaine her.

THE LVI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Thus saith the Lord; Keepe iudgement and iustice: for my saluation is at hand to come, and my right consaſſe to be reuealed.*



In the former verses God hath manifested the signes of his fauour towards vs: now he shewes what duties wee owe to him.

HIS is a notable place. For the Prophet shewes what God requires of vs, as soone as he manifests the signes of his fauour, or promiseth to bee recouered vnto vs, to the end our peace may be assured. The thing he requires of vs, is such a conuersion as changeth both our iudgements and affections: so as hauing forsaken the world, wee forthwith aspire vnto heauen: and therewithall hee requires the fruits of repentance.

Vnder the words *iudgement* and *iustice*, hee comprehends all the duties of charity, which consists not onely in abstaining from euill, but in doing good to our neighbours, according to our abilities. And this is the summe of the second table: in the obseruation whereof, we giue testimonie of our pietie, if there bee any at all in vs. The Prophets alwaies bring vs thither: for by this means it will quickly appeare what we are within: and the

The summe of the second Table.

God often tries our loue to him, by

true integritie of the heart is thus discerned, our iustice from those outward ceremonies wherein hypocrites please themselues; as wee haue men. shewed heretofore. Now he renders a reason, and forthwith shewes the beginning from whence all must frame themselues to newnesse of life; namely, that in as much as Gods iustice is at hand to bee reuealed to vs, we in like manner ought to present him with

our.

The Lord calles himselfe *iust*, and saith that iustice is *his*; not that hee holds it shut vp in himselfe; but because he sheds it abroad vpon men. He also calles that *his saluation*, by which he deliueers men from destruction.

Besides, howsoeuer these words be directed to the Iewes, that with a sincere affection of heart, and with an vnfeined desire of godlines, they might shew themselues thankful to their redeemer; yet it also belongs to vs all in general: for the whole world is lost in it selfe, vnlesse it recouer saluation in God. Let vs also note this exhortation; for thereby we are taught to be so much the more moued to the true feare of God, as we are neere vnto him; and therefore *Saint Paul* admoniseth the faithfull, to cast off the workes of darknesse, and to put on the armour of light; because our saluation is neerer vs then wee be aware of: *Rom. 13. 12.*

Verſ. 2. *Blessed is the man that doth this,*

this, and the sonne of man which layeth hold on it: he that keepeth the Sabbath, and * pollutesh it not, and keepeth his hand from doing any euill.

* Or, violates it not.

To the duties of the second Table vers 1. he now add s those of the first.

IN calling them *blesed*, who hauing imbraced this doctrine, doe submit themselues vnto God, walking in vprightnes, he closely insinuates, that there are many deafe, or vn-teachable. But to the end their peruersitie or sluggishnes might not discourage the faithfull, he recommends his exhortation to them by the fruite which comes thereof. That the faithfull then should not recoile back, but casting off all impediments, they might readily prepare themselues to walke vprightly, he cries out that such only are *blesed*, to whom grace is giuen to be thus wise-hearted.

Obiect.

Anf.

The duties of both Tables must goe together.

In the former vers^e we haue said that the duties of the second Table were comprised vnder the words of *Iustice and Iudgements*. But heere he mentions the *Sabbath*, which appertaines to the first Table. I answer (as I haue touched before) that such as lue innocentie and iustlie with their neighbours, doe giue good testimonie of their sinceritie towards God. It is no wonder then if after the Prophet hauing spoken of the second Table, he now mentions the first, because they must be ioined both together. In a word, *Isaiah* meant to say, that he shall be a *happie man* who submits himselfe vnto God in the obseruation of the whole law, for to such an one the *righteousnes and saluation* of God belongs, vers. 1.

But because men wander and erre in their imaginations, and seeke diuers means how to draw neere vnto God, the Prophet shewes that there is but one way, namely, when we studie how to order and rule our liues according to the Decalogue. Besides, heere is an excellent place, for it teacheth vs, that nothing is pleasing vnto God, but the obseruation of his commandements. If it be asked whether men can obtaine *righteousnes* and *saluation* by works; the answer is easie: for the Lord offers vs not saluation as being prevented by our merits (nay he rather prevents vs) but he offers himselfe freely to vs, and onely requires that wee draw neere vnto him. Seeing then that of his owne good will he calles vs to himselfe, and offers his righteousness freely, we are to take heed, that we deprive not our selues of so great a benefit.

Quest.

Anf.

Now because the *Sabbath* (as it appears by *Moses* and *Ezechiel*, Exod. 31, 13, 17. Ezech. 21, 13.) was the principall signe of Gods seruice, therefore by the figure Synecdoche it contains in it selfe all the exercises of pietie, a part being taken for the whole. We must vnderstand the Sabbath then, with all his circumstances. For God rests not himselfe contented with the outward ceremony, neither delights he in our idleness, but he requires that we freely renounce our selues, that with hart and hand we may yeeld him absolute obedience. The Prophet also addes another Synecdoche in the end of the vers^e, to note out charitie. The summe is, That God is not serued aright, vnlesse true pietie and innocencie

That keepeth his hand &c.

of life goe together: as also vnder these two parts he hath distinguished the maner of well liuing. In a word, here is an exposition of that true righteousness which is contained in the law of the Lord, that in it we may rest, for in vaine shall any man seeke a way of perfection out of it. This then ouerthrowes all deified worthips, and all superstitions.

Verf. 3. *And let not the sonne of the stranger which is ioined to the Lord speake and say, The Lord hath surely separate me from his people: neither let the Eunuich say, behold, I am a drie tree.*

THE Prophet shewes that this grace of God shall be such, that those who were farre off from him before, and against whom the gate was shut, should now obtaine a new estate, or should be placed againe in their right. And thus he meets with their complaints, that they should not say they were reiected, vnworthie, aliants, or shut out for any infamous note; because the Lord would take away all lets and impediments. Now this may be as well referred to the Iewes, whose temporarie reiectiō had made the like to *strangers*, as to the prophane nations: and for mine owne part, I referre it both to the one and to the other, that so it may agree with the prophecie of *Hoses*, *I will call them my people which were not my people.* Hosc. 1. 10.

A prevention of an obiection.

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Moreouer when he saith, that they shall be ioined to the Lord, it is to admonish them that this consolation only appertained to such as followed the voice of Gods call. For there were many *Eunuches* to whom the Lord shewed no mercie, and many *strangers*, which were not ioined to the Lord. This promise therefore is restrained to those, who being called, should obey. Vnder *strangers* and *Eunuches*, be noted out all such as seemed vnworthie to be reputed among the number of Gods people, who once had chosen them for his peculiar inheritance, and afterwards banished them out of his land. Other nations were shut out of his kingdome, as it appeares in euery place of the holy Scripture. Saint *Paul* saith in the Epistle to the Ephesiens, Chap. 2. 12, 13. that the Gentiles had nothing to do in the *Common wealth of Israel*, but were *strangers* from the covenants of promise, without hope, and *without God* in the world; but now in Christ Iesus (saith he) you which were once *farre off* are made neere by the blood of Christ.

Thus then the Gentiles might in the beginning doubt whether this benefit of adoption belonged vnto them or no, seeing it was properly appropriated to the Iewes. And therefore wee see how the Apostles auoided this thing; though the Lord had commanded them to preach the Gospel thorow out all the world. Mark. 16. 15. For they thought the doctrine of the Gospel should haue been prophanted, if they should indifferently publish it as well to the Gentiles, as to the Iewes. And the same scruple might also trouble the minds euen of the elect people, in regard their banishment out of the holy land, was a

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signe

ſigne vnto them of their reiection. The Prophet therefore wils them to remoue all ſuch doubts as theſe out of their heads.

Vnder the word *Eunuch*, hee comprehends all thoſe that bare any note of infamie vpon them, which might be an occaſion to ſeparate them from Gods people. For it ſeemed that y^e Eunuches, and ſuch as had no children, were reiected of God, and excluded out of the promiſe: where in he had ſaid to *Abraham*, that *his poſteritie* ſhould be as the ſtarrs in the heauens, and as the ſand of the ſea: Gen. 15. 5. and 22. 17. In a word, hee withdrawes all men from the conſideration of themſelues, that they may wholly fix their mindes vpon the calling of God, that thus they might imitate the faith of *Abraham* who conſidered not his body *now dead*; neither the *barrenneſſe* of *Sarab*: wombe; ſo as to enter into any diſpute with himſelfe through his owne incredulitie touching the power of God: but aboue hope, beleued vnder hope: Rom. 4. 18, 19, 20. The Prophet then ſpeakes to the *vile* and *conſpicable*, left they ſhould be diſcouraged; becauſe, as *Saint Peter* ſaith, *God is no acceptor of perſons; but in every nation, he that feareth God, and vvorkeſt righteouſneſſe; is accepted of him.*

Act. 10: 34.
35.

Verſ. 4. For thus ſaith the Lord vnto the Eunuches that keepe my Sabbaths, and chuſe the thing that pleaſeth me, and take hold of my covenant.

Now follows the confirmation. For the faithfull ſeruants of God which kept the Sabbath, and cleaued to the righteouſneſſe of the Law, ſhould haue place in the Church, although they were Eunuches, or had any other impediment. And thus it ſeemes the Prophet abol:ſeth all the externall inarkes and vtiſe ceremonies, wherein the Iewes onely gloued. For the dignitie of the new Church is not outward, but ſpiritual: and albeit the faithfull haue no appearance of glorie before the eyes of worldlings; nay, they are rather deſpised and wronged by them, yet are they of precious eſteeme in the ſight and preſence of God.

When he ioines *obedience* to the obseruation of the Sabbath: thence we may eaſily gather, that in ſpeaking of the day of reſt, hee had not ſo much reſpect to the bare ceremony, as to a perfection of holineſſe. Where againe he impoſeth bands vpon the faithfull, that they ſhould not ſtart the leaſt ſtep from the duties of the whole Law: for it is not permitted them to *chuſe any thing* that likes them, but that which God hath reuealed to be pleaſing and acceptable to him. Hypocriſie and inconfiderate zeale therefore are here condemned, in that God oppoſeth his commandments to reuealed intentions, and inioines them to take ſure hold of his covenant.

Verſ. 5. Euen vnto them will I giue in mine houſe, and within my walles, a place, and a name better then of the

ſonnes and of the daughters: I will giue them an euerlaſting name that ſhall not be put out.

Heere wee may evidently ſee, that the doore is ſet open for all perſons to enter into Gods kingdome (how vnworthy ſo euer they be.) The Prophet alludes to *Ieruſalem*, and to the Temple, wherein the Lord had put the incommutall of his name. Now none but the Iewes had any place there: for they would haue thought the Temple prophaned, if any Gentiles had come within it. And this, as you know, was the cauſe that ſo great a multitude aroſe againſt *Saint Paul*, who had brought ſome vncircumciſed ones into it: Act. 21. 28. But heere the Lord receiues all thoſe without exception, whom before he had reiected: and hath aboliſhed that difference, by bringing vs, who were ſtrangers, into the Temple; that is, into the Church. For it is not now ſhut vp within the bounds of Iudea, as once it was; but it extends it ſelfe farre and neere, thorowout the whole world: as in Marke 16. 15.

The word *lad*, is taken heere, as in many other texts, for *place*. It may alſo be taken for power or authoritie, in regard they are advanced to ſuch dignitie, as to be held for the children of God. Where hee adds, a *better name*, it may be demanded whether the Lord compares the Iewes which were then in the Church, with the faithfull which afterwards he will call into their roome: or the eſtate of the people to come, with that it was then. For it is certaine that the name of the Gentiles is more honourable now, then the name of Iewes, who for their infidelitic were cut off: and we haue ſucceeded them, who being wilde Oliues, were grafted into the naturall ſtocke: as *S. Paul* ſpeakes, Rom. 11. 24. We may expound it then, that the Eunuches and ſtrangers ſhall haue a better name then the children, and thoſe of the houſhold; who were vnto God as his heritage. But I had rather take it in another ſenſe, namely, that the dignitie of the faithfull ſhall be greater vnder Chriſt, then it was vnder the law. The Patriarks had an excellent name, in reſpect that they called vpon God as their Father, and were knit vnto him by (a perpetual) covenant: but at Chriſts coming, Gods grace was more abundantly ſhed abroad; and therefore we at this day haue obtained a better, and much more excellent name then they.

He calles it an *euerlaſting name*, becauſe it is vritten in the heauens, where it ſhall not wither, but ſhall flouriſh for euer. The wicked will haue their names to be remembered in this world, and vſe all the meanes they can that their renowne may continue perpetually: but it is perſhable, and therefore laſts not long. But this is another kind of name; for wee are ſo made heires of the heauely kingdome, that wee are accounted for Gods children in the preſence of his Angels. The word *Aſſubaniſm*, may alſo be interpreted, for the name which a man gets by meanes of his children: for men make their names after a fore

D d d perpetuall

A confirmation.

The dignitie of the new Church is not exte:nall, but ſpiritual.

Hypocriſie and inconfiderate zeale condemned.

perpetuall by their offering. Now the Prophet promisseth that this name shall be much more excellent. But I had rather follow the first exposition.

Verf. 6. *Also the strangers that cleaue vnto the Lord, to serue him, and loue the name of the Lord, and to bee his seruants: enery one that keepeth the Sabbath, and polluteth it not, and imbrace my conuenant.*

ioyfull in mine house of praier: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted vpon mine Altar; for mine house shall be called an house of praier for all people.

BY these phrases of speech hee expresseth that which he said before, to wit, that the strangers which were shut out of Gods Church, are called now vnto it: so as the difference betweene the circumcised and the vncircumcised, shall bee abolished for euer. For these words cannot bee referred to the proselytes; that is, the strangers conuerted to the Iewish religion, who were taken into the body of Gods people by circumcision: for then the Prophet had spoken of no new or vnwonted thing. But hee testifies that Gods grace shall bee spread ouer the whole world; which could not be done, but the Gentiles must needs bee vnited with the Iewes, to make one body with the: which came to passe; whē the difference touching vncircumcision and circumcision was taken away. There is nothing now therefore that can hinder the Gentiles from seruing of God, seeing they are called into the Temple: that is to say, into the societie of the faithfull. Yea, as a little before we noted, the priesthood was translated from the Tribe of Leui; not onely to the whole body of the Iewes, but euen to very strangers also. It is well enough knowne, in how great detestation the Iewes haue this sentence. For albeit they reade these words of the Prophet, yet they hold it for a thing extremely prodigious, that God should call the Gentiles to the participation of this so excellent a benefit, which was peculiarly allotted vnto them. And yet that which the Prophet saith is to manifest, that none can without grosse impudencie, call the truth thereof into question.

He extols this grace by the fruit that should flow from it; for the true and solid felicitie stands in our being vnited with God as his children. I grant that the wicked ouerflow in iollitic; but all their ioy shall be turned into wailing and gnashing of teeth, because it is accured of God. In the meane while, he fills the hearts of the faithfull with vnspokeable ioy, as well in shewing himselfe pacified towards them, as in causing them to feele his fauour and good will, by giuing an happy successe to their affaires. Yet the chiefe and principall ioy consists in the peace of conscience; which Saint Paul attributes to the kingdom of God: Rom. 14. 17. which wee then inioy, when wee are reconciled vnto God by Iesus Christ: Rom. 5. 1.

He also promisseth to accept of their sacrifices: for we are all called of God, to the end we should offer vp our bodies, and all that wee haue, as sacrifices vnto him. By the word *sacrifices*, he meanes Gods spirituall worshippe, such as the Gospell describes vnto vs: for the Prophet spake according to the customes of his owne tyme, wherein the worship of God was wrapped with diuers ceremonies. But now, in stead of sacrifices, wee haue praises, thanksgiuings,

A repetition.
Verf. 5.

HEE repeats that he said before, namely, that God will so open the gates of his Temple to all without exception, that there shall be no more distinction betweene Iew and Gentile: but such as the Lord shall call by his word, Act. 2. 39. which is the band of our adoption, shall be ioined vnto him. And therefore these are those espousals, in *compassion*, and *faithfulness*; wherof Hosea speaks, Chap. 2. 19. 20. Now he not onely allots them an outward court to worship the Lord in, as the people in old time did, Luk. 1. 10. but he attributes vnto them a more honourable order, to wit, that God will auow them for Priests and Leuites, which were prophane before.

But the end of their vocation which immediately followes, is to be noted, namely, that the Prophet saith, they shall be *Ministers* of the Lord, on condition that they *loue the name* of the Lord. And thus all hypocrites are heere reiected, because the expresse tenor of our vocation runnes thus; that we *serue* the Lord with a free and ready affection of the heart: for wee cannot serue him, vnlesse wee yeeld him a franke and voluntary obedience. That therefore which is said of almes-giuing, ought to be applied to all the parts of our life; namely, God loues a cheerefull giuer: 2. Cor. 9. 7. that thus vnto our Lord and Master, wee may render such a seruice as proceeds from Ioue.

Hypocrites
reiected.

In adding, *whosoever shall keepe*: hee againe mentions the Sabbath; vnder which (as we haue said before) the whole worship of God is comprehended. But the people neglected that which they should principally haue obserued vpon this day: for in contenting themselves with the outward ceremonie, they omitted the truth; that is to say, amendment of life. The Lord on the other side meant they should so rest, that yet in the meane while they should keepe their *hands*, verf. 2. and their *soules* pure from all vncleanes and iniquitie.

Vnder the particle, *and shall imbrace*: he expresseth the zeale and constancie of such as subiect themselves vnto God, and cleaue fast vnto his word. If therefore wee be ioined to the Lord by *conuenant*, wee must keepe it steadfastly, and be fast glued as it were to the pure doctrine, that nothing whatsoever may turne vs backe, or diuide vs from him.

Verf. 7. *Them will I bring also to mine holy mountaine, and make them*

The difference betweene the circumcised and vncircumcised taken away.

Verf. 6.

thanksgiuings,

1 thankſgiuings, good works, &c. And laſtly, wee
 2 offer vp our bodies and ſoules: Rom. 12. 1. When
 3 he ſaith their ſacrifices are acceptable: let vs
 not thinke the ſame proceeds from their me-
 rit or excellencie, but from the free bounty
 of God: for he might iuſtly reiect them, if he
 onely looked vpon them as they are in them-
 ſelues. And yet by this goade are wee quick-
 ned vp with a prompt deſire to ſerue God,
 ſeeing he aſſures vs that our works (which are
 nothing) are yet no leſſe pleaſing in his
 ſight, then if they were pure and ipſoſe
 ſacrifices.

See Exod.
 28 36. 37. 38.

He addes, *upon mine altar*: for the ſacrifices
 were not allowed of God, vnleſſe they tooke
 their holines from the altar vpon which they
 were offered. And thus, whatſoever we offer,
 ſhall be vncleane, vnleſſe it bee ſanctified by
 Chriſt, who is our altar. See Chap 63 7.

Chriſt our
 Altar.

For mine houſe ſhall be called, &c. The Tem-
 ple was onelic deſtinated to the Iewes, by
 whom the Lord would eſpecially be called
 vpon. And therefore when Paul would ſhew
 that the Iewes were aboute the Gentiles in
 dignitie, he ſaith, that to them belonged the
 ſeruite of God: Rom. 9. 4. Thus then the Tem-
 ple was built amongst them by a ſpeciall pri-
 uiledge, ſeeing no other nation in the world
 was permitted to haue the like. But now that
 difference is taken away, and euery perſon,
 of what place or Countrie ſoever, may enter
 into the Temple: that is to ſay, into Gods
 houſe, becauſe all nations are called to wor-
 ſhip God. Here then we ſee the manifeſt dif-
 ference betwene the Law and the Goſpell:
 for vnder the Law, there was but one people
 which might ſerue God purelie; for which
 cauſe the Temple was particularly built: but
 now all may freely enter into Gods Temple,
 there purely to worſhip him: that is to ſay,
 euery where.

The diffe-
 rence be-
 twene the
 Law and the
 Goſpell.

But wee muſt note the phraſes of ſpeech
 which are vſual and familiar among the Pro-
 phets: for they vſe ſuch figures as fitted their
 owne times (as we haue already ſhewed): for
 by the Temple and ſacrifices they meane Gods
 pure worſhip and ſeruite. The Prophet here
 therefore ſets forth or deſcribes the ſpiritual
 Kingdome of Chriſt, vnder which it is lawfull
 to call vpon God, and to liſt vp pure hands in
 euery place, 1. Tim. 2. 8. And neither in this
 place nor at Ieruſalem, ſaith Chriſt, ſhall men
 worſhip the Father any more: but the true
 worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in ſpirit
 and truth, verſ. 23. With our eies therefore do
 we behold the accompliſhment of this pro-
 pheſie, namelic, that Gods houſe is made the
 houſe of prayer to all nations, that ſo in all
 languages he may be called vpon, *Abba Father*.
 The Iewes therefore can no longer boaſt that
 they onely are Gods peculiars. Thus you ſee
 then how neceſſarie it was that the Prophets
 ſhould ſure their manners of ſpeech to the
 times and cuſtomes then in vſe, that ſo all
 might vnderſtand them: for the time of the
 full and open reuelation of things was not
 yet come, but Gods ſeruite was clothed with
 diuers figures.

Mat. 1. 11.

And yet no queſtion but this Temple thus
 conſecrated for the ſeruite of God, was truly

and really his houſe: for he had told by Mo-
 ſes, that he would be preſent in euery place
 where he ſhould put the remembrance of his
 name, Exod. 20. 24. And Salomon in dedicating
 the Temple ſaid, When they ſhall come and
 pray in this houſe, then wilt thou heare in hea-
 uen thy dwelling place, 1. King. 8. 33. which is
 the cauſe why Chriſt reproceheth the Iewes
 for making his Fathers houſe a denne of
 theeuces, Math. 21. 13. and thereunto addes this
 our text to that in Iere. 7. 11. Now Chriſt cal-
 led the Temple the houſe of prayer, as ha-
 uing reſpect to thoſe times in which the Goſ-
 pell was not yet publiſhed. For albeit he was
 come, yet he was not then knowne, neither
 were the ceremonies of the law aboliſhed.
 But when the valle of the Temple was rent
 in twaine, Mat. 27 31. and remiſſion of ſinnes
 preached in his name, Luk. 24. 46. Act. 13. 38.
 then theſe high praifes touching the Temple
 and other ceremonies tooke their end, for
 then God began to be called vpon of all
 nations.

And yet herewithall let vs marke that we
 are called into the Church vpon condition
 that we call vpon the name of God. For thoſe
 do but glorie in vain who hold a place there-
 in, and yet make little or none account of
 prayers, nor of true inuocation. In what place
 ſoever we be then, let vs beware we deſpiſe
 not this exerciſe of faith, ſeeing it ſufficientlie
 appears by the words of our Prophet, that
 prayer is the greateſt and the moſt excellent
 ſeruite that God requires of vs: as alſo it is
 ſaid in Pſal. 50. 15. that the holines of the Temple
 conſiſted in the prayers which then had their
 forcé there.

We are cal-
 led into the
 Church. vpon
 condition
 to call vpon
 God.

Verſ. 8. *The Lord ſaith which gathereth
 the ſcattered of Iſrael, yet will I gather
 to them ſhoſe that are ſo be gathered
 to them.*

*Or, vpon
 him.

HE againe confirms that which he ſaid be-
 fore touching the reſtaurbing of the
 people, for he hath heretofore wonderfullie
 extolled that grace of God wherby he ſould
 deliuer his choſen: but the eſtate of the
 Church was ſuch, that theſe promiſes ſeemed
 ridiculous. Theſe are no needles repetitions
 therefore, but were of neceſſitie to be added
 for the ſuſtentation of the weaké, that that
 which otherwiſe was incredible, might be aſ-
 ſuredly confirmed vnto them.

A confirma-
 tion of the
 former do-
 ctine.

Who gathers &c.] Iſaiah giues God this title
 in regard of the circumſtance of the matter
 in hand, becauſe it is his office to gather in the
 Church when it is ſcattered abroad, which is
 confirmed in the ſame ſenſe out of the words
 of the 147. Pſal. verſ. 2. The Lord builds vp Ie-
 ruſalem, and gathers together the diſperſed of Iſ-
 rael. For this cauſe then he promiſeth to aſ-
 ſemble them againe, yea, and to ioine diuers
 nations vnto them, that ſo the Church might
 grow and multiply into a great number. As
 oft then as we doubt of the reſtauration of
 the Church by being aſtoniſhed at the ſight
 of ſo many ſtormes & tempeſts wherewith it
 is toſſed, let vs lay hold vpon this buckler,

and couer our selues therewith, namely, that it is the Lords office to gather together the dispersed of Israel; yea, though they were diuided and scattered to the utmost part vnder heauen, yet, that euen thence will the Lord easilie gather vs, and restore vs to our perfect estate: Deut. 30.4.

Yet will I gather upon him, I willinglie retain the proprietie of the Prophets words: Gnal, that is, to, or vpon: for (as I thinke) he hath an'ie vnto that which he said in the former verse, namely, that the Temple should be set open to all people: and here signifies, that God shall adde to the Iewes which should be gathered a great number of others, which is now indeed accomplished. For he not onely gathered together those which were dispersed in Babylon, but also gathers together other scattered theepe, which often, and almost euery day came to passe, Iolin 10.16. so as he neuer ceased gathering till he had added a great heape to those which were first gathered.

Verf. 9. All ye beasts of the field, come to deuoure, euen all ye beasts of the forest.

Having comforted the faithfull, he now turns himselfe to the hypocrites.

IT seems this prophesie agrees not with the former, because whatsoever the Prophet hath hitherto spoken was full of sweet consolation, and now he denounceth terrible threatnings, and an horrible destruction. Truly one would take these things as contradictorie one to another. But having comforted the faithfull, we must not thinke it strange if he now aduertise them notwithstanding touching the calamitie which should ensue, to the end that whē they should see all things in an vprore and confusion, yet they should not faint nor be discouraged: as also that their necessities might therewithall stir them vp to runne to the free grace of God with the greater zeale and diligence. There was yet another reason. For the hypocrites abuse Gods promises, and glorie thereof falsely: they are readie to conceiue a vaine hope, proudly insulting in those matters which do nothing at all belong vnto them. Now you see the cause then why the Prophet meant to disappoint them of all matter of reioicing. And thus this prophesie hath a two-fold vie: First, to preserue the faithfull from desperation at the sight of so many calamities which should in a manner ouerwhelme them: and that euen whilest all things were quiet, by faith foreseeing the euils to come, yet they should content themselves with this only remedie. Secondly, that the hypocrites might be astonished with feare and trembling, that they should not insult in their ouerweepings, nor blesse themselves, vnder pretence of these promises.

God therefore calles not men, but cruell beasts to deuoure the people. He commands the faithfull then not to be troubled, nor to suffer themselves to be transported in their minds by distrust whē these wild beasts should be sent. And yet therewithall he meant to awaken them that he might draw them to repentance: and to exhort them patientlie to

This Chapter hath a two-fold vie.

wait for Gods mercie, that so the promises might not lose their authoritie.

By the *beasts of the field*, he meanes all sorts of beasts, and so comprehends not onely the Chaldeans, and Assyrians, but also *Antiochus*, the Romanes, and other nations, who afflicted this people with diuers warres. But he especiallie respects that discomfort of y people by the Chaldeans, who afterwards led them captiues into miserable thraldome.

Antiochus.

Verf. 10. Their watchmen are all blind: they haue no knowledge: they are all dumb dogges: they can not barke: they lie and sleepe, and delight in sleeeping.

NOW he addes the cause why the people were destinated to this destruction, namely, in regard they were gouerned by wicked Princes and Pastors. Not that the fault rested wholly in them, and that the people were innocent; but because their sinne was the beginning of this mischiefe. For if we follow *blind* guides, that shall not excuse vs; but we rather worthily beare the punishment of our owne iniquities, in regard the Lord takes away good Governours fro such as he meanes to chastise for their vthankfulness.

The cause of the peoples destruction.

By the word *watchmen*, he not only vnderstands the *Prophets* which had the gift or charge of teaching, but the *Judges*, Governours, & Kings, whose dutie it is to administer all things with equitie and vprightnes. And thus he comprehends two sorts of governours, namely, both Ciuill and Ecclesiasticall, whom the Lord had established as the two eyes in the bodie for the well ordering of y Church. If they be wicked or faithlesse, there can not a more dangerous plague happen to the Common-wealth.

1
2

Magistracie and Ministrie, as the two eyes in mans body, to gouerne the Church by.

In the first place then the Prophet reprocheth them for their *ignorance*. For as the principall verue of a good Pastor is to know what belongs to his charge, that he may be able to discern and iudge what is profitable or hurtfull for his flock, and then to watch over them carefullie, and to stand as it were vpon his *watch-tower*, that by all means he may procure the saluation of his sheepe: so is there nothing in the world that doth worse befeeme him then *ignorance & blindness*. No man then shall be fit for this office, vnlesse he be acquainted with the right manner of gouerning the people. Hence it appears what account it is to be made of the *Idols* of our time, who proudly vaunt with intollerable insolencie of the title of Pastors, though in the meane while they be vnlearned, and grossly ignorant.

1. Ignorance.

Nothing more vnseemly then ignorance in a Minister.

Idoll Ministers.

Secondly, in calling them *dumb dogges*, he taxeth them of *idleness*, and carelesnes. For seeing it is required of a good Pastor that he be diligent & industrious: in calling them *slow bellies*, he shewes there was nought in them worthie the title of Pastors. When wee then are deprived of good Pastors, and that either sots, or cruell wolues succeed them, let vs see and acknowledge Gods wrath therein; and let vs assure our selues that destruction is not farre

2. Idleness.

Destruction not farre off whē learned and painefull Pastors are remoued, and ignorant idle bellies placed in their rooms.

farre off. For from thence, the Prophet gathers his threatnings, and denounceth delolation to the people, when their *Pastors* are *dumbe*: Prou. 29. 18. It follows then, that *Pastors* are ordained of God to performe the office of *dogges*: that is to say, to watch, to feare away theeues and robbers, and not to suffer them to enter into the sheepfold. If *dogges* then stand so carefully vpon their watch, and in such wise regard their Masters profit, as to be alwayes watching for his safetie, and will neuer cease barking at those, who it may be are able to kill them: ought not the sleepe and idle *Pastors* blush to bee ouer-matched by a brute beast?

Vers. 11. *And these greedie dogges can neuer haue enough: and these shepheardes cannot vnderstand; for they all looke to their owne way, euerie one for his aduantage, and for his owne purpose.*

3. Couetousnesse.

THe third vice he reproues in these wicked *Pastors*, is their *insatiable couetousnesse*. Though they be idle in gouerning, saith he, yet they are valiant and hardie enough in supping vp the broth. Some extend these words of the Prophet further, namely, that such rule with eueltie: and this vice is expressly reprooued by *Ezechiel*, 34. 4. For false *Prophets* are ordinarily fierce, and behaue themselves vniciously and barbarously ouer the poore people. But hee that shall aduise himselfe well touching these words, hee shall see that the Prophet taxeth their vnmeasurable auarice, which hee also in the next words paints out at large.

Euery one looke to his owne way.] That is to say, they are diligent in their affaires. *Euery one seekes his aduantage.* In a word, his meaning is, that there was none, but preferred himselfe first: as if euery one had bin borne for himselfe onely.

The word *Mikhsafelu*, is diuersly expounded; for some translate; To his end: that is to say, to his affaires: but this agrees not with the *Prophets* meaning. Others; After the limits of his couetousnesse. But the most naturall sense (as I thinke) is *right*: which phrase of speech, is also common among vs. *Euery one* then being giuen vnto couetousnesse, they drew and appropriated all things vnto themselves, seeking their owne commoditie, without regarding the good of others.

He which is giuen to inordinate lusts, can neuer serue God.

Hence wee gather, that he which is giuen to inordinate lusts, can neuer serue God: and *whosoeuer he be that bustes his braines to heape vp riches, will neuer apply his mind to build up the Church of the Lord.* I know not a more dangerous blindnesse then couetousnesse. A true *Pastor* therefore ought above all other vices to flee that, if he will serue God faithfully. Doe wee see then that the Prophet complained thus of the wicked *Pastors* of his time? Let vs not bee troubled if the like befall vs now: neither let vs thinke it any new thing, if

vie.

wee see so few to inploy themselves in good earnest, in the worke of the Lord.

Vers. 12. *Come, I Will bring wine, and wee will fill our selues with strong drinke: and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.*

I Auing reproued the *conterfessie* and *idleness* of the *Pastors*: now hee sets forth their *malice* and desperate obstinacie: for hee brings them in speaking, and describes their wicked talke: whereby we may discern, they could not be reduced into the right way, neither by any admonitions nor threatnings; but audaciously contemned whatsoever was said vnto the. In *Chap. 22. 13. & 28. 15.* the *Prophet* hath recited the flouts of *scornets*, who invited one another to play the *epicures* and drunkards, whilest by the seruants of God they were exhorted to fast in sackcloth and ashes. Let vs eate and drinke, say they, for to morrow we shall die: as if they should haue said; What meane these *Prophets* to importune vs so much? Wee shall looke but with leane cheekes, if wee follow their counsell. These and the like blasphemies they were not afraid to vtter: as we haue scene in *Chap. 22. and 28.* And *Isaiah* repeats the same complaint heere, to wit, that the *Pastors* hardened their hearts, and obstinately contemned the iudgements of God.

4. Desperate obstinacie.

Now hee reproues them not for drinking *vine* and *strong drinke*, which in it selfe is no vnlawfull thing: but he taxeth their brainesicknesse and brutishnesse, which makes men proudly and presumptuously to despise the word of the Lord. The abuse of wine is condemned in other places. But the *Prophet* in this place inueighs against this frantike malapartnesse, whereby they loftily combined themselves against God, and trampled vnder feete all threatnings, admonitions, reprehensions; and in a word, all religion. And yet no doubt but hee taxeth this horrible and hateful vice, in that they ouercharged themselves with wine and meates, when they had no neede; that neither shame, feare, nor reuerence of God or man, might disquiet their meriments. For it is the custome of the wicked, to glut themselves with all the belly-cheere they can deuise; that so they may with the greater boldnesse and intemperancie, plunge themselves in their filthinesse. But is it not an horrible and fearefull example to see such a contempt of God; not in strangers, nor among the common people; but in the heads and gouernours, who by their godly conuersation, (in this holy and sacred order, which was the figure of *Christ*) should haue bin guides vnto others? For the *Kings* and *Priests* bare in them his image, and were types of him. Wee may easily iudge how insupportable this pride is, whereby men thus furiously oppose themselves against Gods word. For when we come once to recite this soueraigne and last medicine, our case is desperate; we are past cure; because we will not

Chap. 5.

suffer the Lord to bring vs againe into the right way. For this cause, in Chap. 22. 14. the Lord vowes, that *this iniquitie shall neuer be pardoned.*

Thus then the Prophet notes out an extreme impietie: and let vs obserue his words diligently; *To morrow shall be as this day:* that is to say; Haue we bin merry to day? wee will be yet more merry to morrow; let vs not pine our selues away before the time.

He applies their fault, because in deriding Gods patience and long suffering, they promised to themselves impunity: as if

God slept, or sat idle in heauen, as oft as hee deserues his iudgements. Men at this day in debt or to benumme and bewitch their owne consciences with such diabolically proverbs as these, mentioned in this text, that they may the more freely wallow themselves in all sorts of voluptuousnesse, and take libertie to commit wicked and execrable impieties. That we then may escape this horrible iudgement of God, let euery one search and try his owne waies, and a far off let vs espie the wrath of God; lest being ouertaken at vnawares, wee be suddenly ouerwhelmed therewith.

Diuellish proverbs.

THE LVII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *The righteous perisheth, and no man considereth in heart: and mercifull men are taken away; and no man understandeth that the righteous is taken away from the euill to come.*

The Prophet continues on his argument still.



Isaiah prosecutes his argument still. For hauing shewed how securely hypocrits repose themselves in their pleasures, and with what impudencie they despise Gods word; he further complaines, that they consider not the workes of the Lord: for we are placed in this world, as vpon a spacious Theatre, to behold the acts of our God. Neither is there any of his workes, how meane soeuer they appeare in our eyes, that we should lightly esteeme; but ought rather diligently and attentiuely to obserue and consider them. Now among other testimonies of his providence, the Lord sets before vs the death of the *faithfull*, and of approved men whom hee takes out of *this world*, when he is purposed severely to chastise and correct his people. But no man laies it to heart, neither imagines that such matters should be forerunners of imminent destruction, namely, that the good are gathered to God, and laid vp in safetie, that they may not be wrapped vp with others, in so many common miseries. The summe is, that the wicked greatly deceiue themselves, in thinking that the prolonging of their liues, should bee the onely happinesse that can befall them: and that for this cause they should take themselves to be in better case then the faithfull, who die sooner then they. For as they are glued to the world, so vnder this pretence, doe they harden their owne hearts, that (as they suppose) God fauours them exceedingly, in suffering them to bee safe and sound, whilst others die.

If by men of mercy you vnderstand the charitable and pitifull, then this epithete must be diligently noted; for thereby the Prophet shewes what the true *righteousnesse* of Gods

children is, whereas hypocrites place their righteoussesse in things of no value. Now there is no vertue more pleasing vnto God, then liberalitie, whereby wee manifest our righteoussesse, and discouer vnto all an heart void of guile. But *mercifull men* may as well be taken in the passiuie signification, namely, for such to whom the Lord shewes mercie: for this manner of speech is common enough among the Hebrewes. Neither is it from the purpose to say, that the grace of God should be priuily opposed to the peruerse and sinister iudgements of men, who are wont to condemne such as die in the flower of their youth. And yet seeing the Prophet in many places adorns the children of God with this title, of being *mercifull* and libetall, I see no inconuenience, if (as I haue said) we make it a true definition of righteoussesse.

By this it appeares that then the Lord gathered a great number of good men out of the world vnto himself, whose death prognosticated some horrible calamitie; & yet that the Iewes regarded not such forewarnings. Nay, which is worst of all, they tooke occasion thereby to ouerflow with the greater freedome in all licentiousnesse, thinking all should goe well with them, when they surruied the best men.

Now this doctrine is very fitting for all ages & times. For, for the most part, it comes to passe that God takes the good out of this world, when hee is purposed sharply to punish the sinnes of the wicked. Why so? Surely as hee hath a tender care ouer those that be his, so hee puls them often times as brands out of the fire, hauing compassion on them, to the end that such as shall suruiue them, may therein perceiue a token of Gods wrath. And yet this is not a perpetuall law, seeing the elect are often wrapped vp in the temporall iudgements with the wicked. Notwithstanding the taking of them away first, is a thing so ordinary, that it seldome fallies out otherwise: where of in our time we haue a famous example in the death of *Martin Luther*, who was taken out of this world a little before Germany was pitifullly wasted with that furious warre, which many yeeres before he had foretold, whilst hee thundered against the

Martin Luther's death.

the contempt of the Goſpell: againſt the villainies and foule enormities which then overflowed in every place. Often he entreated the Lord to take him out of this life before he ſhould ſee thoſe horrible iudgements which he had threatned: the apprehenſion whereof made him to quake for feare: and this requeſt he obtained of the Lord. Soone after his death a ſudden and unexpected war began to invade, and miſerable to afflict Germanie: euen then when they ſuſpected nothing leſſe. And examples hereof alſo we have daily. And doubtleſſe, if men did well conſider of them, they would not flatter themſelves ſo much in their iniquities as they doe. But I have thought it good to recite this in particular, not onely becauſe it hath happened within theſe few yeeres: but alſo that it might be the more apparant, in regard it fell out according to that which ſo excellent a Preacher of the Goſpell, and a Prophet of God had foretold. We therefore ought diligently to obſerve the worke of the Lord as well in y^e lives, as in the death of the iuſt: but moſt of all in their death. Whereby the Lord calles them to the enjoying of a better life: that ſo they may bee deliuered from thoſe miſeries, into which the wicked muſt at length be plunged.

Verſ. 2. *Peace ſhall come: they ſhall reſt in their beds, euery one that walketh before him.*

THe Prophet here deſcribes what the ſtate of the faithfull is after death. For the wicked who thinke there is no life after this, do iudge that good men are periſhed, becauſe they can apprehend nothing in death but ruine and perdition. Iſaiah therefore ſaith, that ſuch a *peace ſhall come*, as is more deſireable then a thouſand lives that are replenished with troubles. As if hee compared the good to crased ſouldiers, who are permitted quietly to take their eaſe.

He addes the ſimilitude of ſleepe, to ſhew, that they ſhall bee ſet free, and deliuered from all diſquietneſſe and care, as if they ſafely and ſweetly ſlept in their beds. Whereas he addes, *euery one that walkes*: I referre not whoſoever to the word *peace*, as ſome expound it. Namely, that peace ſhall goe before the faithfull, as if it led them the way. But I thinke he therein notes out the faithfull. As if hee ſhould ſay, Whoſoever walkes before God, he ſhall haue peace. And therefore when the righteous doe die, they (after the enduring of many troubles) are called to peace and reſt, as hauing finiſhed their courſe.

Now they reſt in their beds, in regard they doe not yet inioy full and perfect glorie and bleſſedneſſe: but wait for the laſt day which ſhall be the time of their reſurrexion, where in all things ſhall be fully reſtored. And mee thinke Iſaiah meant to ſay ſo. But, may ſome ſay, Doe not the iuſt inioy peace in this preſent life? For the fruite of faith is that wee poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience, Luk. 21. 19. Rom. 5. 1. I anſwere, that albeit faith begets

peace in our hearts, yet notwithstanding wee are toſſed to an ſea with many waues, and are neuer ſo ſecure and quiet in this life, as when the Lord drawes vs home to himſelfe. The death of the iuſt then you ſee brings them to a ſweete reſt and peace, becauſe the ſame is precious in Gods ſight: Pſalm. 116. 15. But the death of the wicked is full of horror. From this place alſo we may gather, that our ſoules are immortal: for were they without any ſenſe, as ſome braineleſſe ones haue dreamed, then could they not bee ſaid to enioy any peace. They are in peace and reſt then, becauſe they liue in Chriſt.

Verſ. 3. *But you witches children, come hither, the ſeed of the adulterer, and of the whore.*

HAuing ſpoken of the happie and peaceable death of the faithfull; he inueighs with exceeding vehemencie againſt the wicked, who for all this, ceaſed not to leade a leaud and laſciuious life without taking the death of the righteous to heart. For as he hath affirmed that the faithfull are in peace: ſo contrariwiſe he denounceth an vnreconcilable warre againſt the other. Nay, which more is, he hath ſhewed that death to Gods ſeruants is an hiding place which defends them from the whirlewind, haile, and other tempeſts: that afterwards the obſtinate contentners may bee laid open to all ſorts of calamities. For we muſt note here the oppoſition betweene the faithfull which walke before God: and the wicked who ceaſe not obſtinately to reſiſt him. The former after death, ſhall haue peace: the latter ſhall bee vexed whileſt they liue, and after death ſhall feele horrible torment.

He ſummons them before Gods iudgement ſeate: becauſe they thought to eſcape by their ſophiſtications. But he ſhewes that they ſhall gaine nothing thereby, becauſe they ſhall be drawne before the ſame whether they will or no. For, as they had made their hearts ouer hard, ſo was it needfull that they ſhould be pricked with the ſharper launcers: doubtleſſe the Prophet could not vſe too much ſeueritie, as well to awaken their drowneſſe, as to beate downe their pride. Who knows not with how great outweening the lewes inſult in regard of their race? The Prophets therefore are vſually wont to cruſh this their arrogancie and hee mindednes; by affirming that they were none of Abrahams children, in reſpect they beuaught themſelves as baſtards, and ſuch as were degenerate.

This is the cauſe why our Prophet termes them, the *ſeed of the adulterer, and of the whore*. Wich which alſo Ezechiel reprocheth them in Chap. 16. 3. ſaying, Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite. And the like phraſes of ſpeech are vſed in many other places: Hoſea. 1. 2. Thus then hee brings their intollerable pride downe to the ground, and in deſpite of their teeth drawes them forth into the light, that they ſhould not thinke they could eſcape the tribunall ſeate of God.

The ſtate of the faithfull after their death.

ſimile.

Queſt.

Anſ.

The curſed life and death of the wicked, oppoſed to the bleſſed life and end of the godly.

Verf. 4. *On Whom haue yee iested? upon whom haue ye gaped and thrust out your tongues? Are not yee rebellious children, and a false seede.*

Hypocrites vnmarked in this, and the verses following.

THe Prophet shewes that the Iewes haue no occasion at all to glorie so much vnder pretence of their linage or stocke, seeing they derided the Prophets of God. Now they thought it was but with men, with whom they had to deale when they reiected the word. And so at this day wee see how impudently the wicked despise the doctrine of their saluation, and scorne the Ministers of it; and yet in the meane while, couer themselves vnder a vaine shew of religion. This is the reason then wherefore the Prophet preseth them so neere, and reprooues them so sharply. As if he should say, When you thrust out your tongues in this manner against God, and scorne his word, doe ye thinke you haue to deale with a mortal man? For these words, *on whom*, signifies that they sought out euasions and pretences to cloake their impietic withall. For the vngodly will not acknowledge that they rebell against God: no, they thinke soule scorne any man should so iudge of them: but yet they must bee brought out into the light, and conuincd of their wickednesse. And seeing there is a God, they must be told that they make open warre vpon him, in resisting or in reiecting his word, and in esteeming no better thereof, then of a fable.

To open the mouth, and to thrust out the tongue, is heere taken in one signification: ynesse that vnder these two phrases the Prophet meant the better to discouer their impudencie, namely, in that they thought it not enough only to reiect the Lord, but they must also deride him. For the inward contempt of the heart caused them to vtter forth such manifest scories and blasphemies, so as they were not touched at all with any feare of dishonoring themselves.

Lastly he concludes, that they are rebellious children, a lying seede, and therefore hath iust cause to esteeme them the *sonnes of an whore*, for such a contempt could not be found in the children of Abraham. By this we learne how the wicked ought to be handled, and with what seueritie they are to be reprobud, that they may haue no cause left them wherby to flatter themselves: and, the more they despise whatsoeuer is propounded vnto them in the name of God, the more ought we to discouer and to manifest in all mens sight their impieties so full of sacrilege.

Verf. 5. *Inflamed with Idols vnder euery greene tree? and sacrificing the children in the valleyes vnder the tops of the rocks.*

Others translate, Who take pleasure in consolation. But our Prophet takes a similitude vsed in many places of the Scrip-

tures, and very fitting to the circumstance of this place. For the Lord is wont to compare *lust*, wherewith poore and miserable Idolaters are furiously transported and inflamed, to the loue of brothels, for they keepe no measure at all, neither will they suffer any to restraine them from their follie. Now Idolatrie in Gods sight is a most hatefull kind of whoredome.

As touching the Hebrue word *Elim*, some translate it *Gods*, others *okes*; we may take it in whether sense we will, for there will be no great difference: and all the expositors agree that the Prophet condemnes Idolatrie. I contend not then about the words, though it be very likely that one thing is repeated twice, according to the custome of the Hebrues: and yet it may be vnder an ambiguous word he alludes to their gods.

Sacrificing children. Heere he preseth the Iewes neerer, and shewes that they are none of *Abrahams* true children. Why so? Because they polluted themselves with all manner of superstitions: and in regard they pleased themselves in such forgeries, therefore he discouers their villanies. As if he should say, You pretend religion, but I protest that you play the whoremongers with Idols. For thus must wee manifest and point out (as it were with the finger) the impietic which subtle and politique heads inducor to varnish ouer with sundrie delightfull colours. The Prophet therefore discharged his dutie most faithfullie, in adiuring them thus before Gods tribunall, and in prouing to their faces that they were guiltie, though they meant to play the cauillers to the full.

Now he shewes that they were rebellious, and had reuolted from Gods law through detestable Idolatries. Then he comes to some particulars, and mentions an horrible, nay, a prodigious and execrable kinde of seruice, namely, *Sacrificing of children*. Whence it is euident, how greatly the spirit of error preuailes ouer men after they haue once turned away from God. For Satan so possesseth their vnderstandings, that he makes them become starke bedlems. For we must needs conclude that such are frantique and out of their wits *who spare not their owne children*, but will cut their throates, and thinke they haue then performed an acceptable sacrifice. And yet these cruell murtherers wanted not their pretences wherewith to couer their execrable villanies, to wit, *the example of Abraham, who spared not his only sonne*. For the ancient Hebrues are of opinion that these customes proceeded fro an inconsiderate zeale: as if they should haue said, Seeing wee are descended from *Abraham*, we ought no more to spare our children then he did. But this good Patriarke did it in obedience to God, Gen. 22. 2. 12. 16. and these on the contrarie had no commandement, but did it on their owne heads.

Abrahams example was extraordinarie, in which the Lord meant to prouue and to manifest to all the faith of his seruant. Again, *Isack* was not offered, in respect that the Lord satisfied himselfe with *Abrahams* prompt and readie willingnes; but these sacrificed their children,

How greatly the spirit of error preuailes in such as are reuolted fro God.

Abrahams example in offering vp his sonne inconsiderately and peccerfully followed of the Iewes.

children: and therefore this imitation was peruerſe and damnable, ſeeing they trode nothing at all in the ſteppes of their father. This muſt be well obſerued: for the moſt of our ſuperſtitious obſeruāces haue ſprung frō this fountaine of incoſiderate zeale, becauſe men haue greedily ſnatched at any occaſion, and without iudgement haue followed what-ſocuer their fathers haue done.

Whence ſu-
perſtitious
haue ſprung

Verſ. 6. *Thy portion is in the ſmooth ſtones of the riuer: they, they are thy lot: euen to them haſt thou poured a drinke-offering: thou haſt offered a ſacrifice. Should I delight in theſe?*

Hee proſecutes the ſame argument, and ſundry waies taxeth the ſuperſtitious which raigned in Iudea; for there was no place exempt from idolatry: there was neither rocks, riuers, rallies, nor any corner free, wherein they had not left ſome memoriall of their ſuperſtitious. They had their woods and mountaines, where they ſacrificed according to the cuſtomes of the heathen.

Whether we reade it *poliſhed ſtones* here, or Parts of the riuer, the ſenſe will be alwaies one. For the Prophets meaning is that the Iewes choſe a ſeruice of God after their owne fantaſie, and turned themſelues away from that rule which he had preſcribed them in his law. Alſo, that by meanes hereof all the ſacrifices by them deuſed were wicked and abominable, in regard God only ought to be heard, when there is any queſtion touching his religion and worſhip. If you will turne it *poliſhed ſtones*, then *Iſaiah* taxeth them for the contempt of the law, wherein God had forbidden them to *cuſ* or *poliſh* any ſtones with hammers for the framing of his Altar: Exod. 20. 25. Deut. 27. 5. 6. becauſe he would haue them ſacrifice no where elſe but vpon one only Altar. But in reſpect that it was the faſhion of the Heathen to erect Temples iueere vnto fountaines and riuers, the other ſenſe agrees well alſo.

Theſe words *theſe, they*, haue great weight: and it is to be vnderſtood as if the Lord gaue the Iewes leaue to cleaue to their inuentions, ſeeing they had forſaken him, and rather turned after Idols, and forged inuentions. As alſo the Lord by *Ezechiel* ſaith to the people, *Goe, and ſacrifice every one of you to his Idoll, ſeeing you will not obey me*: Ezech. 20. 39. And as I thinke this expoſition agrees beſt. As if he ſhould ſay; I euen leaue you to your owne inuentions; and it contents me that you are whollie addicted therunto. And yet no doubt but the Prophet alludes to that place of *Moſes*, by whoſe mouth God had promiſed to be the *lot* and *portion* of his people, that they might content themſelues with him alone. According to which alſo *Dauid* ſaith, The Lord is my *portion* and my inheritance: Pſal. 16. 5. For as much as the Iewes then were reuolted from God, and followed Idols, the Lord had juſt cauſe to ſay they might cleaue vnto them, thereby ſhewing that they ſhould haue no more to doe with him.

To them haſt thou poured drinke-offings.] He continues to put them ſtill in mind of their ſuperſtitious, and proues that they had renounced and forſaken God, becauſe they had attributed vnto them whatſocuer he would ſhould be whollie reſerued as his proper right vnto himſelfe. But the Iewes might haue replied to euery one of the Prophets words, and haue ſaid; that in all theſe things they had none other purpoſe the to ſerue God. And yet you ſee the Prophet ſeares not to charge them with idolatry, for all their vaine and idle pretences: for Gods wrath is prouoked by ſuperſtitious; and the longer they be continued and maintained, the more hotter doth it wax. Hence let vs learne what ſobrietie we ought to keepe in erecting Gods worſhippe, that we may depend vpon his onely will and word. For hee that ſhall ſwarue but the leaſt iot from that, ſhall not onely loſe his time, but ſhall alſo inkindle Gods diſpleaſure againſt him, whoſe Maieſtie, as much as in him is, hee labours to violate and diminiſh.

Should I delight?] We may alſo turne it; *Should I repent?* And this is the moſt receiued interpretation, becauſe hee meanes to ſhew the cauſe wherefore hee chaſtiſeth the people. As if he ſhould ſay; When I ſhall reuenge theſe enormities, can I repent? Notwithſtanding the expoſition which I haue followed, ſeemes to ſure beſt: Should *I take delight* or comfort in theſe ſacrifices which you offer mee? For idolaters are wont to pleaſe and flatter themſelues in their inuentions; and therefore preſume that God alſo reioiceth and takes delight and comfort in all things, vpon which they dote with burning luſt. Such an *interrogation* is not ſuperfluous then, when men thinke that God reſembles them, and that he likes and approoues of all that they thinke well of: but he on the contrary ſhewes, that nothing *pleaſeth* him, nor is approued of him, but that which accords with his word.

Interrogation.

Verſ. 7. *Thou haſt made thy bed vpon every high mountaine: thou wenteſt vp thither, euen thither wenteſt thou to offer a ſacrifice.*

Hee repeats the ſame ſimilitude againe which we haue touched before. For ſuperſtitious ſort commit whordome with their Idols; in regard that hauing forſaken the puritie of the word, they breake that holy marriage *knos* which God had contracted with them; and ſell themſelues ouer vnto Satan. But *Iſaiah* meant here to expreſſe ſomewhat more: for in telling them that they had made *their bed* in an high place, it is as much as if he had ſaid; they were become ſhameleſſe, for they cared not *who ſaw* their villanic, no more then an impudent harlot ſinnes the preſence of men, but is careleſſe of her reputation: ſo theſe committed whordome in the ſight of the Sunne, and being paſt ſhame, aſcended vp to *every high and imminent place*, to doe it in.

A repetition of the former ſimilitude, verſ. 4.

Hee compares Chapels and Altars to beds, vpon

vpon which this cursed filthinesse is committed, and men which sacrifice there to bold and brazen faced strumpets.

In the end of the verse he shewes without any figure, what this harlotry is which he condemnes, namely, that they sacrificed to Idols, I grant they thought in so doing to serue God; but hee reiects whatsoeuer it is that men forge, according to their owne lusts, and detests such a lasciuious course.

Verf. 8. *Behind the doores also and postes, hast thou set vp thy remembrance: for thou hast discovered thy selfe to another then mee, and wentest vp, and diddest enlarge thy bed, and make a covenant betwene thee and them, and loudest their bed in every place where thou sawest it.*

An amplification of the fault.

HE amplifies the crime whereof hee spake before, that the people should not flatter themselves in their inuentions. Now it is verie likely that *isaiah* alludes to *Moses* words, wherein the Lord commanded that they should alwaies haue the Law before them: that they should fixe it vpon the doore postes of the house, and write it in roles, to wrap it about their armes, and about the fringes of their garments, that they might be continually admonished of their duties: Deut. 6.9 and 11.20. Numb. 15.38.39.40. But contrariwise, the Iews ceased not to pollute the doores and the postes of their houses with *markes and signes of idolatry*; and left no corner nor nooke free from such deflings. Thus *God* and his Law were reiecte in all places, and in stead thereof, they had fet vp provocations and inticements vnto whoredome.

Thou hast enlarged thy bed. Yet once more he repeats that which he had said before, and comes to this clause againe, to wit, that the Iews committed grosse adulterie with their Idols; and yet thought they serued God; but this came to passe, because they neglected to follow the rules of the word. For it is all one, as if a woman hauing forsaken her husband, should goe and prostitute her selfe to the stewes, and make herselfe common indifferently to all commers: as if the bed were now become an open field, which might containe a great troope of men.

For this cause he saith, that the discovered herselfe *without him*: because hauing taken off the shamefastnesse of marriage, she suffered others to abuse her. For God holds the place of an husband, to which shee ought to haue been subiect: but shee sought out new companions, and brake the faith of marriage. He amplifies this crime, in regard the Iews did voluntarilie present themselves before the idols: as if a disloyall wife should runne after another man, to haue his companie.

More ouer, vnder another figure, he taxeth their inordinate lust, in respect that one onlie glance of the eye serued the turne, to carry them suddenly and dotingly away into euertie place. Therewithall also he conuinceth

men of rashnes: who think themselves very sharp witted in things belonging to Gods seruice; and make choice of their places where themselves list. But this is a diuelliish wit; for the Lord will haue our eyes fixed in such wise vpon him and his word, that they rest closed and shut vp against all other things.

Verf. 9. *Thou wentest to the Kings with oile, and diddest increase thine ornaments, and send thy messengers farre off, and diddest humble thy selfe vnto hell.*

HERE the Prophet reprooues another vice almost like the former: for impietie begets many errors, and forceth light heads that are void of Gods feare into very sore and perplexed molestations. And is it not good reason that such as will not rest in God should bee restless, or rather tossed vp and downe with whirlwinds? He reprooeth the Iews then that they vexed themselves so much, and so long a time in hunting after the helpe of strangers, namely, when they endeououred to oppose the aide of the Egyptians against the Assyrians: and then being defrauded of their hopes, they began to trot to the Chaldeans. For when men haue forsaken the feare of the Almighty, then they seeke helpe in others, and not onlie wearie themselves, but are a great cost and trauell to achieve the same. And whilest the Lord giues quiet sleepe to his beloued ones, that they may quietly finish that they haue to doe, the wicked vex themselves for nothing. *They rise early, and goe late to bed, and eat the bread of carefullnesse*: as it is in Psalm. 127. 2. And yet in the meane while they cannot enrich themselves the value of a nail: because they do nothing vnder Gods authoritie or government. Now the Lord punisheth them thus, to the end they may wander vp and downe, as men at their wits end, being euer in doubt and perplexitie, without euer enjoying the benefit of a quiet and contented mind.

It is iust that such as will not rest contented with God, should wander vp and downe restless without reliefe.

See 2. Sam. 28.5.6.7.

Verf. 10. *Thou weariest thy selfe in thy manifold iourneys, yet saidst thou not, There is no hope: thou hast found life by thine hand, therefore thou wast not grieued.*

HIS meaning is, that men labour in vaine when they follow not God. For they vex themselves without profit, as wee haue said before: because whatsoeuer it be that is taken in hand contrarie to the will of God, can neuer haue good successe. And here hee doth wittily deride the peruse endeuers of such, as in taking much paines, had rather waste and consume the strength of bodie and mind, then with quietnesse to goe whither the Lord called them.

Men labour in vaine when they follow not God.

It is labour lost. That is to say; Albeit thou seeest thy iourneys serue thee to no purpose, yet doest thou obstinately go on in pursuing thy enterprises. And yet very Idiots are wont to repent, when their counsels proper not well.

Such

Who they be that deſerve to be called perverſe and obſtinate.

Such then muſt be called perverſe and deſperate, who having experience of Gods curing and creſting their affaires, are not moved ſometimes to enter into their own harts, and to ſay, *What doeſt thou? Ieremiah* in his 18. chap. and 12. verſe toucheth this obſtinacie; but in other words: for he ſhewes that the Iewes were growne ſo ſtubborne, that they deſperately ſaid, *It is done*: that is to ſay, We will walke after our owne imaginations: we have concluded it ſhall be ſo, and we purpoſe neither to alter nor change our determinations. But *Iſaiah* in this place reprooves that ſenſeleſſneſſe wherewith they were ſo befotted, that they could not bee brought to acknowledge their owne follie, nor repent ſo, as to turne into the right way againe.

Thou haſt found life.] Some take *life* here for ſoude. As if the Prophet had ſaid; This thy labour hath been as acceptable to thee, as if thou hadſt gotten thy *living*, in labouring with thine hands. Others take *life of the bands* for delite or great voluptuousneſſe; and theſe two expoſitions come to one reckoning. But there is yet a little more difficultie, namely, whether he ſpeakes here in good earneſt, or by way of ſcorne. For if there be no figure uſed here, then the ſenſe will be thus: Thou wert not ſorrow, becauſe fortune ſeemed for a time to fauour thee. Whileſt the affaires of vnbeleeuers ſucceed well, the they flatter themſelues more and more in their infidelitie. As the common prouer is, *Proſperitie blinds men*. But this fallies out then ſpeciallie, when hauing forſaken God, they follow their owne waies and deliberations. For then they deſpiſe the Lord. It may alſo be read by way of ſcorne, as if he ſhould ſay, Whence is it, I pray thee, that thou breakeſt not off thy courſe, nor repent'eſt? why doeſt thou not acknowledge thy follie? Is it becauſe thou haſt *life in thine bands*, and becauſe all things fall out according to thy deſire? This reading pleaſeth me beſt: though I reiect not the other. Truelic it appeares ſufficientlie by the histories that this people had ſmall cauſe to glorie in their good ſuccesſes. For the league which they firſt made with the *Egyptians*, next with the *Aſſyrians*, and laſtly with the *Babylonians* was pernicious and deadly vnto them. So as they felt by experience how vnaduised they were to call ſuch companions into their reſcue. The Prophet then had good reaſon to obiect againſt them that they had *found life by their hand*. He ſets out the ſottithneſſe of the Iewes therefore, in regard they wittinglie plunged themſelues into ruine, and obſtinately purſued their owne perdition; whereas at leaſt they ought (euē by the example of foolles) to haue become wiſe after they had taſted the whip.

Verſ. 11. *And whom diſt thou reuerence or feare, ſeeing thou haſt lied vnto mee, and haſt not remembred mee, neither ſet thy minde thereon? Is it not becauſe I held my peace, and that of*

along time? Therefore thou feareſt not me.

HE inueighs here more ſharply againſt the Iewes, in that they were deſtitute of all feare of God; how ſoouer they bragged of their holineſſe, and pretended a vaine title of religion. For hypocrites not onelic flatter themſelues in their ſuperſtitions, but the common people take them for pettie gods: and for this cauſe they inſolentlie advance themſelues both againſt God and men, and ſet forth themſelues with an impudent malepertneſſe. But our Prophet pronounceth that there can be *no true feare of God*, where he is not purely worſhipped, nor according to the precise rules of his holy word. For let men eſteeme the beſt they can of all their goodlie ſuperſtitious deuotions; yet all is but meete follie and impietie. Thus then hee protests that they haue *no feare of God, nor no religion at all in them*, though they gloried neuer ſo much of their painted theate. Nay, which was worſe; by their ceremonies they made it manifeſt as by infallible teſtimonies, that they had *no reuerence nor awe of God* in them. For the Lord teſtifies by *Moses*, that he would proue whether they loued him from the heart; in ſuffering falſe Prophets to bring in ſuperſtitions and idolatries: Deut. 13. 3. All ſuch then as runne after ſuch trumpetic doe evidently ſhew that their hearts are void of Gods true feare: for if they conſidered, that one day they muſt yeeld an account thereof before his iudgement ſeate, they would not ſo preſumptuouſly tread his commandments vnder their feete.

Where hee complains, that they had *forgotten him*; it is to ſhew that they had not ſinned againſt him through ignorance, but of an obſtinate maliciousneſſe. For hauing a certaine rule of a godlie life ſet downe before them, they wittingly reuolted from God, and brake their faith which they had promiſed him. We are heedefully to obſerue how terrible this thunderclap is which is ſhot from heauen, as it were againſt all hypocrites, who ſcorne all threatnings, and couer themſelues vnder vaine pretences: when hee thus teſtifies, that they haue *no ſparke of the feare of God* in them: that they haue *forgotten him*: and are *full of lies*.

It is not becauſe, &c.] I haue thought it fit to inſert the particle of rendring the cauſe here, which muſt be ſupplied, to the end the Prophets meaning may be the more manifeſt. For thoſe that ſupplie it not, vex themſelues much to draw out an expoſition: But we know how vſual this manner of ſpeech is among the Hebrewes. The Prophet blames the Iewes for thus abuſing the patience and long ſuffering of God: which notwithstanding ſhould haue mollified their hearts: Rom. 2. 4. But ſuch is mans malice, that hee thereby unbouldens himſelfe in ſinning: and thinks hee hath good leaue to do whatſoever him liſteth as long as hee is ſuffered to eſcape vnpuniſhed: Pfalm 50. 21. And therefore I expound this member thus: Thou *feareſt not me*, becauſe I haue *held my peace*: whereas on the contrarie,

There can be no true feare of God, but where due is worſhipped purelie.

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contrarie, my lenitie should haue broken thine hard heart. Hence we gather, that the Iewes had no cause to complaine that God dealt too severely with them, seeing that though hee patiently forbore them a long time, yet they became the worse; and that by meanes of this impunitie. The Lord was vrged therefore of necessitie to take another course with them: and to punish their iniquities with the greater rigor.

Verf. 12. *I will declare thy righteousness and thy workes; and they shall not profit thee.*

Though God suffer long, (ye: his patience being abused) he will be avenged at length.

The Prophet shewes that God will suffer no more so long as he hath done in times past, but that heereafter he shall be constrained to take another course with them. Hee mentions their *righteousnesse*, by way of derision: for vnder this word, hee vnderstands all the impieties and errors wherewith they were stained and defiled. As if he should say; *I will haue your righteousnesse to be seene of all.* For whilst God holds his peace, those that are most vniust, & filled with all corruptions, seeme to be peticie Saints: but when God gets vp into his iudgement seate, then men are forced to come out of their dennes, and their villanies are manifested to euery one: Psal. 50. 21. The Prophet therefore meane to say, that the world esteemes horrible impieties to be vertues, as long as God is silent: but this shall vanish at the last, when hee shall sit to iudge of them. For after men shall haue flattered themselves much, and for a long time together, yet in the end they shall feele him to be their Iudge.

And they shall not profit thee] This appertaines to the effect; by which men are wont to iudge of things for the most part. For they care not whether the matter be iust or vniust, but imagin, that *vvas/bes/ewer is profitable, ought to be approved of:* and therefore denounce, that all the *workes* from whence they expected any *benefits* should turne to their detriment and ruine.

Verf. 13. *When thou criest, let them that thou hast gathered together, deliuer thee: but the winde shall take them all away; vanitie shall pull them away: but hee that trusteth in mee, shall inherit the land, and shall possess mine holy mountaine.*

The former verse am plified.

Hee shewes now more at large, that which hee touched but briefly in the former verse, namely, that when the matter shall come to the vp shot, they shall be confounded: for the clause, *let them deliuer thee*, signifies as much as if he had said; *they shall not be able to doe it.* In this verse then hee alludes to that which he said before, in verf. 9. to wit, Thou wentest to Kings with thy presents. And for this cause hee calles all the meanes whereby the Iewes thought to secure themselves, ga-

thered: for in resting thereupon, they prostituted themselves to all kindes of villanies, as if they had had been liable to no punishment at all, in regard they were fortified with ramparts on euery side. But the Lord shewes how vaine all their preparations are, that are thus gathered together without him.

The *ay* here signifies that calamitie wherewith they should be afflicted. For being fetled vpon leagues and succours of their confederates, they thought themselves in such safetie, as if before they had neuer been annoyed by such associates. But hee protests, that all the aid which they haue gathered together, shall serue them to no use: for the hopes which we conceiue in the things of this world, and in the helpe of man, ioined with the forsaking of God, is accursed and abominable: Ier. 17. 7.

Hee reproched the Iewes in Chap. 8. 6. for not contenting themselves with the still waters of *Silo*, but searched out swelling and roaring ruers, which would ouerwhelme them in the end: which indeed came so to passe. For the *Assyrians*, *Egyptians*, and in the end the *Chaldeans*, not onely were vnprofitable to the Iewes, with whom they were confederate, but at last were also their destruction.

Afterwards there follows an opposition, wherein hee recalls them to trust in God; which was the onely remedie that ought to be opposed to all calamities: as on the contrary, all our miseries flow from our owne infidelitie and distrust. And whereas hee promiseth an *heritage* to those that hope in the Lord, it is as if hee should haue said; What is it that you seeke, but that you may liue in safetie, and that your inheritance may remaine whollie vnto you? And I am sure my seife can giue it you. For (tell me) who brought you into this land? Who gaue you possession in it? And yet you trow downe into Egypt, and seeke aid from men which cannot helpe you, and you set mine assistance at nought. The word *heritage* out of all doubt is meane of Iudea, wherein the Iewes desired to remaine securely. For afterwards, he mentions the *mountaine of his holiness*, wherupon the Temple was built. Thus then the Iewes sought to turne God out of his office as it were, seeing they rather ranne for succour to the Egyptians and Assyrians, then to him.

Hence let vs gather a generall doctrine, namely, that all our affaires shall succede well, if we trust in God: but if wee reiect that, wee are not to wonder if wee be tossed from post to pillar, and carried with the violence of diuers tempests, whither we would not. By the *holy mountaine*, to which the Iewes were to be brought againe, hee meanes, that neither life, nor none of the commodities thereof, are to be desired, but vpon condition that we be therewithall inioy the true worship of God: for the end of mans life is, that God may haue a people to call vpon his name purely. Let our eies then be alwaies fixed vpon the honour and seruice of our God, if wee either desire deliuerance from troubles, or to inioy life with the commodities thereof.

All our miseries flow from our owne infidelitie.

Doctrine.

The end of mans life.

Verf.

Verſ. 14. *And he ſhall ſay, Caſt up, caſt up: prepare the way: take up the ſtumbling-blocks out of the way of my people.*

See verſ. 1.

A prece-
ntion.

BECAUSE this promiſe (to wit, that thoſe who truſted in the Lord ſhould poſſeſſe the land) might ſeeme ridiculous, ſeing ſoone after they ſhould be baniſhed out of their countrie: therefore this ſecond promiſe is added for the little remnants ſake which yet remained. In which he promiſeth that they ſhall be brought home againe into the land of Canaan, though for a time they were caſt out and driven into a ſarre countrie. He meetes with a doubt which might ariſe, that ſo the faithfull might not be diſcouraged during this long and tedious exile, nor eſteeme Gods promiſes to be vaine.

Some expound, That the Lord would ſend true and faithfull Prophets which ſhould remove and purge out thoſe offiſces of the Church, wherewith it was corrupted by falſe prophets, and wicked governours. For they, as he ſhewed in Chap. 56. 10, 11. were the cauſe of the ruine of it, and therefore they iudge that heere is a better and more deſirable eſtate promiſed. But this expoſition ſutes very ill, and therefore I had rather follow the firſt, namely, that albeit the Jewes for a time were to be deprived of this land, yet the Lord would eſtabliſh them therein againe, who will to that end command the rough waies to be made ſmooth, for their returne. This place therefore agrees with that which we have ſeene in Chap. 40. 1. 2. 3. 4. where the Lord commanded that the people ſhould be comforted: *that their ruine ſhould be proclaimed: and that the waies ſhould be cleared.* For being yet in Babylon as in a ſepulcher, and the diſtance of place very great, and the paſſage tedious, they were hardly drawne to hope that they ſhould ever returne againe into their countrie.

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Iſaiah therefore was not lightly to paſſe over this matter, that ſo he might take from them all feare of being hindered in their journey, either in regard of the mountaines or the ſea. He ſpeakes to *Cyrus* and *Darius* then, into whoſe minds God would inſpire a will to giue the Jewes both paſſage, and all neceſſaries fit for the ſame. As if he ſhould ſay, The Lord will ſend the Jewes ſuch ſervants of his as they little thinke of now, by whoſe miniſtrie he will prepare the way, and bring back his people. The manner of ſpeech wherby he commands, hath greater vehemencie in it, then if he had ſpoken in the third perſon.

Cyrus.
Darius.

In that he bids them to take away the ſtumbling blocks: he ſignifies, that they ought not to be diſmayed for the lets and impediments that lay in their way, for the Lord would eaſily remove them in his good time. *Out of the way of my people.* The hope of the returne is included in this, namely, that after God had brought back his people, he would againe place them in the land of Canaan. And therefore howſoever for ought they could ſee, there was no way nor paſſage left for them,

yet would he provide one, and would breake all barres and obſtales. Why ſo? Becauſe they had the Lords promiſe here for their returne: and in deed it was he that brought them home in ſafetie.

Verſ. 15. *For thus ſaith he that is high and excellent, he that inhabiteth the eternitie, whoſe name is the holy one, I dwell in the high and holy place: with him alſo that is of a contrite and humble ſpirit to receive the ſpirits of the humble, and to give life to them that are of a contrite heart.*

HE confirms the former ſentence touching the reſtoring of the people after ſy captivitie. But this verſe may be two waies expounded; either, that the Prophet prevents a doubt which might fall into ſy minds of the faithfull, and ſo he mentions things oppoſite; or, that he draws an argumenc from Gods nature, to confirme the hearts of the weak. That this may be the better vnderſtood and opened: firſt of all we know that our minds are often diſtracted by ſuch thoughts as theſe, to wit, That God in deed is in heauren, but in the meane while there is a great diſtance betweene him and vs: and that he little regards vs; or elſe lets things goe at ſix and ſeven in the world: or that hee cares little or nothing for our matters. Now to correct this imagination, the Prophet grants it is true that God dwells on high, but yet doth not therefore ceaſe to behold and to governe this world by his providence: for he is careful of mens ſalutations, and dwells alſo with the afflicted, and with thoſe that are of a contrite and broken heart. For though the Lord be high, yet he beholdeth the lowly, as it is in *Pſal. 113. 3. 4.* and *148. 6.* and in other places.

A confir-
mation
of the
former ſen-
tence.

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The other ſenſe is, that God reſembles vs nothing at all. For we tremble in aduerſitie; becauſe we meaſure him according to our owne capacitie: and thus we mutter, *How can the Lord help vs, ſeing we are overwhelmed with troubles?* Moreover, the afflicted are for the moſt part deſpiſed and neglected. And thus we thinke that God is careleſſe of vs, becauſe we conceive of him according to the reach of our carnall reaſon. But it is our parts to iudge ſarre otherwiſe of him, and therefore the Prophet ſaith, that he dwells in the heauren, to ſignifie, that he is not ſubiect to humane afflictions: for he is alwaies like himſelfe, and neuer changeth his counſell. As he therefore hath once promiſed to reſtore the people to their former libertie, ſo will he aſſuredly performe it.

This expoſition I approve of, and yet rather accept of the firſt, which is more ample and copious, and alſo agrees with other teſtimonies of the holy Scriptures, where theſe two things are often conioined, namely, That God dwells in heauren, and yet hath reſpect to things below: but eſpeciallly of his children, as I ſaid erewhile.

Dwelling in eternitie.] But we grouell on the earth, we are vnſtable, and neuer continue ſtayed nor ſetled in that which we have once

E e e embraced.

Anf. embraced: and therefore hee separates God from men; for in him there is nor so much as a shadow of turning: James 1.17. Contrariwise, wee are not so affectioned, as to haue a perpetuall care ouer such as neede our helpe.

Why God cales himselfe the holy one, dwelling on high.

A consolation.

With whom God will dwell.

I dwell in the high and holy place.] The holy place is often taken for the Temple; but heere it is taken for heauen it selfe. We see wherefore the Lord calles himselfe holy, and dwelling in an high and holy place, euen that hee might cause vs to know what difference there is betweene him and vs, and betweene his nature and ours. Besides, we may hence collect a speciall consolation, namely, that the Lord will *afflict the poore, yea, and dwell in the midst of them*, if so be they acknowledge their miseries. For the wicked shall be pressed with diuers calamities; but in the meane while they cease not to remaine haughtie and vntamed. Let such neuer looke to haue God dwell with them: for those that will expect any comfort from him, must be rightly humbled, and brought low in their owne sight. But he stoopes euen to the dead, that by inspiring new life into them, he may create them anew. Afterwards, he makes expresse mention of the *humble spirit*, and *contrite heart*, to let vs vnderstand, that these promises appertaine to none that are rebellious and stiff-necked in their afflictions, but to such as hauing at last subdued all loftinesse of spirit, shall stiew themselves humble and meeke.

Verf. 16. *For I will not contend for euer, neither will I be alwaies wroth: for the spirit should faile before me, and I haue made the breath.*

Hee prosecutes the same matter still.

HE prosecutes the same doctrine. For this was an hard matter to perswade them of, in regard that in this reidious banishment, they felt God as it were their enemy. It was no easie matter then for them to conceiue such a taste of this grace, as might cause them to take heart vnto them, and to bee of good cheere. The Prophet therefore meetes with this doubt, and shewes that the euils which they were to indure, should last but for a time, and that God would not alwaies be wroth. No doubt but hee hath iust cause giuen him to be angry: but hee rather parts with his right, and pardons that which he might iustly exact. And thus he ioines with Gods wrath, that moderation wherby hee comforts the faithfull, lest the spirit should faile. For albeit he reasons from the nature of God, yet this promise is particularly directed to the Church. Let vs for euer then keepe this point in our remembrance in our extreme anguishes; that so we may not thinke that God will stand to commend or to plead the case with vs.

In wrath God still remembers mercie.

When he saith that God is wroth: it is by way of yeelding so much vnto vs, in respect of the weaknesse of our flesh: for in aduersitie we can conceiue no other wise of God, but as of an angry Iudge: and no question it is profitable for vs to bee touched with this feeling, which ought to bring vs to repentance.

This phrase of speech then must wholly bee referred to our weaknesse, and not vnto God.

For the Spirit shall be clothed againe.] Heere he renders a reason wherefore the Lord will not contend for euer: but this place is diuersly expounded. Among other expositiones, this seemes to agree best; that the Spirit is clothed with the body, as with a garment. In which regard, the body also is called the Tabernacle or dwelling place of the Spirit. If we receiue this exposition, there will be a double sense: for some referre this place to the last resurrection, and say, that the soule shall bee clothed: that is to say, after it shall depart from the body, shee shall returne the second time into it, as into her house. And thus it should be an argument from the greater to the lesse, thus; I will raise the dead bodies: wherefore then should not I put you into a better estate; though you seeme as good as dead? The other sense which some others follow, will be better, and lesse constrained: for this interpretation touching the last resurrection, seemes far remote from the scope of the text.

I haue compassed the Spirit in wroth the body.] As if hee should say; It is I that haue created men; you must thinke that I will haue a care of them then. But I should thinke that the Prophet mounts higher: for he teacheth that the Lord handles vs thus mildly and graciously, because hee knowes and is well acquainted with our frailtie and infirmities. This doctrine is confirmed vnto vs by many other places of the Scriptures; but amongst the rest, out of Psal. 103. 13, 14, 15. Euen as a father pitieth his owne children, so is the Lord compassionate ouer such as feare him. He knowes whereof we be made, he remembers we are but dust. Man is like to grasse, he flourisheth as a flower of the field. In Psal. 78. 38, 39. it is said in the same sense; But hee being mercifull forgave their iniquities, and destroyed them not. He often called backe his anger, and suffered not his whole displeasure to arise: for he remembered they were but flesh, and a vvinde that passeth a way, and returneth not againe. And we thinke the Prophet meant thus much in this place, as if the Lord should haue said; What should I doe trying my force against a little vvinde, or breath; or against a leafe, or grasse, which vanisheth in a moment, and withers away as soone as it hath felt the heate of the Sunne?

Some expound the verbe *Taarah*, Shall faile: and this agrees well enough to this place; for our Spirit must needs faile, as soone as the Lord doth begin to manifest his power against vs: Psal. 104. 19. But not to stand vpon the signification of the words, we see, I hope, what the Prophets meaning is: for he shewes that God spares vs, and vseth great lenitie towards vs, in correcting our vices, because he respects our infirmity, and meanes to support and relieue it.

Verf. 17. *For his wicked conuouersnesse, I am angry with him, and haue smitten*

ſmiten him: I hid me and was angry, yet he went away, and turned after the way of his owne heart.

reſtore comfort vnto him, and to thoſe that lament him.

A complaint.

Here he complains of the deſperate obſtinacie of the people, and ſhewes that the Lord had exceeding iuſt cauſe to puniſh them thus: ſo as they could not complaine of his ouer great ſeueritie.

For his luſts.] Others turne it, For his auarice. And in this ſenſe if you vnderſtand it of auarice, it is by a figure called Synecdoche, taken as a part for the whole. For couetouſneſſe is the roote from whence other vices ſpring. But we may take it generally for all luſts. For the Lord was wroth againſt ſo many wickedneſſes, wherewith the Iewes were ſtained: and puniſhed them ſeuerely for them. But he ſpeakes expreſly of luſt, to ſhew that they were chaſtiſed, not ſo much for their maniſt and open finnes, as for that they were *guiltie before God*. For this ſufficeth to all mens condemnation, that God is the Iudge of thoughts. So as he will not onely puniſh notorious iniquities, but alſo the ſecret inordinate and wicked luſts and affecti- ons of the heart. Beſides, hee aduerteth them that they are iuſtly *ſmiten*: that by feeling their guiltineſſe, they might humble ſue for pardon.

I haue ſmiten him, and bid my ſelfe.] The meaning of theſe words is, that his grace ſtood a farre off and was *bidden* from them for a time. But he ſpeakes according to our opinions. For we apprehend God as an enemie and angrie with vs, when he puniſheth our offences, as we haue ſaid before. And doubtleſſe it is needefull we ſhould thus conceiue of him and apprehend him, that thereby we may be brought to acknowledge our finnes: which we will neuer do in good earneſt, neither will we be effectually touched with the horror of them, vneſſe we conſider and be aſſuredly perſwaded in our minds and conſciences that we haue thereby prouoked the wrath of God againſt vs. Now as it is expedient that we be brought to repentance by this meanes, yet let vs beware that we be not ouerwhelmed with ſorrow, in imagining either that God is irreconcilable, or that he will haue no more to doe with vs. Thus then the Prophet mitigates theſe exceſſiue feares, and forbids vs to meaſure God according to our owne ell. For albeit he chaſten vs, yet caſeth he not to beare a gracious loue and fatherly affection towards them whom he hath adopted.

But he went his way.] This is the rebellion which the Prophet taxeth and reprobues, namey, that the people amended not by their ſtripes, but obſtinately perſeuered in their wickednes: and therefore he ſhewes they were growne paſt cure, in regard the violent remedies which God vsed could not bring them back into the right way.

The Lord here on the contrarie magnifies his mercie, in regard that he is fauorable to this ſo obſtinate and rebellious a people, and in preventing them of his mere bountie and compaſſion. As if he ſhould ſay, I haue indued to bring them to repentance by my rods and chaſtiſements, euen whileſt they purſued their luſts: but they haue thewed themſelues obſtinate and incorrigible, ſo as I haue ſpent all my labour in vaine. I might therefore (if I would) iuſtly deſtroy them, yet had I rather *heale* and ſaue them. But this can not be effected vneſſe I maniſeſt my great and infinite mercie. Well, I will therefore withdraw my correſtions. You ſee then that our Prophet by degrees amplifies and ſets forth Gods mercie, whom he brings in as a careful Phyſition, beſtinking himſelf of the apteſt and fitteſt medicines to cure this peoples maladies. But they are incurable, vneſſe the Lord preuent vs for his owne mercie and truths ſake. Let his rods be neuer ſo ſharp and biting, yet can they not draw vs to repentance, vneſſe the Lord worke it in vs by his holy Spirit. Alas I without it wee are in danger to grow the more obſtinate and hard hearted. In this people therefore we may behold the image of mans corrupted nature, therein the better to take knowledge of our owne obſtinacie and rebellion againſt God; as alſo what remedies are the meeteſt to heale our ſpiritual ſickneſſes: ſo as being ſick, may haſte dead, yet wee may recouer health, and be brought into the right way, and therein remaine.

Our Prophet ſhewes herewithall, that perſeuerance in a good courſe is the only worke of God, whereupon follows a great conſolation, which yet wee can not haue, nor faith neither, if repentance be wanting: for ſuch as are not at oddes with themſelues in regard of their finnes, can neuer conceiue ought but Gods wrath, terrors, and deſpaire. Wee are carefull to obſerue the order then which *Iſaiah* keepes heere; for he doth not raſhly adde a *conſolation* to the healing, becauſe ſuch as recouer their health, do therewithall recouer ioy of heart, whereof they were before deſtroyed.

When he addes, *and to thoſe that lament him*; he ſeemes eſpeciallie to note out the faithfull who were few in number, as it appears by the Prophets complaints, who make ſharp and bitter inuectiues againſt the drouzines wherewith this people was whollie poſſeſſed. He ſpeakes to thoſe then who being guiltie of common offences, were conſtrained to weepe in regard of the griefe which preſſed them neere: and *lamented* not onely the calamities of the people, but alſo in pitifull ſort mourned vnder the ſenſe of Gods wrath, whileſt others plunged themſelues in their voluptuouſnes.

Our mal- dies incurable, if the Lord ſhould not preuent vs by his grace.

Reade Exod. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. and 12. Chap. ers.

Perſeuerance the only worke of God.

Beware of being overwhelmed by deſperate ſorrow.

Verſ. 18. *I haue ſeene his waies and will heale him: I will leade him alſo and*

Verſ. 19. *I create the fruit of the lips to be peace: peace to them that are farre*

Eee 2 off;

of, and to them that are neere, saith the Lord; for I will heale him.

An expecta-
tion of the
former sen-
tence.

This is the explication of the former sentence, namely, by what meanes the Lord would comfort this people, to wit, by promising and offering them peace: for by the fruit of the lips, he signifies, that they shall heare such good newes of peace, as shall reuiue and reioice their hearts. And, as I take it, he speakes of the publishing of that peace, which was committed first to the Prophets, then to the Apostles, and other Ministers of the Gospell: as Saint Paul teacheth, 2. Cor. 5. 20. Wee are Ambassadors for Christ (saith he) and doe beseech men to be reconciled vnto God.

The repetition of the word peace, serues not onely for the greater confirmation, but it also signifies a continuall progresse of it. As if he should say; You heare nothing now but terrible threatnings: the doctrine of grace and saluation is as good as buried: for you are vncapable of it; your obstinacie is such, that you must be thundered against with terrors and menaces: but one day I will restore vnto you the doctrine of peace, and I will open the lippes of my Prophets, which shall publish the same in your eares.

To those that are farre off.] This was added in regard the people, who were carried away captiue, thought that these things appertained not vnto the, because they were farre off, but such as were left in the Country, might happily inioy this fruit; for their exile was vnto them as a kind of reiectiō. But the Prophet protests, that euen they shall taste of this grace, though they be farre remote. Lastly, the effect is added, namely, that God would heale the people: that is to say, would keepe them safe and sound. Hence we gather that which I touched but erewhile, to wit, that whatsoever appertaines to the true and perfect felicitie of the Church, is the free gift of God.

It seemes Saint Paul had an eye to this place, in Eph. 2. 17. where he saith, that Christ hath brought peace to those which were neere, and to those a farre off. Now hee speakes of Iewes and Gentiles: for the Iewes were neere, because God had made a couenant with them; and the Gentiles were farre off, in regard they had no part in this couenant. But it seemes our Prophet speakes onely of the Iewes? I answer, that the Apostle retaines the Prophets true meaning, if all be well considered: for the Iewes are said to be farre off heere, because they seemed to be banished out from the house of the Lord: and in this respect their condition was like to that of the Gentiles. Seeing then that during the time of their banishment, there was no difference betweene them and the Gentiles, Saint Paul had iust cause to put them both in one ranke, and therefore makes them paires: and thus applied that to the Gentiles which our Prophet had said touching the Iewes: as in like maner he applies the place of Hosea, Chap. 1. 10. to the Gentiles: Rom. 9. 26.

Verf. 20. But the wicked are like the

raging sea, that cannot rest, whose waters cast vp mire and dirt.

Having spoken of that peace which the faithfull should inioy, he on the contrary denounceth against the wicked continuall warre and perpetuall troubles, and garboiles of conscience, wherewith they should be vexed. And the rather, that the faithfull for their parts might the better prize this excellent benefit of peace: as also, that the wicked might know, that this peace is so promised to Gods children, that their condition shall no whit be bettered by it. But in regard these doe often vainly and falsely pretend the name of God, and glory in it as a cloke to couer their wickednesse withall; therefore the Prophet shewes, that they shall haue no cause to reioice heerein, or to attribute any thing to themselves in regard of this promise; because they can haue no part in this peace. It should bee litle to their good then, though God shewed mercy to his people, receiued them into fauour; or that hee gaue men authoritie to publish peace vnto them.

A denuncia-
tion against
the wicked.

This similitude of the sea, is elegant and verie fit to expresse the disquietnes of the wicked. For the sea troubles it selfe, and is tossed with hideous tempests, though the windes be calme: the vvaues iustle one against another with great violence, and breake with a verie terrible noise: and so the wicked are vexed with a secret worme, which cleaueth fast to their consciences; for they are in continuall terrors, by reason of the gnawing and stings thereof, which is a torment that surmounts all the rest, and the most cruell hangman that is to be found in the whole world. The furies of hell harrie and pursue the wicked, not with burning Torches, as the Poets faine; but through anguishes of conscience, and y tormēt of their wilfull rebellion: for euery one of the is affrighted, and extremely tortured by his owne iniquitie: their wicked cogitations amaze them, and cause them to rage, and the guilt and scruples of their consciences astonish them. He hath very aptly then compared the wicked to the raging sea. He that would escape and auoid these tempests and horrible boiling of spirit: let him beware how hee rejects this peace which the Lord offers him. There is no meane betweene these two: for vnllesse wee abandon all our lusts, to entertaine this peace, we must of necessitie be continually tormented and vexed after an horrible maner.

Verf. 21. There is no peace, saith my God, so the wicked.

The Prophet confirms the former sentence, namely, that the wicked shall gain nothing in seeking this peace; for they shall haue alarums rung in their eares on euerie side; and in regard that God makes warre vpon them, therefore they shall but lose their labour to hope for peace. I grant the wicked would with all their hearts inioy peace, yea they much desire it. For what seekes they else

A confirma-
tion of the
former de-
nunciation.

Obiect.

Anf.

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in this world, but to be ſecured, and to rocke their conſciences aſleepe, that they may take their fill of pleaſures, and give themſelves over without cheek, unto all laſciviousneſſe. They indeuor to baniſh from them all thoughts of Gods iudgements, and would ſaine become ſenſleſſe: and theſe they take to be the true means whereby to obtaine peace: but they ſhall neuer this way inioy it; ſot till they be reconciled vnto God in Chriſt, their conſciences will euer be galling them, and they ſhall not ceaſe to be moleſted with the accu-

What courſe the wicked take to attaine peace.

fations thereof. And thus hee brings in God the onely author of peace, who by this terrible ſentence, takes from the lewes their peace, and calles him *his God*: oppoſing it againſt their vaine glory, who falſly couered themſelves vnder ſuch titles. For they could not be ſaid to haue any knowledge of God, whileſt they reiected both his Prophet and doctrine: and therefore *Iſaiah* is bold by Gods expreſſe commandement, to proclaime open warre againſt them.

THE LVIII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. Cry aloud, ſpare not: liſt vp thy voice like a trumpet, and ſhew my people their tranſgreſſions, and to the houſe of Iacob their ſinnes.

This Chapter depends vpon the former.



His preſent Chapter was ill diuided, in regard this is knit vnto the former: ſo as if we will vnderſtand the Prophets meaning, we muſt read this as if there were no breking off. *Iſaiah* hath

teſtified that the people ſhould be ſo chaſtiſed, that yet ſome hope of peace remained for them. Now hee confirms this doctrine, and teacheth that the Lord hath charged him to cry out of the throte, or as we commonly ſay in our ſpeech, with open throte. To what end? For ſooth, to ſhew the people their ſinnes. Neither ſpeakes hee onely of the liſting up of the voice, but of that vehemencie and ſeuertie of ſpeech (whereof hypocrites ſtand eſpecially in need) as if God thundered vpon them from heauen. For they flatter themſelves in their vices, if they be not roundly dealt withall, and bee forced to come into the light: nay, no good is to bee done vpon them, vnleſſe they bee laid vpon with maine blowes.

A plaine goſpel.

Where hee addes, *ſpare not*: it is a forme of ſpeech much vſed among the Hebrewes; *I ſpeake, and will not hold my peace*: as we alſo commonly ſay; Cry without ceaſing. We haue told you that the Prophet ſpeakes not heere ſimply of the ſound of the voice, but ſignifies a ſharpe & biting kind of reprehention, where-with hypocrites muſt be galled to the quicke: as for example, if the Prophets ſhould onely propound the Law of the Lord, and ſhew wherein the rule of a well ordered life conſiſts, ſhould fall into the praiſe of Gods worſhippe, and without any vehemencie reprocue iniquities; what would hypocrites haue been the better for ſuch a cold manner of preaching? For their conſciences are ſo drowſie, that they cannot be awakened, but with loud and ſerill cries. A cold maner of preaching then would doe them no good, vnleſſe

Crie fans eſpagnier.

they were ſharply preſſed and thundered vpon with terrible threats.

Saint Paul (imitating the Prophets) hauing proued all mankind guiltie and worthy of death, he riſeth vp with great vehemencie, againſt ſuch as had ſome appearance of holineſſe, and yet abuſed Gods patience. Behold, ſaith he, thou art called a Iew, and reſeſt in the Law, and glorieſt in God, thou knoweſt his will, and approuſt the things that are excellent, being inſtrued in the Law. Thou takeſt vpon thee to be a leader of the blind, a light to ſuch as are in darkneſſe, an inſtruder of the ignorant, and an inſtruder of them that lacke diſcretion, hauing a ſorme of knowledge & of ſome truth in the Law. But thou which teacheſt others, teacheſt thou not thy ſelie? thou that' preacheſt another ſhould not ſteale, yet doeſt thou ſteale? &c. Rom. 2. Againſt ſuch, in concluſion, hee denounceth iudgement, and the horrible vengeance of God; becauſe they abuſed Gods goodneſſe, and gloried in his name in vaine. Likewiſe in this place the Prophet teacheth the Iewes in particular, who gloried in the name of the Lord, and in the meane while roſe vp in armes againſt him.

This is the courſe then that muſt be taken with hypocrites, who content themſelves with an outward maſke of holineſſe, if we meane to diſcharge our duties profitably, and as we ought. And euen as the Lord hath exerciſed his Prophets in this combat, ſo muſt wee alſo at this day be in like maner exerciſed; that we may not feare the faces of hypocrites, nor content our ſelves to haue reproued them lightly, in two or three words, but to cry aloud with might and maine againſt them.

But, may ſome ſay, If the Lord command ſuch to be reproued for their ſinnes, to whom he promiſeth peace, then no doubt but his meaning was to leaue them ſome hope of ſaluation: and yet it is out of queſtion, that this ſpeech is directed to the reprobates, againſt whom before he proclaimed open war. I anſwere, the faithfull were then few in number: for a ſmall remnant only embraced this peace which was offered them. When *Iſaiah* then giues hope of a peace neere hand, he had reſpect to that little ſlocke: when he proclaimed warre, that was to terrifie the multitude, who

Obiect.

I 2

were reuolted from God, and contemned all admonitions. For the state of the people was such that nothing was found nor pure among them, as we haue seene in chap. i. 11.

He mentions the *house of Jacob*, in regard the most of the people were corrupted. Now this distinction in the Prophets Sermons is diligently to be noted of vs, in that they now speake to the whole bodie of the people: and by and by restrain their speech to a small number of the faithfull. But it is not without a very sharpe and biting reproch that hee calles those *his people*, and the children of *Iacob*, which were degenerate from their originall, and had shamefully reuolted from the faith of the Patriarks. This therefore is a yeelding of so much to them: but with a plaine mocke. As if he should say, There are no deserts at all of theirs which shall priuiledge them from hearing their owne.

Verse. 2. Yet they seeke mee daily, and will know my waies, euen as a nation that did righteouslie, and had not forsaken the statutes of their God: they aske of me the ordinances of iustice: they will draw neere vnto God, saying,

A preuenti-
on to an ob-
iection.

HE meant here to take from hypocrites all occasions of replies, for they had their exceptions readie, We feare, serue, loue, and seeke God with our whole hearts. Wherefore blamest thou vs as if we were infidels? For we would thou shouldst wel know we order our liues according to the *ordinances of the law*. But to meete with this obiection, hee denies that they doe any thing purely or sincerelie: but that all is *hypocriticall*, and from the teeth outward; and therefore God who chiefie requires a *perfect heart*, reiects such a fained seruice.

Gen. 17. 1.

And wee are to obserue the order which the Prophet here followes. For hauing proclaimed open warre against the wicked and hypocrites, he now seuerely reproofes them, and stripes them quite of their fained pretence, vnder which they shadowed themselves. For thus they were to be handled and to be ferreted out of their lurking holes: otherwise doctrine would profit them but little or nothing. Which order as al the faithful are to obserue in regard of others; so ought every one to applie this doctrine to his seuerall vse, that he may not please nor flatter himselfe in his vices, lest he deceiue his owne heart, or suffer himselfe to be seduced by the illusions of the diuell. Let every one bring with him a pure and an vpright heart, if he meane to profit in the pure doctrine; and to be acceptable to his God.

Moreouer, although *Isaiah* attributes to these dissemblers and disloyall some kind of holinesse; yet he againe taxeth them with a verie bitter flout, as if hee should say, Your impudent boasting is accompanied with too manifest an obstinacie. And thus it is not only a plaine mocke, but there is a complaint mingled therewith, for presuming to serue

How he
ought to
come to bee
fired that
meanes to
profite by the
word.

God in hypocritic. Whereas if their shewes were rightlie examined, and that the whole course of their liues were sufficiently sifted, it would be found that their hearts were farre remote from God.

They aske of me.] Those who thinke that hypocrites doe here complaine of God, and rise vp against him as it were to pleade the matter with him, haue not rightlie conceived of the Prophets meaning. I confesse we shal see this hereafter: but before that he plucks off from them that maske of fained holinesse. Hauing said then that they *sought God daily*, as if nothing had bin deerer to them then religion, he prosecutes the same sentence, and saith, that they *asked of him ordinances of iustice*, to the end they might honour God, and follow an vpright course of life; to wit, when they made thew to burne with zeale.

And no question but the Prophet here recites the chiefest exercises of the faithfull, which sometimes hypocrites in appearance seeme to imitate. Now the maine point of true godlinesse consists in seeking to Gods reuealed will, that our conseruation may be squared according to the rules which hee giues, and to depend vpon his sacred mouth. But the hypocrites doe counterfeit this in such wise, that for the most part they seeme to practise that which appertaines to Gods worship in an highest measure then the faithfull.

Verse. 3. Wherefore haue wee fasted, and thou seest it not? Wee haue punished our selues, and thou regardest it not. Behold, in the day of your fast you will seeke your will, and require all your debts.

HEE passeth on further in the same argument, and saith, that besides this *hypocrisie* which thus blindes those that serue God to the halues, *pride* doth so superabound in them, that they dare in plaine termes *make opposition against God himselfe*: and when hee pressest them neere, they burst forth into *complaints*, as if he offered them great wrong. As if they shuld haue said; Hast thou any reason to reiect our seruices, fasts, and prayers? Wherefore shouldst thou not accept of them? Canst thou in equitie suffer vs to punish our selues thus for nothing? Hee hath already granted to the hypocrites some shew of holinesse, whereby they deceiued the world: but now he shewes that they were befotted, and ready to burst with pride inwardly, vnder pretence of their painted workes, with which they thought to satisfie God, and in regard thereof, ourfaced the Prophets, and flattered themselves in their wickednesses, namely, in their infidelitie, rebellion, and obstinacie against God; distrust, crueltie, deceit, and oppression. These were light matters with them, and they thought they might easilie purge themselves of them, by *fastings*; and such bodily exercises: for these were their goodly merits in which they imagined the whole wor-
ship

Hee still pro-
secutes the
same argu-
ment in this
and in the
next verse.

ship of God consisted, and by which they hoped to be absolved from all their finnes. And thus they strained at a gnat, and made no bones to swallow a Camell: *Mat. 23. 24.*

But if the Jewes had onely been such, and that the world were now growne better, then should wee be enforced to seeke out examples hereof farre hence: but seeing we haue experience every day of the like dealing, we need not spend much time in the exposition of this text.

Besides, this complaint may as well be referred to the word as to the power of God. For the Lord iudgeth hypocrites both waies. First, he reprooues them by his word: and secondlie, he punisheth their wicked obstinacie. This may then be referred as well to his corrections, as to the former reprehension. But yet I had rather referre it to the word: and I thinke that the hypocrites who vaunted of their *fasts*, are here rebuked for opposing these exercises against the Prophets admonitions. As if forsooth they had been the true seruants of God, and that they were wrongfully reproboued.

Neither am I of their mind who thinke that the people complaine of God for vsing them so teulerly in this their banishment. But I rather thinke they complaine of the Prophets of God, who as they thought, rebuked them too sharpelie. For the Jewes would needs be held for zealous and deuout men, and could not endure that any should condemne them of impietic or iniquitie. And for this cause the Prophet discouers their affections; & tels them that they stroue against God: that so they might know they had not to doe with a mortall man.

In the second part of the verse (in the person of God) he refuses the vertues which the hypocrites proclaimed with sound of trumpet. The reason is, because they neuer made any reckoning, touching *vs putting off* of their froward and carnall affections, nor began not at the deniall of themselves. For he condemnes them especially for being giuen to their lusts: and then mentions certaine particular vices. Whence wee may gather, that they were touched with no care of repentance.

Vers. 4. Behold, yee fast to strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickednesse: yee shall not fast as yee doe to day, to make your voice to be heard aboue.

The reason Why God regarded not the Jewes fasts.

This verse must be ioyned to the former. For in regard the Lord brought in the hypocrites complaining of *vs* Prophets vehemencie and sharpnesse in the first member; now in this second he yelds a reason wherefore the Lord regarded not their fasts and other workes: namelie, because none of these things proceeded from a pure affection of the heart. Now he shewes what their hearts were by the fruites; for he brings them to the commandements of the second table, whereby it is easie to discern what wee are within.

The puritie of the heart manifests it selfe in an vpright conuersing with our neighbours, and in abstaining from all fraud and violence. These are *vs* luely representations of a pure affection: without which God reiects, yea abhorres all externall seruices. For where deceit, extortions and robberies haue the full scope, it is most certaine that here the feare of God hath no place at all. He reprocheth the hypocrites then that vnder colour of their *fastings*, they took the greater libertie to oppresse their brethren, and to follow their lusts the more freely. Wee haue experience of this euery day: for manie fast, not onely to obtaine pardon for their fraudes, and thefts, and libertie to play the cheecus the more freely; but also that during the time of their fasts, they may haue the better leisure to cast ouer their reckonings, to reade their bills and obligations, to count what gaines are come in by their vsurie, and to deuise waies how to intangle the goods of their debtors within their nets. And therefore for the most our hypocrites put off this businesse vntill Lent, and to the set fasting daies; and such as are the most notorious hypocrites, will heate manie Masses euery daie, that vnder pretext of religion, they may plot their cosenages and treacheries with more freedome, that so no man may come to interrupt them. Last of all, the Prophet reiects their fasts, notwithstanding the high account which they made of them; because by meanes hereof, Gods wrath was the more prouoked.

And by and by after he also reiects their *prayers*: whence it appeares (as we haue more largely shewed vpon the first Chapter) that God approues no seruices at all, vnlesse they proceede from the sincere affection of the heart. Truly there is no sacrifice more excellent then *prayer*, and yet we see notwithstanding that the impuritie of the heart pollutes and defiles all our prayers. Moreover, in regard that fasts are vsuallie ioined with prayer, the Prophet takes it for granted, for indeed, it is a dependance of prayer. He forbids such kind of men then to make solemne prayers with fasts, because they shall gaine nothing thereby, vnlesse peraduenture that the Lord will punish them the more feuerly for it. And hence we gather (as we haue said before) that *vs* Lord reiects all externall workes, if the true feare of his Maicstie goes not before.

The fast which was in vse among the Jewes is not here in it selfe condemned, as if it had bin a superstitious ceremonie, but the abuse of it, & vaine confidence in it. Which we are well to obserue: for we must goe another way to worke with the Papiests, if we should stand to reprove their fasts, which are merely superstitious, in regard they are tied to certain daies and times, as if the rest of the yeere it were lawfull to cram their bellies. They also hold flesh to be vnclane, and in the meane while, stusse themselves vp to the throates with iunckets, & delicate meates. In a word, if so be they eate and drinke their fill only once in the day when they keepe their fast,

Vsurie.

Lent.

God approves no seruice, but that which proceeds from the sincere affection of the heart.

Fasting, a dependance of Prayer.

The Jewes fast not condemned in it selfe.

Fasts of Papiests merely superstitious.

they thinke then they haue done a worke of supererogation. Seeing then that there is nothing in all that which they doe that may be approued of, wee may simple condemne them. But *Isaiahs* dispute was in another kind: for the fast which the Iewes obserued was laudable in it selfe, because God had instituted it, *Leuit* 23.27. and 16.29.30. But the false opinion only was condemned. As for the Papists, we must condemne not only their false opinion, but the institution of their fasts also, in regard it is wicked. The Papists ioyne together with the Iewes in this, namely, that they thinke God beholding to them for it, and in that they thinke to merit by it. But a fast alone is no seruice of God, neither is it required in it selfe as other works commanded in the law: but it is an outward action, as an handmaid vnto prayer; and is profitable either to tame the flesh, or to testifie our humiliation. As when we feele our felues guiltie, we desire God in the day of our aduersitie that hee would turne his wrath away from vs. But he that would be further instructed touching this point, let him resort to our Institutions, Lib. 4. Chap. 12. Sect. 14. 15. 16. 17. and there he shall find a more ample discourse both concerning the vse and end of it.

Fasting alone is no seruice of God.

Institutions of Caluini

Verf. 5. Is it such a fast that I haue chosen, that a man should afflict his soule for a day, and to hang downe his head like a bulrush; and to lye downe in sackcloth and ashes? wilt thou call this a fasting, or an acceptable day vnto the Lord?

A confirmation of the confirmation.

HE confirms the former sentence, and shewes that God neither approoues nor condemnes fasting in it selfe further than when it is applied to the right end. Now his meaning was not vtterly to abolish it, but the wicked abuse of it, to wit, when men put holines in it, and either in despising or neglecting true godlines, they thinke that the bodilie exercise alone sufficeth. For hypocrites are euer wont to make the most they can of their externall ceremonies, and that no lesse, then if they were satisfactions to appease God withall. Now in regard that men according to their headines dare of themselves desire what Gods seruice is, he therefore brings vs backe expreslie to his own definition of it, to the end our reason may not giue sentence that a thing is right, ylesse we be first assured that he approoues of it: for howsoeuer men please themselves, and be highly conceited of their owne vnderstandings, and malepertlie vaunt thereof, yet the Lord reiects and abhorres such pride; for he reserues it in his owne power to make choice of that which he likes best, neither doth it belong to any other.

To chuse, is as much as to like or allow of; but he protests that this is not acceptable vnto him to see one continue a day without meate; and to goe sorrowfull with his head hanging downe. The Prophet hath vsed a very fit similitude: for as the bulrush bowes it selfe easily, notwithstanding it stands bolt vpright,

Simile.

so hypocrites haue skill to bow and hang downe the head, as if they were brought low with faintnes, or to signifie some vaine appearance of humilitie. His meaning was therefore to taxe these superstitious gestures wherein hypocrites are wont to place a kind of holinesse.

Sackcloth and ashes were added to fasting then chiefe, when they made solemne profession of their repentance: for they couered themselues with sackcloth, and laid ashes vpon their heads. God approoued this as an holie and laudable exercise. And we also see that the Prophets summoning the people to repentance, haue called them to sackcloth and ashes, *Ioel* 1.13. But as we haue formerly said that fasting is not here condemned in it self, no more doth *Isaiah* condemne these externall rites; only he rebukes hypocrites for separating the truth from the signes.

When sackcloth and ashes were chieftie in vse.

If any shall aske, whether sackcloth and ashes agree to our times or no: I answer, that they are things indifferent, which may also be vsed to edification. And yet it is not needfull to vse such shadowes now in the light of the Gospel, which hath brought vs greater libertie. Herewithall we are also to note the difference which is betwene the Easterne people who vse many ceremonies: and the Westerne, who are much more sparing therein, so as if wee should imitate them, it would be little better then a may-game, or apish tricks. And yet this hinders not them who are desirous to confesse their faults; to clothe themselues in vile rayment after the maner of the penitents, who craued pardon and mercie.

Quest. Anf.

An acceptable fast.] From hence we obserue that fasts were celebrated whē solemne prayers were made; and that all the Church was assembled together. For fasting is but the handmaid of prayer, as we haue shewed before; and wee also see that Christ addes it thereunto, *Math* 17. 21. It is not instituted then in regard of it selfe, but tends to another end.

Fasting the handmaid of prayer.

Verf. 6. Is not this the fasting that I haue chosen, to loose the bands of wickednes, to take off the heauie burthens, and to let the oppressed goe free, and that yee breake euery yoke?

THE Prophet shewes wherein the true offices of pietie which are principally commanded of God consist, namely, in comforting the poore and oppressed. But it seemes the Prophet vtterly abolisheth fasting, when in stead thereof hee recites those works which are much more acceptable vnto God: I answer, that fasting is then approoued, when charity is ioined with it. The Prophet brings vs to this principle; to wit, that our consciences may be pure & sound, & that we exercise ourselues in shewing brotherly kindnes one to another. For if this order be duly obserued, then fasting being added thereto, will be pleasing and acceptable to the Lord. But, may some say, here is not a word vttered touching the

What duties God allows of in fasting.

Obiect.

Anf. Fasting approoued when charity is ioined with it.

Anſ.

the puritie of the heart. I anſwere, it is vnderſtood by the fruits that proceede from the ſame, or from the workes by which it is eaſie to diſcerne what the heart is. In the next place he numbers vp the duties of the ſecond Table, and ſo vnder this part vnderſtands the obſervation of the whole Law; as wee haue ſeene in Chap. 56. For it is not enough to be beneficial to our neighbours, if in the meane while we contemne God. But we are to note our Prophets meaning: for in as much as we cannot hold the band of brotherly loue with our neighbours, vnleſſe the loue of God goe before, to examine whether this loue and feare of his Maieſtie bee in vs or no, hee requires theſe Chriſtian duties, as the neceſſit ſignes therof, namely, if we liue with our brethren, iuſtly, louingly, and without offering them any hard meature. Adde alſo, that an outward appearance will not ſerue the turne: for where the Spirit of God beares not rule, there charitie is cold. And therefore *S. Paul* makes expreſſe mention of *loue* among the fruits of the Spirit: *Gal. 5. 22.* When the obſervation of the Law is mentioned then, we vnderſtand not onely the outward actions, but the affections of the heart muſt alſo come into account.

To looſe the bands of wickedneſſe.] Some expound it; The wicked thoughts, wherewith men are bound and intangled. But it ſeemes *Iſaiah* meant otherwiſe, to wit, that hypocrites are very mercileſſe towards the poore, and lay very heauie yokes vpon them. He calles that knots or bands, which wee commonly terme oppreſſions. To which agrees that which is added, to take off the heauie burthens, vnder the weight whercof, the poore & needie grone, and are in a maner ouerwhelmed therewith. The Prophet then ſets not downe the definition of a faſt, but ſhewes what the Lord chiefly and principally requires in the firſt place: alſo by what meanes our ſeruite may be acceptable before him: and how thoſe ought to be fitted and prepared that meane to faſt.

Verſ. 7. *Is it not to deale thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poore that wander vnto thine houſe? When thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou cover him, and hide not thy ſelfe from thine owne fleſh?*

He ſhall goe on in deſcribing the duties of loue.

HEE goes on in deſcribing the duties of loue, which hee touched in the former verſe. For hauing laid in the firſt place, that wee muſt abſtaine from doing any wrong; now he admoniſheth vs to ſhew our ſelues liberal and lowly towards the afflicted, and ſuch as ſtand in neede of our helpe. For there are two parts of equitie and iuſtice. Firſt, that we offer no man any wrong: ſecondly, that we employ our riches and goods towards the maintenance of them that are in want and neceſſitie: and theſe two parts muſt be ioined together. For it is not enough to abſtaine from violent courſes, vnleſſe therewithall we

ſhew mercy in relieuing our poore brethrens wants. Neither is it ſufficient to ſuccour one, if you rob from ſome to beſtow vpon others: for wee muſt not relieue our neighbours wants by thefts and pillages. And if thou haſt committed any iniuſtice, crueltie, or extortion, thou oughteſt not to make amends by calling in God to thee, as if thou wouldſt make him partner with thee of thy ſpoiles. It is neceſſarie then, you ſee, that theſe two parts be ioined together, if we would haue God to approue and allow of our charitie.

In commanding them to *break their bread to the hungry*, he meant to take away all excuses from the couetous and niggardly, who are wont to reply, that their goods are their owne: like *Nabal*, 1 Sam. 25. 11. It is mine owne, ſay they, and therefore I may keepe it to my ſelfe. Why ſhould I make that common, which God hath giuen me for my particular vſe? The Prophet anſwers, that it doth indeed appertaine vnto thee, but vpon condition that thou dealeſt out part thereof to the hungry and thirſtie: and not that thou ſhouldeſt eate all thy ſelfe alone. Truly common reaſon teacheth vs, that the hungry are defrauded of their right, vnleſſe their wants be ſupplied: yea, ſuch a woſull ſpectacle often moues the moſt barbarous and cruell to compaſſion.

Afterwards hee reckons vp ſome particulars, which are vſually wont to mollifie the ſtonieſt heart, and moue them to ſhew mercie. The reaſon is, that their inhumanitie which are not touched with the ſenſe of the pouertie, and need of their brethren, might be the leſſe excuſable.

Laſtly, hee concludes, *and hide not thy face from thine owne fleſh*: where we are to note this word *fleſh*; for thereby hee means all men in generall; not one, whercof wee can behold, but therein of neceſſitie wee muſt view our owne nature, as in a glaſſe. It is great inhumanitie then to diſdaine and deſpiſe thoſe in whom wee are forced to acknowledge our owne image.

Verſ. 8. *Then ſhall thy light breake forth as the morning, and thine health ſhall grow ſpeedily: thy righteousneſſe ſhall goe before thee, and the glory of the Lord ſhall embrace thee.*

THE Prophet ſhewes that God is not ouer rigorous, neither requires hee of vs more then is neede, though hypocrites complaine cauſleſſe neuer ſo much, in accusing him of too great ſeuericitie: for when their workes are condemned, then they gnaw the teeth, and anſwer, that God can neuer be content; and therefore they know not what they ſhould doe more, nor what way to take. Hee anſwers them againe, that God requires no more but a pure and vpright heart: that is to ſay, a good conſcience. If they haue that, he will ſhew them mercy, and in gathering them together againe, will giue teſtimonie of their holineſſe, and will bleſſe them euery manner of way, whom he hath iuſtly chaſtiſed for their diſloyalties,

A preuention of an objection.

Two parts of equitie.

1
2

disloyalties. In a word, that they shall haue no occasion at all to murmure, as if he were too sharpe towards them; because they should taste of his bountie and liberalitie, if in reiecting all hy poecrisie, they would dispose themselves to worship him in sinceritie.

We must note the particke *then*. For on the contrarie, it signifies that hypocrites are very farre off from this pure worship of God, though they would be taken for the holiest men in the world. But the Prophet holds them more then conuincid, when by their owne workes he shewes that they neither feare nor reuerence the Lord.

By the word *light*, he meanes a prosperous estate: as on the contrarie; *darkenesse* signifies a life full of miserie and calamities. And this we know is a phrase of speech much vsed in the Scriptures. *Health*, notes out an happy and quiet life, as we shall see anon in another place. For the plagues which were inflicted vpon this people by the hand of God in regard of their sinnes, had almost consumed them: so as they pined away as a sicke man that is brought low by a languishing disease. For there is no sicknesse so sharpe, as to be pressed with the iust vengeance of God, or to be wasted vnder his curse.

The word *righteousnesse* may be taken two waies: either for a testimonie of vprightnesse: or for an estate well ordered: because God would heale the confusions, and place all things in their first estate. The first sense then will be; after God shall be reconciled with thee, *the testimonie of thy righteousnesse shall appeare* before him and before men; as if an Herald of armes went before thee. There are other expositors, which had rather take *righteousnesse*, for a well ordered commonwealth, which is a gift of God, and no small token of his fatherly loue. And in other places also we haue seene that it is taken in this sense amongst the Hebrews. But the last member which followes, *the glorie of the Lord*; causeth me rather to follow the first exposition, *Thy righteousnesse shall see forth*, that is to say, *All shall know that thou art iust and holie; whereas before thou wast guilty and conuicted.* And thus the *glorie of the Lord* shall be put vpon thee: whereas before thou wert overwhelmed with ignominie and reproches. For we are exposed to shame and contempt, when we beare the punishment of our transgressions.

Verf. 9. *Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answere: thou shalt crie, and hee shall say, Here I am: if thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and wicked speaking.*

Isaiah persecutes that which he hath already begun to inreate of, namely, that the Jewes should prosper in all things, if they liue in such equitie, and so abstaine from all wrong, that thence men may take notice of their piety and religion. For he pronounceth that which is said by *Hosea*, and is repeated

by Christ: That mercie ought to be preferred before sacrifice: Hof. 6. 7. Matth. 12 7. Having spoken then of the duties of charitie, and likewise hauing protested that such as performe them shall be happy; now he ads, *Then thou shalt call, and the Lord shall heare thee.* For herein consists the chiefest part of our happinesse: namely, if God vouchsafe to heare vs: contrariwise, there cannot befall vs a more wofull condition, then when hee is our enemy.

Now for the exercise of our faith, he attributes that to our prayers which he is minded to bestow voluntarily, and of his meere liberalitie. For if he should full supple vs with his benefits while we slept, as it were; the affection of prayer would grow cold in vs, yea would be vtterly frozen vp; and so his liberalitie should nourish our sloth & negligence. Albeit then that hee preuent vs by his free grace; yet will he haue our prayers to come betweene: and therefore he addes, *Thou shalt crie, and he shall say, Here I am.* For this promise contains also an exhortation, to the end we should not remaine idle. When hee saith, *Here am I*: this appertaines not to our outward senses; but by the effects he shewes that he is neere vnto vs, and affours vs.

And in the end of the verse he repeates againe, that God will be pacified towards the Jewes, if so be they did repent. By the *yoke*, he comprehends all the molestations wherewith the poore were vexed. As if hee should say, If thou ceasest to molest thy brethren, and abstainest from deceit and violence: the Lord will blesse thee euery kind of way.

The *lifting vp of the finger* also, contains vnder it all manner of iniuries. For we are wont to say, *Lift up thy finger*, when we meane to deale cruellie with our neighbours, or to offer them any outrage. The *word of vanity*, is the third kind of wrong, by which wee hurt our neighbour in deceiving them with sweet and sugred words. For all iniquitie is composed either of secret fraud and malice: or of open violence.

Verf. 10. *If thou poure out thy soule to the hungrie, and refresh the troubled soule: then shall thy light spring out of darkenesse, and thy darkenesse shall be as the noone day.*

Poure out thy [soule.] He continues to commend vnto them the duties of charitie. For the whole summe of his exhortation is to shew that men worship God in vaine, if they onely offer vnto him some cold and naked ceremonies, seeing Gods true and pure worship consists not in such childish things; but rather commands and chargeth vs to liue in innocencie and vprightnesse with our neighbours: doing them good to our powers, and being readie to helpe them when need is, readilie and cheerefully.

The two parts of this dutie are to be marked, which *Isaiah* also hath expressly distinguished. For in the first place he commends vnto vs the affection of *pietie and compassion*: in the

Wherein our
principall
happinesse
consists.

Mich. 7. 8.
Chap. 42. 16.

The same ar-
gument fur-
ther profe-
cuted.

the next place he exhorts vs to manifeſt the ſame by theſe effects. For it is not ſufficient to doe good to men, vnleſſe it proceede from a franke and willing mind. If I diſtribute all my goods to the poore, ſaith *S. Paul*, and haue not loue; I am nothing: *1. Cor. 13. 3.* Thus then to powre out the ſoule, ſignifies nothing elſe but to pittie our bretherens miſeries, & to be as much affected with their wants, as if we our ſelues were afflicted with them: *Heb. 13. 3.* As contrariwiſe all ſuch as are ſtrait laced being giuen to their priuate commodities, ſhut-ting vp their bowels, and are void of affection, *1. Iohn 3. 17.* are called men of an hard heart.

Whereas others tranſit aſe, If thou preſentſt thy ſoule: it agrees not. The ſame promiſe with that in verſe 8. followes, and vnder the ſame ſimilitude or figure. For by *darkeneſſe* he vnderſtands a wooll eſtate: and by *light*, an happie and prosperous condition. As if he ſhould ſay, The Lord will cauſe all thy miſeries which now ouerwhelme thee to ceaſe: and a ſudden felicitie ſhall ſucceed the ſame. Hee ſhewes therefore that they had no cauſe to complaine of God when afflictions preſſed them to the quicke; becauſe they ſhould forthwith eſcape, and enioy an happie eſtate, if they ſerued and obeyed God.

Verſ. 11. *And the Lord ſhall guide thee continually, and ſatiſfie thy ſoule in drougth, and make fat thy bones: and thou ſhalt bee like a watered garden and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters faile not.*

THe Lord ſhall guide thee.] Now hee more clearly expreſſeth that which he touched before in briefe, and vnder borrowed ſpeeches. Namely, that God will bee their leader: ſo as nothing ſhall hinder them from enioying all things in abundanc. It is ſaid that God guides vs, when we feele by experience that hee goes before vs, as if wee ſaw him with our eies. Next hee addes, that this ſhall not be for a time; becauſe God neuer leaues thoſe that bee in the mid way; but with an vnchangeable courſe continues his benefits alwaies vnto them. For this cauſe the Prophet alſo promiſeth fulnes and ſatiſſie in their extreameſt penurie. For God hath abundanc of bleſſings alwaies in his hand wherewith to relieue the wants of his children. And ſurely his onelic bleſſing is more worth then the ſweeteſt dewes that can fall in an whole yeere. And yet he doth not promiſe to the faithfull, that they ſhall haue alwaies a goodly and plentifull increaſe of fruites, and good ſeaſons to end their hatcut and vintage well; but that God will nourish them, albeit the earth ſhould bring forth no foode at all. And thus he commands them to depend vpon Gods helpe, and to content themſelues therewith, notwithstanding that the barrenneſſe of the earth ſhould put them to their ſhifts.

In this ſenſe it is ſaid afterwards, *Hee will make fat thy bones.* He ſaith not; they ſhall be full fed and fat; but ſo leane, that their bones ſhall pierce the very ſkinne. Hee calles them bones then, who are pinched with penury and famine. In a word, ſuch as in whom there is nothing left but ſkinne and bones vnto: he ſtrunke vp and withered. And thus he ſignifies that the Iewes ſhould haue to wreſtle againſt famine and leauntes, vntill God ſhould be pleaſed to reſtore them.

Heereunto appertaines that which hee addes touching a *watered garden*, and of the *ſpring of waters*. For *Iſaiah* cannot ſatiſſie himſelfe in expreſſing the largeneſſe which God would powre but vpon his ſeruants, that ſo men might ſeeke the cauſes of death no where but in themſelues. The ſumme is, that this fountaine of Gods bountifullneſſe ſhall neuer faile nor bee drownt dry, if ſo bee wee ſtoppe not vp the ſame by our frowardneſſe.

Verſ. 12. *And they ſhall be of thee, that ſhall build the old waſte places: and thou ſhalt raiſe vp the foundations for many generations; and thou ſhalt be called the repairer of the breach, and the reſtorer of the paths to dwell in.*

*Or, reſtore the old deſerts.

By *deſerts*, the Prophet meanes an horrible waſte which beſell the Iewes at that time, when they were led captiues: for the Land became like a deſert, the cities were ruinated, the Temple was razed, the people made bondſlaues, and ſcattered into all quarters. Hee calles them *deſerts*, and *old*, becauſe they could not be ſo ſoone reedified; neither was there any hope left that the people ſhould be reſtored to their fiſt eſtate. If any Citie be waſted or laid on heapes, yet as long as the inhabitants remaine there, it may in ſhort time be reſtored: but if the inhabitants which dwelt therein be dead, or haue bin carried away into a farre Country, and ſhall be long abſent, what hope is left that ſuch a Citie ſhould be new built againe? Wil it not ſeeme ſtrange if a long while after the ruine thereof, one ſhould ſay; *The people which ſeemed forlorne, ſhall build and reſtaure it againe?* Seeing this promiſe then was incredible, the Prophet meant to meeete with this doubt. For they might obiect; If the Lord meant to raiſe vs to our former eſtate, why ſuffers he vs to languish ſo long a time? He answers, that the length of time ſhall not let God to raiſe vp the things againe that were fallen to the earth for many yeeres together. Now this muſt not be reſtrained to the building of the Temple begun by *Zerobabel*, and continued by *Nehemas*, *Ezra. 3. 8.* but it comprehends the reſtauration of the Church, which was effected ſome ages after.

An obiection p^{ro}duced.

Of thee] ſignifies that out of this people almoſt dead, ſhould come forth ſuch as ſhould repaire theſe woſull ruines. And thus they ſhould be the Carpenters and Maſons to reedifie *Jeruſalem*. A little after he ſeemes

to attribute to all the people that which he now restrains to some particulars, but the sense notwithstanding remains alwaies the same. For if it be asked, Who testified Ierusalem? Truly it was this people. But out of this infinite multitude God culled out an handfull, and cut off all the rest. Some thinke that the Cities should not be big enough to containe so many people, for which cause they should be forced to build those againe which were throwne downe before. But this seemes too farre fetched.

By the *foundations from generation to generation*, whereof he speaks in the second member, some thinke that the Prophet only repeats that which he said before, and so expound *foundations of generations*, because they had a long time bin ouerthrowne, in regard these buildings were forthwith to be reedified and set vp: but many impediments should come betwene that should cause the worke to cease: notwithstanding this may be referred to the time to come thus; Thou shalt reare vp the buildings which shall remaine for a long space, for he seemes to promise vnto the Church such an estate as shal continue a long while: as if he should say, *other buildings stand not long, but this shall indure for many generations.* If any had rather referre it to the tinic past, I gainesay him not.

And thou shalt be called.] The Prophet here comprehends two points. First, that the people should resemble a ruinous building: Secondly, that they should shortly be built againe. But he attributes to the Iewes that they shall be the *repairers and directors of the paths*, in regard the Lord shall vsf their seruice to that end. Wee haue heere then an excellent promise, namely, that the ruins of the Church shall be gathered againe together, and repaired. Now seeing the Lord will vsf our selues in this worke, let nothing hinder vs from employing our whole seruices this way. And albeit the world resist and scorne vs as witlesse people, yet let vs be of good courage, and overcome all these impediments. For we must be valiant and bold when we know it is the *Lords worke*, who hath enioined vs thus to doe.

*Verf. 13. If thou turne away thy foote from the Sabbath, from doing thy Will on mine holy day, and call the Sabbath * a*

* Or, delites, *delite, to consecrate it as glorious to the Lord, and shalt honor him, not doing thine owne wayes, nor speaking * a vaine word.*

* Or, thy words.

Some thinke the Prophet hath respect to the outward obseruation of the Sabbath, because it was not lawfull to *strawle* on that day. Now howfoeuer I reiect not this, yet I take it that the sense hath a larger extent; for vnder the figure Synecdoche, he signifies the whole course of mans life, it being a thing well knowne to all, that by *ualking*, our whole conuersation is vnderstood. He saith then, *If thou ceasest to follow thine owne swinge: if thou stime up all passage against thy selfe: vvalke not vvhither thy fantasia leads thee, &c. For*

they are said to *turne their feete* from the Sabbath who impose not this law vpon themselves, namely, not to wander whither their vnbridled lusts would carrie them.

Now as before vnder the *fast* he comprehended all ceremonies, and shewed that these disguisings in which they placed. their holines, were nothing but vain and vnprofitable things, so in this place he shewes wherein the *true obseruation of the Sabbath consisteth*, to the end they should not thinke it to be in the outward rest from bodily labor, but in the true renouncing of our selues, that is, in abstaining from all wickednes, violence, voluptuousnes, and euill thoughts.

First, by the word *foote* he means their works: for the Iewes durst not trauaile nor dresse any flesh vpon the Sabbath day, and yet they made no scruple at all to vex their poore neighbors, and to scorne the afflicted, notwithstanding, he comes forthwith to speake of the *vwill*, and the *vords*, that he might comprehend all the parts of that obediece which is due vnto God.

The word *delights* ought to be referred vnto God, and not to men. For there is nothing which pleaseth him better, or is more acceptable vnto him than the obseruation of the Sabbath, and his pure worship. He carefullie repeats that men do much ouershute themselves if they cōtemne the commandements of God, to set vp their vnprofitable workes in the stead thereof, and also admoniseth vs to suffer our selues to be gouerned by his only will.

Moreouer, he mentions some particulars, whereby he shewes that the true obseruation of the Sabbath consisteth in the renouncing of our selues; and in the conuersion of the whole man: and therefore he layes the *vwill* for the foundation, that from thence may flow *vords*, and *deeds*, for we lightly vtter the *conceptions* of our *vnderstandings*, and by our *vords* we manifest our *vwill*, then followe the actions. Whosoeuer then will indeuor to serue God as he ought, he must first of necessitie whollie renouente his will and carnall reason. Hence we see wherefore the Lord oft requires the obseruation of the Sabbath in the Scriptures: Exod. 20. 13. Doubtlesse he looked higher then to the externall ceremonie, which is this rest, in which the Iewes placed a worke of great holinesse. No, he rather meant, that hauing put off all the concupiscences of the flesh, and renounced all their inordinate affectiōs, they should testifie their sincere obediece. For in truth, that man can neuer be said to meditate aright of the heavenly life, that is not dead both to the world and to himselfe. Now howfoeuer this ceremonie bee abolished, yet the substance remains. For Christ is dead and risen againe, to the end we might keepe a perpetuall Sabbath; that we cease from our own workes, to suffer the Spirit of grace to worke powerfully in vs.

Verf. 14. Then shalt thou delight in the Lord, and I will cause thee to mount upon

For a more particular explication and application of this 13. verse, see Widley vp6 the Sabbath, Lib. 2. Chap. 2. Sect. 2.

upon the high places of the earth, and feede thee with the heritage of Iacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it.

Then ſhalt thou delight. It ſeemes he alludes to the word delights, in the former verſe. For the word *Tibannah*, which the Prophet uſeth, comes of the word *Onegh*, which hee uſed in verſ. 12. in ſaying, that the Lord tooke great delights in the true obſervation of the Sabbath. In a word, his meaning is, that the people receiued no delight from God, becauſe they provoked him to anger, & would not obey his will. For if wee ſquare our liues according to the rules of Gods Law, wee ſhall be his delights, and hee ſhall be our ioy and contentment. He teſtifies then that the Iewes are the cauſe themſelues that God takes no more pleaſure in them: alſo that their owne liues are ſo comfortleſſe. By this then hee priuily reprocheth the Iewes, namely, that through their owne folly, they haue drawne downe ſo many calamities vpon them.

Afterwards he addes, that they ſhall *mount vpon the high places of the earth*: thereby promiſing vnto them their returne, and a ſafe abode in their Country: for we know that Iudaah was ſituated on high, about the regions

round about: and that Babylon was ſeated lower, ſo as the people was hid there, as within a caue. And yet hee ſhewes more plainly, what he meant by this word *to mount*: for hee promiſeth to them the poſſiſion of that heritage which was promiſed a d giuen to the Fathers, which they alſo ſhould then inioy, after that for a time they had been deſtroyed of it.

He addes, *for the mouth of the Lord hath ſpoken it*; that they might know for certaine, that all theſe things ſhould take effect. But this muſt not only be vnderſtood touching theſe promiſes; but muſt alſo be referred to the former part of this Chapter. For therein hee hath ſharply cenſured the hypocrites, who thought to haue made their party good againſt God, ſhewing alſo that they were (notwithſtanding their plea) juſtly puniſhed for their iniquities: yea, that it was in vaine for them to quarrell with God, by oppoſing their vaine and vnprofitable workes to his iuſtice. And therefore hee brings them backe to the true obſervation of the Sabbath day, and ſhewes that all ſhall goe well with them, if they worſhip the Lord purely: and in the end concludes, that in all theſe things they had not to doe *vwith a mortall man, but vwith the eternall God, vwho is the Iudge that teſtifies theſe things.*

THE LIX. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *Behold, the Lords hand is not ſhortened, that it cannot ſaue: neither is his eare heauie, that it cannot heare.*

2. *But your iniquities haue ſeparated betweene you and your God, and your finnes haue hid his face from you, that he will not heare.*

The Prophet maintaines Gods equall dealing, againſt the ſlanders of the wicked.



His Sermon is in a manner like to the former. For after hee hath vnmasked the hypocrites, who ſally vaunted themſelues, and ſhewed that their puniſhment is iuſt; now hee anſwers to the reſt of their obiections. The cuſtome of ſuch kind of perſons is to accuſe God either of impotencie, or of ouer great ſeueritie: and therefore he ſhewes, that neither power nor *vwill* is wanting in God, to ſaue thoſe that be his: but that it is their owne *peruerſitie* that hinders him from cauſing them to feele his liberalitie: and conſequently, that they did wickedly to complaine of him, in vttering ſuch ſlanders againſt him, ſeeing that themſelues rather deſerued to be accuſed.

The word *Behold*, hath great weight in it: for it is as much as if the Prophet in ſpeaking of a thing preſent, ſhould haue pointed it out with his finger for the greater certen-

tie, that ſo he might at once cut off all the cauiſes and replies of hypocrites. Now we muſt ſupply oppoſitions in the words *ſhortened* and *heauie*: as if he ſhould ſay; *The hand of the Lord was once ſtrong enough to ſaue his children: and once his eares were open to heare their prayers: and now hee is no changeling, as if his hand were maimed, or as if his eares were heauie, that he ſhould not be quicke enough of hearing.* The ſum is, that men are not to charge God with mutabilitie, as if he had altered his nature; but that the whole blame reſted in themſelues, in regard that by their finnes they had as it were ſhut vp the paſſage againſt his bountie, and would not admit of his ſuccour. So that if themſelues had not laid impediments in the way, hee would haue cauſed them to haue felt his power and mercy, as well as their fathers in times paſt had done. And thus he drawes his argument from the perpetuall and equall conſtancie of God, whoſe grace they reiected by their ſins, and would none of his helpe.

Hence we gather that it is our finnes only that deſtroies vs of Gods fauour, and ſets him and vs at oddes. For that which the Prophet ſaid of his time, agrees to all ages: for hee maintaines Gods cauſe againſt the ſlanders of the wicked. God therefore is alwaies like himſelfe, and is neuer wearie of well doing; his power is not leſſened: but it is wee our ſelues that ſhut vp the gate againſt his grace.

Doctrinē.

But ſome will obiect, that God cannot bee prevented.

Fff

preuented

Obiect.

O bic. &
A. u. f.

prevented by mens deserts: and therefore it must needs be that hee doe good to the vnworthy. I confesse this is true: but yet I say that mens perversitie sometimes overflows so farre, that it stops vp all passage against Gods benefits; no lesse then if of set purpose we meant to driue him farre away from vs. And albeit hee neuer heares any, but with pardon; it being also our duties alwaies to bring with vs into his presence requests touching the forgiueneffe of our sinnes; yet hee neuer heares the prayers of the wicked. We are not to wonder then if the Prophet accuseth the people, for hauing reiected Gods benefits by their wickednesse, and for making him vnappeasable by their obstinacie. To be short, for making a *diuorce*; by which they repulsed and turned backe the ordinary course of Gods graces.

Verf. 3. *For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquitie: your lippes haue spoken lies, and your tongue hath murmured iniquitie.*

He descends from the general to particulars.

Now he brings their workes to light, to stop their contentings: and that they should not call into question what these sins were, which had made this diuision. He takes away from the all excuse then, in discouering vnto them these particular vices; as if their wicked life had been blazed in an open theater. Now he speaks in the second person, in regard that he maintaines and prosecutes the cause of God, whose aduocate he is: and therefore *he separates himselfe* out of the wicked societie, to whom now he will not ioyn himselfe, although hee were not vtterly exempt from sinne. But he feared and honoured God notwithstanding: and therefore had his conscience clear. For he which shall be tainted with the same offences, cannot freely condemne others: neither shall he be fit to debate the matter, because he bereaues himselfe of his authoritie by his scandalous and wicked life. For we ought not to be culpable of the vices which wee reprove in others, vnlesse we meane to make the doctrine which we teach, a matter of scorne and derision; and our selues to be taken for bold and impudent fellows. But on the other side, when we serue our God in a pure and good conscience, then hath the doctrine which we deliuer maiestie and power in it, and leaues the aduersarie the more without excuse.

Now it is not to be held as a matter superfluous, that he laies forth the vngenerous life of this people thus, *by peace meate*. For men are wont to seeke out many starting holes; neither can they be brought into any good order, vnlesse they bee first brought to acknowledge their offences.

In mentioning of *blood*; his meaning is not that they committed *open murders*; but thereby he notes out the inhumanitie, rapines, violence and outrages which the hypocriticall sort exercised ouer the poore, and such as were not able to resist. We must not thinke he had to deale with notorious mur-

therers or theecus; but with the King and States-men; who were honoured and respected, in regard of their great places. These are they whom he calles *men of blood*; in that they cruellie vexed poore innocents: and in that by force and violence they wrung vnto themselves other mens goods.

For this cause in the next place, hee puts iniquitie in stead of blood. And howsoeuer hee seemes to extend his speech further off; yet it is but a repetition or redoubling of the words; which the Hebrewes often vse for amplifications sake. For he expresth more by the *fingers* then by the *hands*. As if hee should haue said, There is not the least part of your bodies which is not stained with extortion.

Next, hee toucheth another kind of wickednesse: to wit, when one of them circumvented another by subtilties, periuries, and treacheries. For *iniquitie* by which we wrong our neighbours, is fortified with *crueltie* or lies and deceit, as with the court gard. Now the Prophet in this place insists vpon matters belonging to the *second table*, and by the sinnes which they had committed against the commandments therein contained, hee shewes that they were wicked persons, and vtterly void of the true feare of God. For that barbaritie and disloyaltie which violates humane societie, merely proceeds from the contempt of God. See here the reason then, why from the *hands*; that is to say, from extortions and outrages, hee descends to *tying*, wicked practises, periuries, and other diuellish subtilties, whereby wee circumvent our neighbours.

Iniquitie fortified by crueltie.

Violating of humane societie proceeds from the contempt of God.

Verf. 4. *No man* calleth for iustice: no man contendeth for truth: they trust in vanitie, and speake vaine things: they conceiue mischiefe, and bring forth iniquitie.*

*Or, crieth.

The Prophet meant to say, that there was *no regard of equitie* or vprightnes among the: *That no man opposed himselfe against the iniuries*, which the great ones practised against the weake. And, *that all licentiousnesse grew and increased, because all looked through their fingers therat, and no man did set his heart to maintaine iustice*. Now it is not enough that we only abstaine from violence our selues, vnlesse as much as possible we can, we therewithall endeavour to hinder men from doing the same to others. Truly, who euer he bee that permits that which he may hinder; the same may be said in a sort to command it. For silence is a kind of consent. And to this appertaines the second member.

It is not enough that we abstaine from offering violence, vnlesse we hinder it in others.

Some take the verb *Nishpat* in the passive signification, and thinke the Prophets meaning is, That none is iudged iustly. For the whole State is ful of corruptions, and yet no man opposeth himselfe against them. But the actiue signification agrees better, in respect of the answering of these two points one to another, *No man calles for iustice: No man contendeth*

He is vsit to controule those that is guide himselfe of the same crimes.

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contends for truth. For whereas ſome tranſlate, no man iudgeth himſelfe in truth: it is a little too nice. Beſides, in as much as this verb, *To eric*, is taken, to contend; the ſcope of the text ſeemes here to runne better, No man ſets himſelfe to maintaine the right, with a loud voice freely to maintaine and defend iuſtice. In a word, to contend againſt the wicked. Vnleſſe we had rather refer this *criſing for iuſtice*, to the miſerable, who were vniuſly oppreſſed. As if he ſhould ſay, Theſe poore wretches held their peace, becauſe they gained nothing by their cries. But this lenie would be ſome what too harſh. Well, if ſuch as are careleſſe in defending of mans right; and ſuch as relieue not the afflicted are thus rigorouſly condemned by the Lord: what ſhall become of vs, if our zeale in maintaining the glorie of God, prouokes vs not to eric without ceaſing againſt iniquities? if we winke at the ſcoffes wherewith the wicked deride the doctrine of ſaluation, and prophane the name of our God: or if wee ſet light by the plots wherewith they goe about to ouerthrow the Church, ſhall not our ſilence deſerue to be condemned of diſloyaltie and high treaſon? (I trow yes.) To be ſhort, *Jſaiab* meaning is, that all good order falles to ruine by our fault, if we reſiſt not the wicked as much as in vs lies. Secondly, that there is an extreme conuſion, when no man ſtirres his foote to vphold iuſtice.

When he ſaith, that *they truſt in vaine things*, it is to ſignifie that they heaped vp multitudes of peruerſe counſels, by meanes whereof they became vtterly obſtinate. Will you ſee the height of iniquitie then? Surely wee may then be ſaid to be come vnto it, when in ſeeking our ſweete allurements heere and there, we accuſome our ſelues with a ſelred malice to contemne God; for by ſuch meanes Satan inueigles the reprobates, till hee hath wholly bewitched them. So as hauing firſt of all taken off all feare of God, they come by degrees to reiect all whoſome admonitions, and at laſt, with inſupportable pride & ſauſineſſe to deride and ſcorne them. Becauſe arrogance then tranſports vs, when wee oppoſe our vaine hopes againſt Gods iudgement; it is not without cauſe that our Prophet brands this *ruſt* vnder which ſcorners hide themſelues, with a note of deſpaire. For a man may ſee well enough that the maladie is growne incurable, when the wicked make no bones to flatter themſelues in all mens ſight; and when being built as it were vpon their owne ſrowardneſſe, they thinke they have licence to doe whatſoever they liſt.

Hee adds, that one might diſcerne a farre off, what their thoughts and maners were in their ſpeech, according to the common prouerbe; The tongue is the meſſenger of the heart. And yet this particle may be expounded two waies; either that they vttered nothing that was good, but that their tongues were framed to deceiue without ceaſing: or that their wickedneſſe brake forth into manifeſt ſwaggering. And this ſecond expoſition pleaſeth me better then the firſt.

They ſhall conueine miſchiefe, and bring forth

iniquitie.] Theſe ſimilitudes ate elegant. For by them he compares the wicked to women, who nourish their fruit in their wombe, and afterward bring it forth. Likewiſe, hee ſaith that the wicked are like great bellied women, whileſt they are plotting their treacheries in their breasts, euen till the full time approach, in which they muſt be deliuered; namely, as ſoone as they haue found fit opportunities. Now hee ſaith, that they conueine hurtfull counſels, to the end they may afterward oppreſſe the innocent without cauſe. As if hee ſhould ſay; They plot their miſchiefs long afore hand, and are alwaies readie to execute ſome outrage: for they ceaſe not heere and there to ſearch out cloſe conuiances to trouble ſuch as onely deſire to bee at peace.

Simile.

Verſ. 5. *They hatch Cockatrice egges, and weaue the ſpiders webbe: he that eateth of their egges, dieth, and that which is troden vpon, breaketh forth into a Serpent.*

The Prophet paſſeth on further, comparing the Iewes not onely to *women*, but alſo to *venomous beaſts*; the better to ſignifie, that whatſoever proceeded from them, was dangerous and deadly. Firſt then hee ſaith that they *hatched Cockatrice egges*. As a Viper then cannot but hatch a venomous egge; ſo were they ſo defiled and ſtuffed with iniquitie, that they brought forth nothing but poiſon.

A comparison taken from venomous beaſts.

Simile.

By the *Spiders webbe*, hee means that they were ſo fruitleſſe and emptic of goodneſſe, that by the onely appearance of goodneſſe, they beguiled euery one. And thus hee paints out the wicked with two colours as it were: Firſt, that all their works manifeſted the corruption of their nature. Secondly, that they were profitable for nothing, neither were they readie to ſhew themſelues louing, amiable, charitable, and faithfull to thoſe with whom they conuerſed. I am not ignorant that this place is otherwiſe expounded by ſome, namely, that whileſt the wicked are weauiſg the webbe of other mens deſtruction, they ouerthrow themſelues; and thinking themſelues very wiſe, doe notwithstanding plot their deuices in vaine. And thus are caught in their own nets, and fall into the pit which they digged for others: *Psal. 7. & 9.* But mee thinke the Prophet meant to expreſſe that which I haue touched, to wit, that the wicked *alwaies, every where, and in all things, are miſchieuous, and neuer profitable to any.* Whoſoever ſhall haue to doe with them, ſhall taſte their venome, and that they ſtung to death. Heereunto belongs that which hee ſaith, namely, that *deadly poiſon is in their egges*, and that if one doe but tread vpon them, a Serpent by and by iſſueth forth.

Verſ. 6. *Their webbes ſhall be no garments, neither ſhall they couer themſelues with*

Fff 2

wiſe

Note.

I

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The height of iniquitie.

Prouerbe.

with their labours: for their workes are workes of iniquitie; and the worke of crueltye is in their hands.

A repetition and confirmation of the former similitude.

HEE both repeats and confirms one and the same thing, namely, that they euer more are hurtfull to mankind, whatsoeuer they enterprize or execute: because of set purpose they haue all duties of charitie in abomination. Heere then is a signe of a nature wonderfully corrupted, namely, to be wholly giuen vp to commit euill, that no hope is left of reaping any fruit from their life, who desire to be vtterly void and stripped of all iustice. Others expound; that they strite to get riches, and to be aduanced to honors: but all to no purpose. Yet I had rather plainly expound it thus; that none of them should couer himselfe with his workes, because his vrebbe is altogether composed of rotten and vsenueicall stuffe.

Now hee repeats one and the same thing in diuers phrases of speech, to shew that their workes should be vtterly fruitlesse. Wee are borne to doe our neighbours good, according to our power, and to be doing of somewhat that may serue for the common good. These are wild beafts then, and not worthy the names of men; seeing they are so industrious to hurt, and so prouident, as to do nothing that is of any worth. Last of all, without any figure, hee adds, that they are giuen and as it were, dedicated vnto iniquitie.

Verf. 7. *Their feete runne to euill, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are wicked thoughts: desolation and destruction is in their pathes.*

HE here diuers waies describes vnto vs an image of an hatefull impietie. Namely, when men are so farre past grace, and destitute of all feare of God, that they rush into all kind of wickednesse, as the horse into the battell: and ouerflow in cruelties, roberies, and outrages. *They runne* (saith he) because they are strong and ouerbold to commit wickednesse. Now hauing spoken before of the *bands and tongue*, now he also adds the *feete*, to shew that they are their crafts Masters in all sorts of mischief. So as no member of their bodies was exempt from acting some iniquitie. For some vse violence, but they can restraîne their tongues. Others againe who resemble a certaine raenous bird called an Harpie, content themselves with the first pray they meete withall. The Prophet then confesseth that those of his nation were *light of foote*, to spoile and rob.

A bird called an Harpie.

By the word *desolation*, hee signifies that wheresoeuer these cormorants came they fared like sauage and wild beafts, who rauin and deuoure all they meete withall, and leaue nothing remaining. So as by their terrible course, they scatter and cause all beafts to flee; which dare not come neere

them. *Plinie* takes vp the like similitude touching *Domitian*, who tyranized like a cruell beaft. And the same may we see to be in all these blood thirstie ones, whom all the world flees as from furious and vtamed wild beafts. And thus *their waies become desolate, and solitarie*, when they will suffer none to haue any fellowship with them.

Plinie.
Domitian.

Verf. 8. *The way of peace they know not, and there is none equitie in their goings: they haue made them crooked pathes: who soeuer goeth therein, shall not know peace.*

SOME take this word *peace*, too nicely, for peace of conscience, in respect that the wicked are euermore vexed. But the Prophet so brings them to Gods iudgement, that yet in the meane while by transgressing the second table, he shewes that there was neither faith nor charitie in them. In a word, that they were void of affection. The way of peace (saith he) they know not. Why so? Because their woolluish minds had bereaued them of this *Iustice and equitie*; which two vertues vphold humane societie, and cause men to dwell quietly and friendlie one with another. For iustice and integritie nourisheth *peace*. But if euery one with furie rusheth violently vpon his neighbour, in offering them open wrong: there, open warre is proclaimed. For wee can by no meanes maintaine peace in the midst of vs, vnlesse euerie one in particular squares all his doings by the rules of equitie.

Iustice and integritie nourisheth peace.

He expresseth this more fully by the word *iudgement*. As if he should say, wheresoeuer they came, they were a terror to all; because they had cast off all vprightnesse. The last member may be taken two waies, either that *who soeuer walkes in them, shall also be farre off from peace*: Or, *He which fallles into the hands of the wicked shall feele their cruelty and murderous minds*. Both expositions may agree well, and (as I thinke) we need not much contend about it. And therefore after the Prophet hath spoken generally before, and shewed, that the fault was not in God, that the Iewes prospered no better in their enterprises; now he descends to the particulars, wherein he more fully declares how they had reuolted from God, and so made themselves vnworthie of his fauour.

Peace cannot be maintained without equity.

But here ariseth a difficultie, in regard that *Saint Paul* allegeth this place in the Epistle to the Rom. 3. 17. to condemne all flesh as vicious, corrupt, and vtterlie void of any thing that is good. But contrariwise it seemes the Prophet applies it in particular to the men of his time. But the answer is easie. For when he directeth his speech to the Iewes, who were reputed as pettie Saints in respect of others, of necessitie the Gentiles must all come within this rancke. If any obiect, that the Gentiles in liuing iustly were a law vnto themselves, and that their vncircumcision is counted to them for vncircumcision.

Obiect.

Anf.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Rom. 7. 16. I anſwer, that the Prophet brings God in complaining of all ſuch as were not regenerated by his holy ſpirit. And thus none can be exempt, if he be conſidered of in his owne nature. And yet the Prophet exempt himſelfe out of this number, in regard he was regenerated and governed by the Spirit of God. S. Paul therefore hath alleaged this ſentence to very good purpose when he minded to ſhew what men are, being forſaken of God, and are led by the light of their owne nature. I grant that the perverſitie of men breakes not alwaies ſooth into open ſinnes. Well, our Prophets meaning is to reprove the corruptions of thoſe times wherein iniquities were growne to ſuch an height, that one might well diſcerne as in a glaſſe how (loſſome a ſinke and) bottomleſſe gulph of all at ominations mans nature is. In the meane while there is no doubt but this Sermon ſtung the Jewes to the very quick, in regard they were puffed vp with a vaine conceit of their race for ſooth; but in as much as the ſpirit of God ſpared not them, the reſt of the nations who were no leſſe corrupted by nature, had no reaſon at all to wallow themſelves in their pleaſures.

Verſ. 9. *Therefore is iudgement farre from vs; neither doth iuſtice come neere unto vs: we wait for light, but loe, it is darknes: for brightnes, but we walke in darknes.*

Why is the living man ſorrowfull? man ſuffers for his ſinne. Lam. 3. 39.

HAVING ſhewed how much the eſtate of this people was perverted and corrupted, he therewithall teacher that they are juſtly corrected thus ſeverely, to the end they ſhould take vp no complaints, as if they were more hardly dealt withall then there was cauſe. He hath by peccemeale then deciphered out their open and knowne corruptions, that they might acknowledge how many waies they were guiltie before God: and now he puts them in minde that it was no wonder if God caried a ſtrait hand ouer ſuch obſtinate ſpirits, in handling them according to their deſerts. Now he ſaith, that *iudgement was farre off*, in reſpect that they were the only miſerable people in the world, and had not God their protector, as at other times. He takes iudgement & iuſtice for Gods particular care and ſafeguard ouer vs, namely, when he expreſſeth ſo much by the effects. By *Iuſtice*, he meanes Gods protection, by *Judgement*, the vengeance which he executes vpon ſuch as offer any violence againſt vs. But here he affirms, that God hath no more care ouer his people, and that he hath withheld his aid and ſuccor from them, becauſe they were vnworthy thereof. We are alſo to note this particule *therefore*, for thence it folloes, that they were not to murmure againſt God, as if he kept no meaſure in his corrections, ſeeing they had ſo often abuſed his Maieſtie.

Hereunto appertains that which he addes, namely, that a perpetuall *darknes* enuironed them, who *waited for light*. This metaphor

ſhewes, that they were almoſt conſumed in their miſeries, and were then fruſtrated of their hopes, whyleſt they promiſed vnto themſelves ſome releaſe. By *light*, is meant a proſperous eſtate, as on the contrarie, by *darknes*, a ſtate vnhappy, as is well enough knowne in diuers places before. His meaning is then, that it was in vaine for them to expect better fortunes, becauſe he would haue this people learne to impute theſe calamities to their owne deſerts, and not to imagin either that they came by chance, or that the Lord handled them too ſharply, for his whole ſcope and drift is to bring them to the doctrine of repentance.

Verſ. 10. *Wee grope for the wall like the blinde, and wee grope as one without eyes: wee ſtumble at the noone day as in the twilight: we are in ſolitarie places, as dead men.*

BY varietie of phraſes he expreſſeth one and the ſame thing. For in regard many complaints would be heard to paſſe from this people, he would omit nothing that might ſerue to lay forth their woſull calamities. It may be he vtters theſe things as if he conſented with them, that they were ſo indeed; as if he meant to ſay, Our matters are brought into wonderfull ſtraits: but wee are about all things to conſider the cauſe thereof, ſeeing wee haue deſerued to be handled with much more ſeueritie. And yet the ſenſe will not ſute amiſſe if we ſay, That the drouzie are here awaked, to be thinke them of their miſeries: for howſoeuer they were but too forward in making their *complaints*, yet Satan benumbed their ſenſes, leſt the ſignes of Gods wrath ſhould ſolicite them to repentance.

One and the ſame thing expreſſed, vnder diuers manners of ſpeech.

Now he alludes to that ſimilitude which he mentioned in the former verſe, where he ſaid, that the people were in *darknes* and obſcuritie, without any hope of getting out. Here he ſignifies that they were deſtitute of counſell, and ſo preſſed with anguiſh, that no refuge nor remedie at all appeared vnto the. When ſome light affliction befallles vs we looke this way and that way, and haue hope of ſome iſſue: but in great extremities we are able to diſcerne nothing, in regard of deſpaire which hath ſurprized vs: for this cauſe the Prophet ſaith, that being intangled in a maze of perplexities, they *groped*.

We ſtumble.] This phraſe of ſpeech tends to the ſame end, and hath alſo greater weight in it, namely, that if they ſet but one foote forward, ſo many impediments preſented themſelves on all ſides, that they could finde no more releaſe, then if the day had bin conuerted into the night. By *ſolitarie places*, I vnderſtand deepe gulphes, or deſert and barren lands. For in this place I allow S. Ieroms reading, who deriues theſe words *ſolitarie places*, from the verb *Aſham*; which ſignifies as much as to be horribly deſtroyed and deſolated.

S. Ierome.

The Rabbins who will needs draw it from Rabbins, *Shauin*, which ſignifies, to be fat, argue childiſhly.

disfilly, as I thinke, neither do they alleage any thing that makes to the purpose. For by solitarie places they thinke men are vnderstood, because *Shemmen* signifies anointment, and thus iudge, that the Gentiles are noted out in these words. But the Prophets true meaning is, that the Iewes were brought into solitarie places, that being banished from the societie of men, they might resemble the dead, and might bee left without any hope of deliuerance.

Verf. II. *We roare all like beares, and mourne like doves; weelooke for *equitie, but there is none; for *health, but it is far from vs.*

*Or, iudgement.
*Or, saluation.

HE notes two sorts of men that cannot beare their miseries with patience, but they must discouer them by outward testimonies. For y first cry very loud like beares; & the other *mourne like doves*. He vsed this latter similitude in Chap. 38. 14. where he described the sighings of *Herzaias*. And this happens at such times as we would faine repress our sorrowes, and yet wee cannot so restrain them, but whether we will or no some signes thereof will breake forth outwardly. The summe is, that one while the weight of their miseries extorted from them *lowd cries*; another while they were overcome with *groanes, and broken sighings*; but neither their *roarings, nor muttering*, brought them any release, because their estate was not changed for the better.

For this cause, he repeats it once againe, that they *vained in vaine for iudgements and saluation*; whereby he means that the people were deprived of that succour from God, which about all things they wished and longed for. And he hath vsed the word *saluation*, the better and the more fully to expresse what hee meant before in verf. 9. by *iustice*; and here, by *iudgement*. Hence let vs gather, that we are miserable through our own fault, and that wee wither and waste away in our miseries, till wee be conuerted to our God. Wee may well *roare* and *mourne*; but without repentance our sorrowes shall receiue no reliefe. Our miseries then cannot cease, as long as we prouoke the Lord to anger, nor till we induor with our whole hearts to be reconciled vnto him.

No saluation without conuersion.

*Or, multiplied.

Verf. I 2. *For our trespasses are *many before thee, and our finnes testifie against vs: for our trespasses are with vs, and we know our iniquities.*

A confirmation of the former sentence.

HE confirms his former speech, namely, that the people did ill in accusing God of cruelty, and that they did not rather acknowledge that they receiued the iust recompence of their finnes, the heapes whereof reached vp to the heauens. And in this sense it is that the Prophet saith, they were *multiplied*. Also this particule *before thee*, hath great weight; for the Prophet descends into himselfe, and ac-

knowledgeth the iust iudgement of God, which was hidden from mens eies. His meaning is then to note out a close opposition, which is between mens iudgement & Gods. Men flatter themselves, and thinke not of their finnes; but God who is the Iudge, leaues not to condemne them for all that, neither cares hee for all the vaine and idle excuses, wherewith they would faine daube them ouer. And therefore he contents not himselfe simply to condemne this people; but he ads, that they had *multiplied* their iniquities: that is to say, they were *guiltie before God many vvaies*. He acknowledgeth then that God is iust, and executes the office of a good Iudge, seeing among men there is not to be found *so much as a droppe or graine of iustice or equitie*. And therefore it is he adds, that it was not needfull to cite *any vvainesses*, nor to bring them from the Court of heauen, because the Iewes were sufficiently conuicted and condemned by the *testimonie* of their owne consciences. This manner of speech therefore ought to be well obserued; for it shewes that God hath no great neede of proofes, seeing our finnes hold vs sufficiently conuicted. We haue no reason then to contend with God, as if he punished vs wrongfully, or as if he chastised vs too seuerely: *for our owne iniquities testifie plainly enough against vs, vvhath vvaies are, neither hath God neede to seeke out for any other vvainesses*.

Verf. 4.

With vs.] Others translate, Vpon vs: but I had rather keepe the proprietie of the word. Men make many turnings, and transforme themselves into many shapcs, that they might be taken for iust: but all in vaine, because they *bearc their iniquities, about vvvith them in their bosomes*, from which they cannot flee. As also when God condemned *Cain*, he pronounced that his sinne plaid *the vvaichman as the doore*. So, hee that despiseth Gods iust iudgement, shall vex himselfe in vaine, if he thinks to escape by rebellion.

When hee saith, the Iewes *knew their sinnes*; hee means not that they were truly touched with them in their hearts, for then repentance would haue followed: but hee shewes, that albeit they strove to flee the iudgement of God, yet the testimonie of their owne conscience kept them imprisoned, and confined them in such wise, that they lost their labour to frame or forge excuses. Now whereas hee speaks in the first person, putting himselfe also in the ranke, it is a thing very rare in the Scriptures: and yet therewithall he shewes, that this euill had so spread it selfe through the whole body, that there was no member found nor free. Now howloeuere hee might for his owne particular, protest his vprightnesse in the presence of God; yet in respect that iniquity had overflowed into all the parts of the body, he confesseth himselfe to be (as it were) one of those rotten members, and to be infected with the common contagion. Neither doth this any way gainsay our former assertion, namely, that he hath hitherto exempted himselfe from the common reuolt, that he might call them the more to the quicke. Now to take away all exceptions,

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hee *wrappes himselfe* also vp in the number with them.

Verf. 13. *In trespassing and lying against the Lord, and wee haue departed away from our God, and haue spoken of crueltie and rebellion, conceiuing and uttering out of the heart false matters.*

In verse 12. the Lewes are taxed generally, here particulatly.

HE heere reckons vp some particular kinds of finnes, that he might with the greater vehemencie prouoke the people to acknowledge their finnes. Now truly it is monstrous that those which were chastised, and in a maner shattered to peeces by the hand of God, should yet stand to set vp the crest, and that their necke should bee of such an yron sinew, as that they could neither bee bowed nor humbled by the feeling of their misdoings. For the Lord labours to soften our hard hearts by his roddes and stripes. But when chastisements profit vs nothing, wee may then be said to bee growne past recouerie. *Jsaiah* insists long vpon this point, namely, to shew how wofully state of this people was, who albeit they were almost ground to powder, yet did they stil grudge against God, and could not endure to be brought vnder subiection. He therefore often repeats this admonition, and stands the more vehemently vpon it, that he might tame the rebellion of this people.

He also taxeth their iniquities with many words, and singles them out one from another, hauing shewed before generally what finnes reigned euery where amongst them. Neither doth he reprocue any pettic offences, or of a small handfull of people, but rather a generall reuolt. For by this verse hee giues vs to vnderstand that they were so corrupted, that there was not one dram of faith, integritie feare, or conscience in them. For what is it to *lie against God*, but wickedly to *depart away from him*, as if they plaied the flat rebels? He not onely reprocheth them then with the breach of one or two commandments of the law, but saith, that they renounced God, and revolted from him, left they should come at his call.

In the next place he saith, that they were giuen to *forge wicked matters*, and that they were wholly stained with *falsehood*. For it is much more detestable to vtter false matters *out of the beaui* then to be suddenly ouertaken *with a lie*, yea or to deceiue vpon the instant. In the meane while these rebukes no doubt cut the very hearts of the Lewes, who were readie to braust with pride; taking themselues to be exceeding holy men. But hypocritie must bee thus dealt withall; because a plaine admonition in such a case would haue done little good. By this example then al Pastors when they see the Church of God corrupt, and men to please themselues in themselues, & to lie rotting in their dung; thus must they oppose themselues, and scie sharply and shrillie against the same.

Verf. 14. *Therefore iudgement is*

turned backward, and iustice standeth a farre off: for truth is fallen in the streets, and equitie cannot enter.

THEse are deceiued who thinke he returns to his first speech, in verf. 9, as if he now spake of the punishments which the people had felt from Gods hand. For he still prosecutes his former discourse; and discouers the corrupt diseases of the people: to testifie vnto all that they were iustly punished. But this verse we must thus distinguish vnto the ninth, where he said, *That iudgement was gone farre off*. For in that place hee pronounced that the Lewes were deprived of Gods helpe, in regard they had made themselues vnworthe that hee should be any longer a defender of their cause. But here he saith *that iudgement was turned backward*; because they had ouerturned all iustice and equitie amongst themselues. They receiued then a recompence according to their desert, when Gods *iustice stood a farre off*, and appeared not for their helpe; seeing they had banisht iudgement and iustice farre away from them. For we doe but lose our time, to expect that from God, which wee haue denied vnto others, and haue cast behind our backes.

The former discourse shal p usecued in this, and in verf. 15.

In the place.] That is to say, in the publike assemblee. For his meaning is to speake of those places where they held their courts. And thus hee signifies, that corruptions had not onely seized vpon some priuate persons, but that the whole estate of the people was so depraued, that there was nothing found amongst them. If any vices raigne among the common people, there may some good order be taken to remedie the same as long as iustice hath place: but if the iudgement seates themselues be ouerturned or corrupted, then it must needs be that all things are infected with an vnuerfall contagion. Hee also bewrays their vnbridled libertie, in that they were not ashamed to doe euill in publicke places, and that they neither fled from the light, nor from the eies of men.

Where iudgement seates are corrupted, there the contagion of sinne is vnuerfully ouerspread.

Verf. 15. *Yea truth faileth, and hee that refraineth himselfe from euill maketh himselfe a pray: and when the Lord saw it, it displeas'd him, that there was no iudgement.*

BY this it sufficiently appears, that *Jsaiah* spake not in the former verse of the punishments which the people sustained: For he prosecutes the very same discourse with the former: and shewes that the people had no cause to complaine of the rigor of their chastisements, seeing they had so grossely offended and prouoked the Lord. Hee confirms his former speech then: namely, that truth was fallen, iustice had no more place: and here he amplifies the same further, in adding that he which *refraineth himselfe from euill, made himselfe a pray*. The most of the expositors among the Hebrewes reade this part of the

A confirmation and amplification of the former sentence.

verse with a breath, thus; Truth is fallen, and was made a pray, in refraining it selfe from euill. But I see no reason why they haue accepted of this sense. Saine *Ieroms* exposition (which I also haue followed) is much better, and more agreable. This phrase of speech is very frequent in Scriptures, as we see in Iob 1.1. of whom it is said, that he was an vpright and iust man, feareing God, and *eschewing euill*. *Salomon* also saith, Prou.14.16. That a foole rageth; but the wise man feareth; and *deparieth from euill*. Well, the Prophets meaning is, that all honest courses were so hated and abhorred, that the small remnant of the faithfull could not liue in safetie. As if he should say, Whosoever meane in these times to haue societie with men, must of necessitie be as wicked as they: according to the old prouerbe; *Hee must howle amongst woules*; but he that will *refraine from euill*, shall be deuoured of the woules like a poore sheepe. Truly hee here expresth the height of impietie: for he shewes that *truth was so fallen*, that no honest man durst conuulse amongst them. Why so? Because whosoever refrained himselfe from euill, did by and by fall into the iawes of Lions.

S Ierom.

Prouerbe.

The height of iniquitie.

A consolatio.

And the Lord (auii. et.) This tends to the consolation of this people: for his meaning is, that notwithstanding this peoples obstinacie wich in a manner seemed irremissible, yet God would tender their welfare. And howsoeuer for a time he had feuerely punished them, yet would he at last thinke vpon his couenant: so as in curing their euils, hee would restore vnto them incredible comfort. He speaks here of the time to come, and promiseth that a day will come after all these calamities, that God would send some reliefe to the remnant of his inheritance: for the Iewes had been left destitute of all hope, if the Lord had nor added this consolation.

Take a view heere then after what sort men are wont to plunge themselves into contrarie vices. Are they reprobud? then either they grow stubburne, or being surprized with terrors, they fall into despair. We are therefore carefully to obserue our Prophets course which he heere rakes: for in the first place it was needfull that the Iewes should be sharply rebuked, that so being touched and humbled by repentence, they might cease to murmure or repine against God. In the second place he promiseth them a moderation of their chastisements, with hope of deliuerance, that they should not faint, but wait for the Lords helpe, who neuer suffers his Church to perish: for he so corrects his chosen for a time, that hee will neither forsake, nor vicerly consume them.

If any had rather restraine this discontent and displeasure of God to his iudgements, in regard that hee iustly condemned and abhorred this wicked people; I gain say him not. As if hee should haue said; God saw nothing in this people but matter of hatred: whence it followes, that he had no other motiue to send them reliefe, but onely because hee saw that things were brought to vtter ruine.

Verf. 16. *And when hee saw that there was no man, hee wondered that none would offer himselfe. Therefore his arme did saue it, and his righteousnesse it selfe did sustaine it.*

THE Prophet prosecutes the same argument still: but hee laies that out more at large now, which hee briefly touched before. For that which hee said in the former verse, might peraduenture seeme obscure, namely, that it displeaseth the Lord, *because there was no iudgement*. In this place then hee repeats, that the Lord saw there was no man that would succour the Church, and he wondered at it. He vseth a verbe which signifies, that the Lord tooke vp an occasion of wonderment. As if he should say; He stood as one amazed. Some translate the word *Maphgia*, Intercessor: but I thinke the sense is, *that no man presented himselfe to set the things in order, that were confused; there was no Physicion that would put to his hand to prescribe a remedie for this sickness; and therefore the Lord wondered*. But it is ealie to iudge why he attributes this astonishment vnto God: for by this reproch, he meant to shame the Iewes, that so (according to their custome) they might nor seecke out pretences to couer their sinnes withall.

The same argument prosecuted.

Now in regard it was a thing incredible or rather monstrous, that amongst the holy and elect people there was not a man to be found that would oppose himselfe against iniustice, he brings in God as one astonished at so rare a matter, that by means hereof they might be brought at last to wonder and blush at their owne hypocrisie. For might they not worthily be taxed of detestable obstinacie if they would not blush at that which draue the Lord into this admiration, and that by reason of their stubbornnes? And therewithal he taxeth their hypocrisie, in that they made shew of hauing pietie and holines in great estimation, and yet when God came to make a diligent search, there was not a iust man to be found amongst them.

Moreouer, by this text he magnifies and extols the greatnes of Gods mercie, in that he vouchsafes to pull out a people as out of the bottome of hell, that were in such a pitifull plight. For no doubt but the Iewes by these words were admonished by what means they were to expect their deliuerance, namely, euen because the Lord was willing by a miracle to saue this forelorne people. Now this word *to wonder*, sets forth Gods fatherly care. Sure it is that there are no such afflictions in God, namely, that he should be astonished at new and vnwonted accidents, as if they were strange to him. But herein he rather applies himselfe to our capacities, that being touched to the quick with the sense of our miseries, we might be brought to abhorre our wofull condition.

God is not subject to humane passions.

When he saith then that the Lord saw, it is to signifie, that there is no reliefe to be found in our industries: and when he *wonders*, it telles ys that we are more then block-

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kith and ſenſeleſſe; in regard that we neither know nor regard the miſeries we are in. And yet that our careleſnes hindres not the Lord from working ſaluatiſon of his Church.

We muſt not deſpaire though mans helpe faile vs.

So his arme brought ſaluatiſon.) In theſe words he ſhewes that we are nor to deſpaire, albeit the helpe of man doe faile vs. Nay, all aides whatſoeuer being aboliſhed, the Prophet attributes the beginning and end of his nations ſaluatiſon, yea, of all mankind, to the free goodneſſe, and onely power of God. Euen as then in affirming that God is powerfull enough; yea, almightie to deliuer the Iewes, he therefore reacheth out his hand to the weak: ſo in telling vs that we cannot ſo much as ſtir a finger towards the procuring of our owne ſaluatiſon, he thereby caſteth to the ground all high imaginations, that ſo being ſtripped of all confidence in our workes, we might the more freely draw neere vnto God.

We muſt not onely marke what the Prophets ſay; but alſo obſerue their ſcope and drift.

This is the Prophets meaning: and I would haue it well obſerued. For in reading the bookes of the Apoſtles and Prophets, we muſt not onely marke what they ſay, but why and wherefore they haue ſaid thus or that. In this place then we are principallie to conſider whereat the Prophet aims, namely, to ſignifie, that God is of ſufficient power in himſelfe to accompliſh the worke of our ſaluatiſon, that our eyes might be kept from wandring here and there; becauſe our minds are too much tied to outward meanes. What then? but that we reſpoſe the whole hope of our ſaluatiſon in the arme of the Lord: and the true reſtauration of the Church in his righteouſneſſe. Bee it therefore knowne, that ſuch erre groſſely, who place it in any thing elſe, ſeeing God borrowes nothing out of himſelfe.

The uſe of this doctrine.

The uſe and profit of this doctrine, extends it ſelfe euen vnto vs. For albeit all helpes do ſometimes faile vs, yet will the Lord find ſufficient ſuccour for vs in his arme and power. As oft then as outward meanes doe faile vs, and that wee bee ouerwhelmed with all ſorts of miſeries, perceiuing nothing but preſent death before our eyes: let vs haue our refuge to this doctrine: and let vs bee well aſſured that God is ſtrong enough to protect vs: and ſeeing he ſtands not in need of any mans helpe, let vs learne to reſt our ſelues boldly vpon his aſſiſtance. But yet we muſt herewithall retainie the generall doctrine, To wit, that the deliuerance of the Church is a worke and benefite which onely belongs to the wonderfull power of God: that ſo wee may neuer attribute any thing either to the ſtrength or induſtrie of man. We ought alſo to abhorre their pride who wreſt and wring part of this praife vnto themſelues, which whollie belongs vnto God: ſeeing in him alone conſiſts the cauſe and effect of our ſaluatiſon.

The Churches deliuerance a benefite proceeding from Gods wonderfull power.

Arme here ſignifies his power and might: Righteouſneſſe, that equitie which he ſeeth in procuring the ſaluatiſon of his choſen when he becomes their protector, and deliuers them from death. Whereas he ſaith, that his owne arme obtained ſaluatiſon: it muſt not be

referred vnto God, neither muſt we reade it as if God had ſaued himſelfe: but it is to bee referred to the ſaluatiſon of the Church which hee deliuered out of the hands of her enemies.

Verſ. 17. For he put on righteouſneſſe, as an habergeon, and an helmet of ſaluatiſon on his head, and hee put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeale as with a cloake.

The Prophet armes the Lord at all points; not onely to confirme the faith of the godlie, but alſo to ſtrip all men of all confidence in their owne vertue. For the ſumme comes to this, that nothing ſhall be wanting vnto God, neither for diſcomfiring, nor for bearing away the victorie ouer his enemies. Why ſo? Becauſe that of his righteouſneſſe, power, grace, and exceeding affection towards his Church, he will make armour of proſe. And this we are to note with no leſſe diligence, then the doctrine of the former verſe. For albeit we confeſſe that God is almightie, yet doth not that ſatiſfie vs, but wee will bee ſeeking out of other helpe. Our minds are alwaies giuen to infidelitie, ſo as they are wonderfully hampered, and glued faſt to outward meanes. To correct this vice our Prophet ſets before vs this liuely deſcription. As if he ſhould ſay, know ye that God hath all the ſafeguards of your ſaluatiſon ready, ſo that nothing ſhall bee wanting vnto him for your deliuerance, and for your returne home againe: doe your enemies what they can. There is no neede then why you ſhould tremble at all. Beſides, we are verie eaſilie carried away to thinke, that wee bring ſome of our owne vnto God. And thus wee attribute part of his praife to our ſelues, which ſhould wholly be reſerued vnto him.

If God put himſelfe in armes to fight, he needs carrie away the victorie.

Whereas hee clothes the Lord with vengeance and indignation as a cloake; it appertaines vnto the enemies againſt whom God riſeth vp in wrath, for the zeale hee beares to his people. The more then that Satan in deours, and with might and maine plots our ouerthrow, the more will the zeale of the Lord of hoſtes bee inflamed, and will ariſe with his admirable and omnipotent power to relieue vs. Although this worrier of mankind then, and all the reprobates with him ceaſe not day nor night how to oppoſe all the impediments they can, to hinder our ſaluatiſon, yea, and that they breake forth into open rage to roote vs out; yet will our God ſcatter all their plots by his onely power.

Verſ. 18. As to make recompence, as to requite the furie of the aduerſaries, with a recompence ſo his enemies: hee will fully repay the Ilands.

Hee confirms the concluſion of the former verſe. For heere hee ſhewes, what that vengeance is, wherewith hee clothed the

A confirmation of the former concluſion. Lord,

Lord, namely, that he is readie to render the like vnto his enemies. But the reason why the Prophet armes the Lord thus readie with indignation to execute his vengeance, is to be noted, to wit, because the deliuerance of his Church is ioined with the ruine of the wicked. It is needfull therefore that God should be armed to meete those enemies which would worke our destruction.

Hence let vs consider how infinite that loue of God towards vs is when he beares vs such an affection, as to hate those that hate vs, and to protest that he will requite the furie of our aduersaries. So exceedinglie doth he loue his little flock, that he esteemes it more then all the world besides. This is the cause then wherefore he testifies that he will repay the Islands, that is to say, the nations beyond the seas, farre remote from them: for, for the deliuerance of his people he ouerthrew such mightie Monarks as seemed inuincible.

Vers. 19. So shall they feare the name of the Lord from the West, and his glorie from the rising of the Sunne: for the enemy shall come as a flood, but the spirit of the Lord shall chase him away.

Now hee testifies that this deliuerance shall bee so glorious and magnificent, that all the world shall wonder thereat, and shall speake honourably of it: and afterwards, being smitten with astonishment, shall giue glory vnto God. But it is vncertaine whether he means this of the conuersion of the Gentiles, or of the terrour by which the Lord would bring downe his enemies. For mine owne part, I rather incline to the first exposition, namely, that so the utmost parts of the earth, Gods name shall be glorious and fully renowned: so as the Gentiles shall not onely bee amazed, but shall also worship and serue him in true repentance.

The expositors agree not about the rendering of the cause which follows. But the true sense, as I suppose, is, That the violence of the enemy shall be so great, that as a flood spoiles and carries all away before it with the force thereof, so shall he come so teare up, and beare away: But the Lord will forthwith cause him to recoile and to vanish away. It is an amplification then of Gods power, who in an instant breakes in sunder all the terrible power and furious rage of his enemies, so as their violence, being turned backward, it falles to nothing.

But some may aske, of what deliuerance the Prophet here speaks. I answer, as I haue done in another place, that these promises must not be restrained (as they are wont to be) to one deliuerance only. For the Jewes referre it to the deliuerance out of Babylon, and the Christians only to Christ. Now I ioine them both together, that so we may comprehend the whole time fro the peoples returne, with that which followed vnto the coming of Christ: for this prophesie was neuer fulfilled, but in him; neither can that which is here said agree to any other then to

him only, because Gods glorie was not manifested before to all the world, nor the enemy so put to flight, that they gathered not their forces together againe, vntill Christ came and triumphed admirably, hauing obtained conquest ouer Satan, sinne, & death:

Vers. 20. And the redeemer shall come vnto Zion, and vnto them that turne from iniquitie in Iacob, saith the Lord.

HE againe confirms that which he said before, namely, that the people should be deliuered, and that God would be the only author of so great a benefit. For this cause then he bids the people to be of good comfort in this exile, in regard it should not be perpetuall: afterwards he placeth the hope of their deliuerance in God only, to the end their thoughts might not rest in any thing but vpon the promises.

Vnder the word Zion, he meanes (as heretofore) the prisoners, and banished: for albeit they were scattered farre off from their countrie, yet was the Temple still to remaine planted as it were in their hearts. But lest the bastard children of Abraham should indifferently applie this vnto themselves with the heires of promise, he forthwith shewes who they be to whom this deliuerance shall come, namely, to such as shall be truly conuersed vnto the Lord. And yet it is very certaine that many returned from Babylon into Iudeah, which were not touched with any repentance at all; who neuerthelesse had their part in this benefit: but the Prophet speaks of that full redemption, which is onely proper vnto the elect. For howsoeuer the external fruit of the deliuerance redounded to the hypocrites; yet embraced they not this benefit of God to their saluation. The Prophet meant to say then, that the punishment of their banishment should haue fruit, to the end that the Lord hauing purged his Church from her filthinesse & corruptions, he might againe gather together her dissipations. We must also euer beare in mind that which I haue heretofore touched, in respect of the diminution of this people. Thus then our Prophet exhorts the elect to the feare of God, that so they might make benefit of the stripes which they receiued.

Hence let vs gather, that we can not be reconciled vnto God by the blood of Iesus Christ, vnlesse we be first of all thorowly displeased with our selues for displeasing of him. Not that our saluation depends vpon our repentance, seeing that is grounded vpon the remission of sinnes. But the hatred of euill, and the loue of good, is so conioined therewith, that they can not be separate. For those whom the Lord receiues into fauour, are in such wise regenerated by the holy Ghost, that they abhorre their vices, and change their course of life.

The Papiests vtterly ouerthrow the whole doctrine of saluation, in mingling and conounding repentance and remission of sinnes together: neither are they of the ignorant

A second confirmation touching the redemption of the Church.

To whom this deliuerance appertaines.

No reconciliation without conuersion.

Conuersion deserues not remission of sinnes.

Papiests con-found repentance and remission of sinnes together.

Vic.

God will make the Churches deliuerance glorious in the sight of the whole world.

Quest.
Ans.

ſort only that do this, but thoſe alſo who will be reputed the moſt ingenious amongſt theſe. They confeſſe indeed that aman is juſtified freely by Chriſt: but they adde, it is becauſe we are reuened by him. And thus they tie one part of their rightcouſneſſe to the remiſſion of finnes, and another part to repentance. But in this doing our conſciences ſhall neuer be at reſt, becauſe we are alwaies farre off from being perfeſtly regenerated. We muſt therefore diſtinguiſh theſe things without ſeparating or confounding them together, and ſo hold faſt the foundation of our ſaluati-
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They muſt be diſtinguiſhed, not ſeparated.

S. Paul alleageth this place, to ſhew, that there yet remaines ſome hope of ſaluati-
Queſt.
Anſ. on for the Iewes, howſoever by their vntamed obſtinacie wee might gather, that they were vntely reiected, and iudged to eternal death: Rom. 11. 26. But in regard that God alwaies remembers his covenant, and that his gifts and calling are without repentance, Rom. 11. 29. Sainc Paul aptly concludes it to be impoſſible, that ſome remnant ſhould not at laſt be gathered vnto Chriſt, to inioy that ſaluati-
Queſt.
Anſ. on which he hath purchaſed. The Iews in the end muſt be gathered in with the Gentiles, that both peoples may make one fold vnder Chriſt. But yet the Prophet ſpeakes here (may ſome ſay) of the deliuerance from Babylon. I grant it: notwithſtanding we haue ſaid, that vnder this hee comprehends the kingdom of Chriſt, and that ſpiritual deſti-
Queſt.
Anſ. nance, to which this prophecie belongs. Thence the Apoſtle concludes, that Chriſt could not ſo be the redeemer of the world, that it ſhould not appertaine to ſome of the Iews, out of whom he had elected their fathers, and made this promiſe expreſly in fauor of them: Rom. 11. 1, 2. In the end of the verſe, the *ratification* of ſo excellent a ſentence is added.

Verſ. 21. *And I will make this my covenant with them, ſaith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I haue put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeede, nor out of the mouth of the ſeede of thy ſeede, ſaith the Lord, from hence forth, euen for euer.*

BEcauſe the doctrine before propoſed by our Prophet hitherunto was hard to be beleued, he labours by diuers meanes to confirme the Iewes that without wauering they might aſſuredly reſt vpon this promiſe of ſaluati-
Queſt.
Anſ. on: and ſhould ſo farre forth honour the Lord, as to ſtay vpon his word. This word *covenant* is diligently to be noted. For thereby the Prophet ſets forth the greatnes and excellencie of this promiſe. For the promiſes haue a large extent, and may be compared to ſtones in the building; whereof the *covenant* is the foundation, that ſuſtaines and beares vp the whole builthen. Thus then he hath vſed this word *covenant*, that they ſhould not eſteeme hereof, as of

ſome common matter. And hee addeſ this confirmation, to the end that howſoever this promiſe was not by aid by accompliſhed; yet they ſhould hope for the ſame, euen aboue hope. And it may be, here is a cloſe oppoſition, to cauſe the faithfull with the greater alacritie to aſpire to the new covenant which ſhould be eſtabliſhed in the hand of Chriſt.

But that which he addeſ afterwards ſeemes to bring but colde comfort with it, when he would haue the Church to content her ſelfe with *words*, and the *Spirit*. As though ſorfooth there were ſome great happineſſe in hanging in ſuſpenſe, touching the accompliſhment of Gods promiſes. But howſoever the Prophet hereby recommends the excellencie and worth of doctrine; yet notwithstanding I am well aſſured that it is not ſeparated from his effect.

Now in regard that God thus orders & diſpenceth his grace, that he alwaies exerciſeth the patience of the faithfull, whileſt they lue here below; and neuer wholly ſatiſfies their deſires: thus is the cauſe why he brings them to the *word*. As if he ſhould ſay, Thou ſhalt truly feele that I am liberal; and that I will many waies procure thy good: but thou oughteſt not to wiſh greater happineſſe, then to feele my preſence by my word. Whence wee gather, that the greateſt treaſure the Church hath, conſiſts in this, that the Lord hath choſen her for his dwelling place, that in the hearts of the faithfull he may make his abode by his *Spirit*, and may conſerue the doctrine of the Goſpell among them.

Laſtly, he foretels that God will neuer forſake his people, but will alwaies aſſiſt them by his *word* and *ſpirit*: which two are conioined together, becauſe without the efficacy of the Spirit, the word would profit nothing, but would remaine fruitleſſe. On the other ſide, wee muſt not ſeparate the one from the other, as ſome fantaſticall ſpirits dreame, who in reiecting the *word*, pretend the name of the *Spirit*, and are ready to burſt with a vaine confidence, which they haue conceiued in their fantaſticall imaginations: for wee muſt hold that for the ſpirit of Satan, which is ſeparated from the word of God; to which, the holy Spirit is euer more annexed. Now when he quickens the externall word, writing it in our hearts by the finger of his Spirit; then is our condition happy euen in the miſt of infinite miſeries. Neither doe I doubt but it was the expreſſe purpoſe of the Lord to ſay, *that albei* Goa means to deale graciously vnto his Church, yet ſhee muſt know that her liſe and ſaluati-
Why the Spirit is ioi- ned with the word.
That is ro be held for the ſpirit of Sa- tan that is ſeparated frō the word. on is hidden in him by ſaith. And thus the ancient people is diſcerned from the new: for as the Kingdom of Chriſt is ſpiritual; ſo from his reſurreſtion from the dead, the ſoules of the faithfull muſt aſcend vp on high with him.

Now hee promiſeth that the Church ſhall neuer be deprived of this ineffimble benefit, namely, of being governed by the *holy Ghoſt*, and ſuſtained by the *heauenly doctrine*: for it were to little purpoſe that the Goſpell ſhould be offered vs; and the holy Ghoſt gi-
uen

Object.

Anſ.

The richeſt treaſure the church hath.

Why the Spirit is ioi- ned with the word.

That is ro be held for the ſpirit of Sa- tan that is ſeparated frō the word.

uen withall, vnlesse they should alwaies dwell and remaine with vs.

God speaks vnto vs but by the mouth of his seruants.

Why God rather speaks to vs by maō, then by himselfe.

When hee saith, *in thy mouth*, it is to shew, that the Lord so speaks vnto vs, that in the meane while hee meanes to vse the seruice and ministry of man. Hee might indeed if it pleased him, speake vnto vs from heauen, or send his Angels from thence: onely heerein he hath respect to our weaknesse. Why so? Because hee would call and exhort vs by our like; that by their voice he might draw vs vnto him the more familiarly. This order therefore was by him established in the Church: so as they who reiect his Ministers, brag in vaine of their obedience vnto God. His meaning is then, that we seeke the doctrine and word of life, in the *mouthes* of his Prophets, and in the teachers who preach in his name, and by his commandement.

My words shall not depart.] Some translate in the imperatiue; Let not my words depart: and so the future tence is often taken for this. But an exhortation or a commandement in this place agrees not, in regard the Prophet rather promiseth what God meanes to accomplish. I denie not but hence we may draw an exhortation: but the promise must goe before. Now the tenure of the promise is, that the Lord will so assist his Church, and haue such great care of her, that he will *never* suffer her to bee deprived of the doctrine of the word. When afflictions presse vs then to the quicke, and things succede not as wee would wish; let vs haue an eye to this sentence: for it is the *word* and *Spirits*, by which we must be raised vp and sustained; of which the Lord heere promiseth *never to desist* *vnle vs.*

THE LX. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Arise O Ierusalem; bee bright: for thy light is come, and the glorie of the Lord is risen vpon thee.*

In Chap. 59. 21. hee spake of the word, now hee speaks of the efficacy of it.



In this place the Prophet shewes what the efficacy of this word is, whereof hee spake in the former Chapter. For he comforts the church in her low and afflicted estate, and *restores her to her brightnesse*. And in respect that he represents the person of God, he heere manifests his *authoritie*: and for that cause, vseth a *commandement*, that he might giue his speech the greater weight: as if by his absolute power, he placed the Church in that happy estate, which hee before promised her. The summe is, to assure the faithfull that the Prophet spake not as in the aire, but effectually.

Now he commands her to *Arise*, in regard that before he said, shee sate vpon the ground: which two words are opposites. In the 47. Chapter of this booke, hee said to Babylon: *Come downe, and sit in the dust*. And in Chap. 32. 18. hee said of the Iewes themselves; *My people shall sit in the dust*: and yet on the contrary, in Chap. 52. 1, 2. hee saith; *Arise, Arise, O Zion*, put on the garments of thy beautie: shake thy selfe from the dust. Now in this place againe hee raiseth vp the Church, as if hee tooke her by the hand, to the end shee might againe recouer her seate of honor, who now sate in the dust, wholly couered ouer with filth and dung.

Now that the poore Iewes might not by reason of the darknesse of their euils, be vtterly ouerwhelmed with despaire, hee telles them that the light which had been smothered for a time, should immediately *breake forth* againe. Heerein alluding to the ordinarie course of the day, *succeding the night*. As if he

should say; The Lord hauing compassion vpon thee, will draw thee out of these obscure dungeons, in which thou hast so long bin held prisoner. I haue satisfied my selfe in correcting thee, it is time now therefore thou shouldst begin to take some ease. And therefore by the word *To shine*, vnder a figure hee meanes a recouery of health, and a flourishing estate: as hee retorefore by *darknes*, Chap. 58. 10. and 59. 9. he signified the calamitie of the Church.

But heere withall he admoniseth her, that this light shall arise vnto her from none but from the brightnesse of Gods countenance, at such time as he shall bee pleased to manifest some tokens of his fauour: for all things fall out to the best, when the Lord *lightens vs with his brightnesse*: but if he be against vs, we cannot possible meete with a greater misery nor infelicitee.

Verf. 2. *For behold, darknesse shall cover the earth, and grosse darknesse the people: but the Lord shall arise vpon thee, and his glorie shall be seene vpon thee.*

Now hee amplifies this grace which hee mentioned before by way of comparison, to the end wee might consider of the infinit loue which God beares to his elect; yea and how great the priuiledges are, which are giuen and granted vnto them by him. The summe is, that whilest the world is pressed, and in a manner *ouerwhelmed with infinite miseries*, God will haue care over his people to *inrich them with sundry benefits*. He shewes then that the *light* of grace and fauour, mentioned in the former verse, shall not be common to all, but particular to the people of God. Wee told you before that the word *brightnesse*, notes out the flourishing estate of the church; but yet wee must not iudge thereof by any outward appearance: for the Prophet flies an

An amplification of the grace mentioned in verf. 1.

higher

higher pitch. Neither make I any doubt, but he here propounds vnto vs a spiritual brightnesse and light. Otherwise the phraie of speech which hee vseth in vers. 3. (namely, that the Gentiles should walke in this light) would not agree. And the coherence of the text of this chapter with the former, shewes it plainly. For in verse 21. of chap. 59. hee said, that the *covenant* was enclosed in the *word* and *spirit*: from the opposition then, it is easily gathered, that the felicitie promised to the Church in the beginning of this Chapter consists in somewhat else then in meate, and drinke, idleness and carnall securitie. Nay, let vs rather consider of the matter aright, and wee shall see, that since that time, all the Gentiles were not covered with a cloud of miseries, whilst the Iewes in the meane while enjoyed their ease. Seeing then the condition of the Church is separated from the state of the whole world; the benefit which *Jsaiah* possesseth the Church of in this place, is spirituall. As also this brightnesse which he promisseth, is spirituall. This therefore belongs to the spirituall kingdome of Christ, whereby the light of the Gospell enlightened all parts of the world. Yea, the strange nations were enlightened by it.

To this appertaines that which followeth, *The Lord shall arise upon thee*. For albeit hee shewed that Gods fauour should appeare by manifest signes and effects: yet he leaues not out that which was the principall: namely, that the faithfull should sensiblie perceiue that hee was their father, to the end they might wait for their saluation from him.

Doctrine 1.

Hence let vs gather, that we are ouerwhelmed with *darkenesse*, till such time as the Lord lighten vs with the testimonie of his free adoption. I speake of all mankind: for *Jsaiah* teacheth that this quickning light proceeds from God only: thereby to signifie that it is the especiall gift of his owne hand. Secondly, we are to note, that the Church only partakes of this brightnesse, y is the elect of God. Whence it followes, that it is no common or naturall gift: but such a one as with which the Lord supplies the common defect of mans nature. And hereby also wee perceiue that there was neuer any sparke of true light, but in the Church. For all men besides are enwrapped with darkenesse, albeit they thinke to be in the light, and that they haue a great splendor: neither can they be deliuered out of this darkenesse, but by the light of the Gospell. He addes the word *glorie*. For after the Lord hath once receiued vs into his fauour, he fo continues the same vnto vs, that his benefits doe daily more and more flow in vpon vs with greater increase.

No light out of the Church.

Vers. 3. *And the Gentiles shall walke in thy light, and kings at the brightnesse of thy rising vp.*

A confirmation in this and the verse following.

The Prophet now confirms that which we were saying, to wit, that men haue no light of their owne: but that whereby the Lord enlightens them through his word. All

will confesse so much; but they doe not worthilie esteeme of this grace as they ought: they onely take it for some common thing which appertaines naturally to euerie man: but here it appeares that it is supernaturall. And therefore it must be distinguished from nature; as the repetition of these wordes, *upon thee*, sufficientlie shewes. First then let vs hold it for certaine, that this benefit proceeds onely from God: secondly, that all indifferentlie do not partake hereof, but the elect onely, whom the Lord enlightenes by his free grace, that he might exempt them out of the common rancke of other men.

Now this is done by Christ, who is called the *sunne of righteousness*: *MaLa. 2.* because we are enlightened by his beames. Moreover, the Prophet teacheth, that the grace which was communicated vnto the Iewes, shall bee spread far and wide. According as the words of the *covenant* often sound, in thy seede shall all the nations of the earth bee blessed: *Gen. 22. 18.* For the light which was proper onelie to a patticular nation, would bring no benefit at all to others. But for as much as the doctrine of the Gospell was to be spread into all parts of the world, *Iudea bare this light*; that from thence it might shine to the Gentiles, who saw not one sparke thereof before. For in that he makes *this light proper to one people*, he shewes that the world could not otherwise be enlightened nor attaine to the participation of this benefit, but in seeking this light in that word which came forth of Iudea, and was heard in Ierusalem; where the lampe of the Lord was kindled; and from whence the *Sunne of righteousness* cast his beames, that thence he might afterwards enlighten all the habitable corners and quarters of the earth. As in chap. 2. 3. wee haue seene, That the law *went forth of Sion*. There is no light then, but in the doctrine of the Prophets: so that whofouer they see that recoil backe from it, they falsely bragge of *walking in this light*.

By the *brightnesse of thy rising vp*, hee alludes to the breake of day. For as the morning star begins the day, by striking thorow the heauen onely, and forthwith the *sunne shines* ouer all the world: so the *breake of day began first in Iudea*; whence the light arose, and spread it selfe through out the whole world. For there is no corner of it, which the Lord hath not enlightened with this light.

He mentions *kings*, that we should not imagine this light belonged to the common people only, but to Princes and great Lords, who otherwise doe much please themselves in their dignities. Truly, the honour which he here attributes to the Church is exceeding great, seeing her brightnesse shall bee so glorious, that it shall draw vnto her, *kings and nations*. He calles it the *Churches light*, not because thee hath any light of her selfe; but in regard thee borrowes it from Christ, as the *Moone takes her light from the Swane*.

This light belongs as well to Kings as to common persons.

As the Moone draws her light from the sunne, so the Church borrowes her light from Christ.

Vers. 4. *Lift up thine eies round about, and behold: all these are gathered*
Ggg and

and come to thee: thy sonnes shall come from farre, and thy daughters shall be nourished at thy side.

be converted unto thee, and the riches of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

BY many words he confirms this promise touching the restauration of the Church, which seemed a thing altogether incredible: and therefore was a matter hard to be bearen into the heads of the Iewes, in an estate wherein things were so perplexed and confused. For then none but the kingdome of Iudah stood: which daily decayed, till at last it fell flat to the ground. Afterwards, when the people were carried away captiue, all things grew so desperate in these horrible scatterings and wofull ruines, that as it seemed the Church was vtterly abolished. It was needfull therefore that this doctrine should be many waies confirmed, that mens minds, which of themselves are too much inclined by nature to distrust, might no longer remain intangled with doubtings. For this cause then he brings the Iewes as it were, to y thing done, notwithstanding it were yet farre off: to the end they might assure themselves no lesse of y accomplishment thereof, then if the thing were already effected before their eyes.

Now hee commands the faithfull to *lift up* their eyes on high, that is to say, aboue all humane thoughts: for whilst we remaine fixed to outward appearances, wee cannot saour the fruit of these promises. He ads *round about*, that they might certainlie know the people should not come from one nation alone, but from all parts, to be knit together into one bodie. Neither doth hee alone promise an end, and a remedie to the scattering which was to come, as in Psalm. 147. 2. and chap. 56. 8. that God *would gather in the scattered of Israel*: but this gathering should extend it selfe further off. For it signifies that there should be a wonderfull change in the world: so as those who before were *strangers and diuided*, should be *gathered into one bodie*. To conclude, the spreading of the Church to the ymost bounds of the earth is here noted out vnto vs. We must also supplie a close opposition here, which manifests that miserable and wofull estate wherinto all mankind is plunged till we be gathered in vnder the conduct of Christ.

Some, by *sonnes* allegorically vnderstand those who were strong and stedfast in faith: and by *daughters*, the weak. But I thinke the Prophet was not disposed to speake so acutely. I therefore take it simple thus, *That sonnes and daughters shall in time to come, runne vnto the Church*. That is to say, shall not onely be begotten within doores, but without also: yea, euen in the furthest parts of the world. For the wombe of the Church shall no more be shut vp in a corner of the earth, but shall spread it selfe as farre, and as wide, as the whole world hath any space.

Verf. 5. *Thou shalt see and shine: thine heart shall be astonished, and enlarged, because the multitude of the sea shall*

These things at the first blush seeme to haue some repugnancie in them; seeing in the former verse he spake in the present tence; and now in the time to come. But there hee spake of the *eyes* of faith, which apprehends that, that men cannot comprehend by nature: here, hee handles that which concerns the *event* of the thing it selfe. Or, rather, by speaking in the present tence before, he meant to signifie the truth and steadfastnesse of the promise: and now restraines the same sentence; to teach the faithfull to limit themselves within the bounds of patience. Besides, howfocuer the promises of God be for a time shadowed from mens sight: yet doe the faithfull cleerely behold them by faith; so as they wait for the vndoubted accomplishment thereof, though others will beleue nothing at all of them.

And shine.] Because the verb *Nabar*, signifies to shine, and to flow forth, it may be translated both waies. For we may referre it to that ioy which carrieth and causeth the Church to ouerflow, when shee growes and increaseth in this world: or, to that decking of her, which makes her to *shine*. But it seemes to agree but vntowardly with the text, that hee couples *astonishment*, with *brightnes* or ioy. Truly I doubt not but by this word hee vnderstands such an *amazement* as ariseth from an admiration and wonderment, with which the Church shall be rapt vp and carried away in seeing her selfe to rise to such an vnexpected honour, and to be exalted to so high a degree of glorie. As if he should say, The grearnesse of this worke shall be such, that it shall farre surmount thy hope. It is no *astonishment* then that is conceiued through some feare of danger or calamitie; but such as we see to happen in great wonders, which surpass the reach of our vnderstandings: when being astonished wee are for the time as in a dreame: Psalm. 136. 1. And this *trembling* suites very well with ioy.

Verf. 6. *The multitude of Camels shall cover thee: and the Dromedaries of Midian, and of Epba: all they of Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense, and shew forth the praises of the Lord.*

7. *All the sheepe of Kedar shall bee gathered vnto thee: the Rammes of Nebaioth shall serue thee: they shall come vp to bee accepted vpon mine Altar: and I will beautifie the house of my glorie.*

Vnder borrowed speeches the Prophet describes the glorie of the Church, and applies his doctrine, both to the time and persons, with which he had to doe. For wee must keepe that in mind which we haue often said.

Men inclined
doubt much by
nature to dis-
trust,

A testimonie
touching the
calling of the
Gentiles.

By speaking
in the pre-
sent tence
verf. 4. hee
shewed the
certaintie of
the promise
speaking;
now in the
future, hee
teareth
them to be
patient.

He that is truly conuerted vnto God, will dedicate all he hath to his ſeruiſe.

ſaid, namely; that the Prophets had reſpect to the people whom they taught. And for that cauſe, mentioned the things beſt known, and the ceremonies moſt in vſe; that vnder the figures thereof, they might note out Gods ſpiritual worſhip and ſeruiſe. For it was good reaſon the Iewes ſhould bee firſt inſtructed: and the Gentiles (in the ſecond place) to whom the truth of theſe things is come. As if hee ſhould ſay; The people of farre Countries ſhall come with their riches, in the power of God.

And where he ſaith, the Church ſhall be enriched, it is not to be referred to the perſons of men: but in regard of the vniõ which the head hath with the members, that which appertaines to God and Chriſt, is heere attributed to the Church. The Iewes deale abſurdly therefore, who vnder colour of this propheſie, by their inſatiable couetouſnes deuoure all the riches of the earth: neither doe the Papiſts leſſe fondly wreſt theſe words to the maintaining of their riches, and ſuperfluous pomps.

Now he mentions *Camels, incenſe, gold, and ſheeps*, as hauing regard to that wherewith euery region abounded in, thereby ſignifying, that all ſhould conſecrate vnto God whatſoever they inioyed; and ſhould offer themſelues and all their riches vnto him in ſacrifice. Whence we are to gather, that we can not truly be conuerted vnto the Lord, vnleſſe we offer vp vnto him all that euer we haue: for theſe are thoſe ſpiritual oblations which he requires, 1. Pet. 2. 5. Rom. 12. 1. which we can not poſſible denie him, if our hearts be truly dedicated and conſecrated vnto him. The wicked abuſe the gifts of God to exceſſe and wantonnes, and as much as in them is corrupt them by an execrable prophanenes, but the faithfull who vſe them with good conſcience, conſecrate them vnto the Lord. None can rightly ſay hee is the Lords then, vnleſſe he therewithall dedicates and conſecrates vnto the Lord himſelfe and all that he hath.

As touching the regions here mentioned by the Prophet, it is not needfull for vs to diſcuſſe in what place euery one of them is ſituated. Notwithſtanding by the way we note, that he ſpeakes of ſuch as lay Eaſtward, and chiefly Arabia, and the places neere adioining, which he ſignifies by *Kedar*, and *Nebaioth*. The Papiſts haue alſo abuſed this place, to proue that Kings came from the Eaſt to offer gifts vnto Chriſt: wherein they ſhew themſelues too ridiculous, ſeing the Prophet ſpeakes of all ſorts of people. But they ſnatch vp without iudgement all ſuch like places wherein mention is made of *gold*, or *incenſe*, as if the Prophets meant to ſpeake of the gifts which the wiſe men offered, Math. 2. 11. There is nothing obſcure in this place then: for the Prophets meaning is, that God ſhall in time to come be called vpon in euery place, and all ſtrangers ſhall be gathered vnto him to yeeld him obedience.

As touching the words, *they ſhall come vp*; ſome tranſlate, *They ſhall come vp vpon mine altar in good pleaſure*. And this ſeemes

to me not vnapt; as if the Prophet meant to ſay, that the offerings of the Gentiles ſhould be acceptable vnto God. Others expound, *They ſhall come vp acceptable*: which ſutes not with the proprietic of this tongue. For *Raſon* ſignifies good pleaſure, good will, or fauor: and therefore I thinke it ſhould be read as I haue tranſlated it, namely, that the oblations ſhould come vp in good pleaſure vpon the altar; ſo as the words may thus be reſolued, *They ſhall come vp, to appeaſe God*: for the altar was ordained, and the ſacrifices offered, to the end God might be mercifull and fauorable vnto men, who according to his promiſe, accepts the ſacrifice offered vpon his altar: for then the Altar was the meane to obtaine Gods fauor.

The Prophet then expreſſeth three things here diſtinctly. For firſt when he ſaith, that the ſacrifices *went vp*, he alludes to the ceremony which in old time they vſed in the ſacrifices, for they *liſed vp their offerings*: Exod. 29. 24. Leuit. 8. 29. to ſignifie, that they were to liſt vp their minds, that ſo they might not be glued to the earth; or only, to fixe their eyes vpon that which was offered. Secondly, that theſe ſacrifices were *acceptable vnto God*, that ſo they might be diſtinguiſhed from the ſacrifices of the Gentiles, which were offered without faith. Thirdly, *vpon the Altar*, which only ſanctified the oblations: for whatſoever was offered vpon any thing elſe was polluted and abominable. Moreouer, this figure ought to leade vs vnto the truth of it: for *Chriſt is Gods altar*, as we haue ſene in Chap. 56. 7. and *vpon him* muſt we offer our ſacrifices, if we would haue them *well-pleaſing vnto God*.

Befides, vnder the *beautie* of the Temple he ſignifies the reſtauration of the people; in regard the principall part of their felicitie conſiſted in hauing the Temple wherein God was purely worſhipped to ſtand in perfect beautie. And there muſt wee begin, namely, to haue God reigne amongſt vs, if we would be truly happie, for which cauſe the Lord minding to ſhew that his Church ſhall be reſtored, mentions the Temple, vpon which he will put his glorie. As if he ſhould ſay, *My houſe is now expoſed to the mocks of the Gentiles, but in the end I will put my glorie againe vpon it, & whereof it is now deprived*. Now out of *Zacharie*, *Haggai*, and *Malachi* it appears, that this was not accompliſhed preſentlie after their returne out of captiuitie: for we muſt not thinke that there was that true dignitie in this ſumptuous building, wherby *Herod* would cunningly haue inſinuated himſelfe into the fauor of the Iewes. The dignitie or glorie here mentioned therefore appeared not till God opened the dore of heauen to Ieruſalem, and afterwards maniſteſted the hope of eternall ſaluation to all the Iewes.

Verſ. 8. *Who are theſe that flee like a cloude, and as the dones to their Windes?*

BECAUSE the Prophet could not content himſelfe with mentioning this benefit of God, being rapt into an admiration, he cries

Ggg 2 out,

Exod. 20. 14.

Three things noted in the ſacrifices of the Iewes.

1

2

3

Chriſt, Gods Altar.

Herod.

The Prophet amplifies this multiplication of the Church by an admiration.

Abſurd collections from this place of Iewes and Papiſts.

Doctrin.

1. Pet. 2. 5.
Rom. 12. 1.

Another abſurd collection of the Papiſts. Kings of the Eaſt.

out, Who are these? Which maner of speech hath much more vehemence in it, then if he had simply affirmed, that a great number did flee; yea, though he had vfed the same similitudes. He meant then more fully to expresse how glorious this multiplying should be, seeing he could find no fit words to set forth the same withall.

Which flee as a cloud.] Some thinke that by this the Apostles are meant, who with an incredible swiftnesse, ranne to the vtmost parts of the world. I grant this exposition hath some colour: but the Prophet speaks of the assembling of the whole Church, namely, that the nations should runne vnto it from all parts, with great nimbleness and alacritie.

The similitude of *doves*, which hee vseth, is very apt for this purpose. For when these birds be in the fields, they seeme to be of the number of other wild birds; yet they belong to an house, and haue their louers, vnto which they retire, and in which they make their nests. So in like manner, the faithfull begin to know their gathering together, being illuminated by faith; that so they may withdraw themselues out of that horrible scattering in which they are. Whosoeuer shall consider the miserable and wofull state of those times, shall easilie perceiue how necessarie this aduertisement was. For if the Prophets, who without ceasing, had so many yeeres instructed the Iewes, reaped little or no profit thereby; what was to be expected from the Gentiles, who were wholly estranged from God? Yet the Prophet hath not spoken excessiuely: but hee so admires the thing, that he also drawes vs therewithall into admiration with him.

Verf. 9. Surely the Isles shall wait for me, and the shippes of Tarshish as at the beginning, that they may bring thy sennes from sarre, and their siluer and gold with them, vnto the name of the Lord thy God, because he hath glorified thee.

HAuing magnified the excellent benefit of this restauration, with all the praises he could possibly deuise, hee brings in God himselfe speaking, that his speech might haue the greater authoritie. Some take *To vvaite* heere, *To desire*: as if he should say; Let this be done, because the strange nations are as men ashamed, longing after him, by feeling themselues destituted of life and saluation. Others take it simply, *To hope*: but the word also sometimes signifies, *To obserue*. And in this sense *Dauid* takes it, in *Psal. 56*, saying, The wicked waited for my soule: that is to say, they spread snares for my life. And in this signification wee may take it heere. They shall wait: that is to say, they shall obserue my countenance, as seruants are wont to depend vpon the will of their Masters: as if he should say; *Marvell not if so many nations runne after the Church, for the Isles which despise and refuse me now, shall be so attentive to my voice, that*

they shall doe whatsoeuer I command them. And questionlesse it appears by the rest of this verse, that such a kind of obedience is heere mentioned.

The shippes of Tarshish.] If any will, they may heere supply the particule of similitude thus; As the shippes of Tarshish once sailed vnto Iudea, and brought that which was necessarie for the building of the Temple, and for mens vse: so it shall come to passe, that they shall saile thither againe, and this interrupted navigation shall recouer the first course.

By *Tarshish*, that is, Cilicia, which was opposite to Iudea; vnder the figure *Synechoche*, he vnderstands all voyages and traffikes, which they made by sea with strange nations. Wee may also take it without figure thus; The shippes of Tarshish which were wont malaparty to scorne my Church, shall subiect themselues to my authoritie, and thereunto shall bring children from a far Country.

Their gold is vwith them.] He againe repeats his former speech, to wit, that the Gentiles shall so yeeld their obedience vnto God, that they shall offer to him both themselues and all theirs. The Popish Doctors doe heere againe (as I touched in *verf. 6.*) shew their extreme impudencie, when they abuse these and the like places, to vphold those tyrannous and Persian-like pompes, whereby that Antichrist of Rome, and his supposts, glister and will be wondered at. And albeit they ouerflow in costly raiment, being couered from top to toe with gold and pearles: in a word, though they appaile themselues like a strumpet; yet are they not ashamed to make the holy Ghost the author of all these abominations. For when the Prophets doe but mention gold or siluer, straightway they apply the same to their dissolutions. Truly in this behalfe they resemble the Iewes, who leape for ioy as oft as the Prophets mention gold or siluer; hoping to wallow themselues therein, when the Messiah shall come. So the Papists thinke on nothing else but vpon gold and siluer, with which vaine appearance, their mindes are so bewitched, that they cannot aspire to heauen: but this blockishnesse hath no need of any refutation. The summe is, that God will exalt his Church vnto an high and soveraigne degree of honour, and decke her vwith ornaments befitting her. But to the end the faithfull might not doubt that any impediments should hinder them to receiue so glorious a promise: or lest they should attribute ought to their merits, God himselfe promisseth to be the author of this thing. Moreouer, *Isaiah* now ascribes the riches of the Gentiles, whom heretofore he had abandoned from the Church, to bee an holy offering vnto God, and as spoiles and recompences of her victory. And thus hee more cleerely expresth that which I haue said, namely, that wee ought to desire nothing so much, as to see the whole world subdued vnder Gods dominion.

Verf. 10. And the sennes of strangers shall build up thy walles, and their Kings

Psa. 110. 3.

Simile.

Impudencie of Popish Doctors, in their absurd collections. *Ren. 17. 3.* Persianlike pride noted in the Pope and his Clergie.

Iewes and Papists iunne together in their fond collections.

That these things might haue the more weight, God himselfe is brought in speaking.

Psal. 123. 1.

kings shall miſſiter unto thee: for in my wrath I ſmote thee, but in my mercie I had compaſſion in thee.

gives them matter of good hope, becauſe he will not puniſh them with rigor according to their demerits; but will content himſelfe that they have been humbled under temporary chaſtiſements. And yet therewithal he informeth them touching the cauſe of ſuch a change: leſt they ſhould judge thereof according to their ſenſe. For when kingdomes are changed, and ſometimes on a ſudden exalted; and forthwith fall backe into ruine: we thinke ſuch things fall out by chance, and that it is but the courſe of the world. The Jewes might thinke the ſame, when after the ruine of the Chaldean Monarchy, they were ſet at liberty. And therefore the Lord proteſts that all theſe things were guided by his Providence; that they blind nor be partners with infidels in their blindneſſe; It is as much then as if he had ſaid; If thou aſkeſt wherefore thou haſt endured ſo manie miſeries: truly, becauſe *I was angrie with thee*, and tooke vengeance of thy offences. But if thou wouldſt know the reaſon of thy deliuerance, it hath proceeded from my meere good will; not for thy merits: or a iumbling together of ſecondarie cauſes; Calamities then fall not out by chance. Neither is the Lord angrie without cauſe. Neither yet is he euer ſo angrie but he leaues way for his mercie.

Gods free mercie, and not our merits, the cauſe of our redemption.

1
2
3

The ſime argument protecuted, and in the next verſe expounded.

HE protecutes the ſame argument. And has hee ſaid heretofore that *ſtrangers* ſhould ſubaiſe themſelves vnder Gods authoritie to reedifie the Temple: ſo now hee ſaith that the *ſtrangers* ſhall beſtow their labour in building up the walles. The comparifons whereby he promiſeth the Churches reſtauration are diuers. For it is a thing vſuall in the Scriptures, where the Church is ſpoken of, ſometimes to ſet it forth vnder the Temple, and then againe, vnder Ieruſalem. Now hee promiſeth that the *ſtrangers* ſhall helpe to ſet vp this building; leſt the Jewes ſhould faint, being aſſiſted at their pouvertie, or ſmal number. For in the captiuitie they might bee ſolicited to diſtruſt, thinking that albeit they ſhould returne into their countrie, yet there was no likelihood that euer they ſhould perfect ſuch a worke. But *Cyrus* did this, who furniſhed them with great ſums of gold and ſilver. And yet theſe things were but figuratiue in him; for they had their full accompliſhment in Chriſt, to whoſe kingdome all that which is here ſpoken muſt bee referred. For firſt of all he vſed the ſeruiſe of a few weakie men, to wit, the Apoſtles, who were diſturbied of ſit meanes for ſo long a buſineſſe; afterwards therefore hee raiſed vp ſtrangers, out of whom hee choſe Paſtors, and made their Princes to be nurſing fathers to the Church.

Cyrus,

Apoſtles,

Paſtors, Kings and Princes.

Papiſts malepert in giuing their Pope ſoueraignie ouer Kings. Papiſts ſhameleſſe liers in calling their Pope Chriſts Vicar. Kings ſo ſuon it themſelves to the Church that they hold in their kinglie authoritie ſtill.

The Papiſts too malepertly do ouerthrow and corrupt this place, when they weſt it to eſtabliſh the tyrannie of their Pope; to who they giue ſoueraignie dominion our Kings and Princes: And herein they ſhew themſelves impudent liers (againſt the truth) in calling him Chriſts Vicar: ſeeing the kingdome of Chriſt is not of this world. Ioh. 18. 36. And yet this companion on the contrary domeineeres in pride and cruelty; and takes vpon him to change kingdomes. Now *Kings* ſo ſubmit themſelves vnto Chriſt, that yet they ceaſe not to be kings ſtill. Onely they are to imploy their power for the maintenance of Gods ſeruiſe; and to gouerne their ſubiects with equitie. Whence wee ſee how ſarre off they are from Chriſts kingdome, who would rent from Kings their power and authoritie, to make themſelves Lords ouer them.

Anabaptiſts would haue no Kings.

From this place wee may alſo refute the Anabaptiſts, who ſo ouerturne politike gouernment, that Kings can no otherwiſe bee Chriſtians, then in renouncing (ſay theſe bedlems) their authoritie. But wee ſee here that God will haue himſelfe honoured of the *Kingly order*.

Moreouer that none might obieſt, that it had been an eaſier matter to haue maintained the Church in her firſt eſtate, then now to plucke her out of hell: God prevents this alſo, and ſhewes that the Jewes were juſtly thus afflicted, in regard they had too much provoked him by their iniquities. But hee

In my wrath I ſmote thee.

Verſ. 11. *Therefore thy gates ſhall be open continually: neither day nor night ſhall they be ſhut, that men may bring vnto thee the riches of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought.*

* Or, and their Kings led.

THIS verſe is ill expounded of the moſt Interpreters. For they thinke the Prophet meant to ſay, that the Church ſhall be in ſafe-rie vnder the fidelitie and protection of God. Why ſo? Becauſe *open doores*, ſhew that danger is farre off. But me thinke the Prophet expounds himſelfe: namely, that *the gates ſhall be open*, that riches may be brought into the citie from all parts. And in as much as they are wont to beare their burthens by day: the day, ſaith he, ſhall not ſuffice in regard of the continual reſurt of ſuch as ſhall bring precious treasures thither. Wherefore *carriages* ſhall not ceaſe, in ſo much that the gates muſt be kept open day and night.

Where he ſaith, the Church ſhall haue the riches of the Gentiles, it is not to be referred to temporall commodities, but to the obedience which all the world ſhall yeeld vnto God in his Church: to which he giues that which is offered vnto him, in regard he hath nothing which is not hers.

What is meant by the riches of the Gentiles.

And their kings led.] I had rather retaine the participle which the Prophet vſeth, then to follow them who change it into a verbe: for they ouerthrow his meaning; in regard that he expreſſely addeth this, becauſe the pride of kings is ſuch, that they will not willingly ſuffer themſelves to bee led. Nay, on the contrarie, ſtanding too much vpon their owne power, they wax intemperate; and in ſtead of being led whither they ought; they

Kings naturally unwilling to ſubmit their neckes to Gods yokes

carrie away with them al others as with a violent flood. He shewes then that notwithstanding their naturall and vntamed rebellion, they shall submit themselues to God and his Church.

Verf. 12. *For the nation and the kingdom that will not serue thee shall perish: and those nations shall bee utterly destroyed.*

A confirmation of the former doctrine.

THE Prophet stands much vpon the confirmation of the hearts of Gods children, to assure them that they should behold the restoration of the Church one day, as hee hath now described it out vnto them. These things were altogether incredible: and howsoever we our selues are sufficiently confirmed by the euents of these things which are manifested in all mens sight; yet if wee were not governed by the spirit of Christ, hardly should wee conceiue them in our mindes. He shewes then that there is no cause at all wherefore the Iewes should doubt of the restoration of the Temple; because the Gentiles should come to aide them with all their power. But *Isaiah* regarded something more high in this place, then the building of the visible Temple. For his meaning is to speake of that obedience which Kings, Nobles, and the commons should yeelde vnto the Church, when they should aduance as much as in them lay, the putitie of doctrine. Yea, hee passeth yet further in pronouncing that the *kingdomes and nations which will not serue the Church, shall perish*. If such as helpe not the Church, are condemned with this fearefull and terrible sentence; what shall we say of those tyrants who set themselues furiously against her, and labour with might and maine to worke her ouerthrow? If the slothfull and carelesse shall not escape vnpunished, ought not the wicked to wait for some horrible vengeance, seeing they strue to hinder and ouerthrow the worke of the Lord?

If such as serue not the Church shall perish, how shall they escape that persecute her?

He repeats that now in the *plural number*, which he said before in the singular; to shew, chat if the whole world were guiltie, yet they should wholly perish. For the *multitude* cannot free those from perishing, that estrange themselues from God: neither shall the wicked be excused, if they hinder one another from comming to saluation; or if they encourage one another to commit iniquitie. Now it is said (as we haue seene before) that Kings and nations serue the Church, not in regard that thee exerciseth any dominion of her selfe, but because God hath giuen and committed the scepter of his word, by which hee rules, vnto her custodie.

And those nations, &c.

Verf. 13. *The glory of Lebanon shall come vnto thee, the firre tree, the elm and the box tree together to beautifie the place of my sanctuarie: for I will glorifie the place of my feete.*

Isaiah vseth yet another similitude, which hee brought in when hee compared the

Church to a building or Citie. For he recites such things as are necessarie to build withall, to wit, the *firre tree*, the *pine tree*, and the *box tree*; all which grew in *Lebanon*, a Forrest that abounded with goodly and excellent trees. His meaning is then, that whatsoever was faire and exquisite in this Forrest, should be brought vnto the Church. But we must refer the truth of these figures to Gods spirituall worship; for he adorns his Church with the title of the *sanctuarie*, because himselfe dwells in the midst thereof: notwithstanding hee hath alwaies respect to the Temple, and to the customes of those times. He sets before vs then a patterne of the Temple that stood in Ierusalem; that vnder the image thereof we might consider of the spirituall Temple, whereof wee are the matter and the liuing stones: Eph. 2. 21. 1. Pet. 2. 5.

By the *place of his feete*, he signifies that hee so dwelles in the Temple; that yet his Maiestie is not inclosed therein, for he is not contained within so narrow limits. There is nothing but his feete then, that is to say, his lowest and meanest part: there by teaching vs, to aspire vp vnto heauen, and not to rest fixed in these external signes, which instruct vs according to our slender capacite. According to which, it is said in Psal. 99. 5. *Worship the footstool of his feete*, for he is holy. Also, We will enter into his Tabernacle, and worship before his *footstool*: Psal. 132. 7. Not that Gods essence is diuided into pieces, part in heauen, and part in earth; but in regard that by such helpes, hee raiseth vp his seruant as it were from his *feete* to his head.

Gods essence not parted into pieces.

Verf. 14. *The sonnes also of them that afflicted thee, shall come and bow vnto thee; and all they that despised thee, shall fall downe at the soles of thy feete, and they shall call thee, The Citie of the Lord, Zion of the holy one of Israel.*

HE prosecutes the same argument still. For he shewes how wonderful this worke of redemption shall be, when those that *persecuted or despised* the Church, shall come to prostitute themselues humbly before her *feete*, and with their whole hearts shall submit themselues to her seruice. By the *children* of those that afflicted her, hee meanes the tyrants and persecuters which vexed her. Now this was partly accomplished when the Iewes returned into their country. But this returne was but an obscure shadow of that deliuerance which wee haue obtained by Christ. Thus these things then were truly accomplished vnder Christs kingdom; yet so, that we must wait for the perfect consummation thereof, till his second comming: as in another place before we haue noted.

The same argument still prosecuted.

But, will some say, is not this honor whereof the Prophet speaks, too excessive, and greater then of right belongs to the Church? For to *bow*, and *fall downe vpon the ground*, are such signes of honour, which no mortall man

Quest.

ought

Anſ. This honor nor done to the Church, but to the head Chriſt.

ought to accept of, I anſwer, that this honor is not made to the members, but to the head, which is Chriſt, who is worſhipped in the Church; and thoſe who hated and perſecuted him before, come now to do him this reverence. Now we ſay that Chriſt is adored in the Church, not according to the Popiſh opinion, who thinke they indeed worſhip Chriſt whilſt they kneele before that Romane Idoll to kiſſe his pantable. Thoſe, in favor of whom this is affirmed, hate and reiect ſuch a doctrine. They only honor Chriſt then who obey his voice; as alſo the Prophet ſaith, that the ſtrangers which were out of the Church ſhould willingly ſubmit themſelves to yeeld obedience vnto Chriſt, whoſe Maieſtie ſhines in the doctrine which himſelfe adminiſters by the ſeruiſe of men.

The Romane Idoll.

And ſhall call thee, &c.] The Church was adorned with this title heretofore, but it was in a maner defaced when the Citie was deſtroyed, the Temple rased, and the people led away captiue. Ieruſalem was no more the ſame, neither was there ought to be ſeene in her but an horrible waſt, and yet he promiſeth that ſhe ſhall be ſo reſtored, that all ſhall acknowledge her for the *Citie of the Lord*. Afterwards he ſpeakes of the *Temple*, to ſignific vnto vs that this dignitie is attributed to *Ieruſalem* in regard of the *Temple*: that is to ſay, for the ſeruiſe of Gods ſake which was there eſtabliſhed.

Zion of the &c.

Verſ. 15. *Whereas thou haſt bin forſaken and hated, ſo that no man went by thee, I will make thee an eternall glorie, and a ioy from generation to generation.*

The Prophet had an eie to y^e middle time which alreadie approached: for a little after his death the people were driuen out of their heritage, and led away captiue, ſo as all thought that the Iewes had bin for euer rooted out. That this thought then might not ariſe in the minds of the faithfull, whereby they were in danger to fall into deſpaire and ſay, We are vndone; there is no way left how to remedie theſe ſo extreame miſeries: neither are we euer to expect a better condition; he, on the contrarie ſhewes, that theſe ſore calamities can not let God to reſtore them againe. For howſoever for a time they were after a ſort forſaken when the Lord thus corrected them, yet was it no matter for him to ſet them in a more happie and better eſtate then the former.

Obiect.

If any obiect, that this magnificence of the Church was of no long continuance: the anſwere is ſoone made. For howſoever the people were diuerſlie afflicted after their returne home, and that the Chriſtian Church alſo did not long hold her excellencie, yet is all that which the Prophet foretold accomplished: for Chriſtes glorie ſhines forth from vnder the croſſe, ſo as Gods name remains, and a people alſo that calles vpon his name by faith.

Anſ.

Chriſtes glorie ſhines vnder the croſſe.

Besides, we are to note, that our owne vniuerſalnes hindere vs from receiuing the

vſe.

fruit of theſe promiſes, becauſe we breake off the courſe of Gods working by our infidelitie; and by our owne ſtowardnes wee loſe the profit which wee might reape from the ſame. To conclude, we are alwaies to remember that which I haue ſo often told you, namely, That the Prophet ſpeakes not of yeeres heere, or of a few daies; but comprehends the whole courſe of our redemption from the end of the captiuitie vntill the publiſhing of the Goſpell, and ſo ſucceſſiue, till he ſhall giue vp the kingdome to God his Father.

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Verſ. 16. *Thou ſhalt alſo ſuck the milke of the Gentiles, and ſhalt ſuck the breaſts of the Kings: and thou ſhalt know that I the Lord am thy ſauour and thy redeemer: the mightie one of Iacob.*

HE ſpeakes of the ſpreading forth of the Church. But it was neceſſarie that one and the ſame thing ſhould be often repeated, in regard it ſeemed incredible that the Church of God being now brought to ſo low an ebbe, ſhould euer be raiſed, or ſpread ouer the whole world: for her condition was lamentable, but in the end ſhe was rebuilt againe, to the aſtoniſhment of all, and that by a ſmall remnant, as a brand recouered out of the fire; and the ſeed thereof was ſcattered farre and wide thorow all the quarters of the world. And therefore it is as much as if he had ſaid, Though thou beſt now incloſed within ſtrait and very narrow bounds, and haſt nothing in common with the Gentiles, yet ſo it is that thou ſhalt receiue from them much fruites in abundance.

By *milke*, and *breasts*, he meanes nothing elſe but that ſeruiſe and obedience which the Gentiles ſhould render to the Church to nourish her offspring. For hauing ſaid before, that of an handfull ſhould proceed an infinite number of children: now he provides *milke* to ſuckle them with, vntill they be come of ſufficient age. And he expreſly ſpeakes of *Kings*, in regard it was the harder to be beleued. And thus *Kings* by the way are admoniſhed of their duties, who if they will diſcharge the ſame as they ought, then muſt they be *ſeruaunts of the Church*, otherwiſe the Lord will call them to account for it, and we know what *Dauid* pronounceth in the ſecond *Palme*, verſe ro. 11.

Kings admoniſhed of their duties.

But wee muſt note after what maner the Church ſhall ſuck the *milke* and the *breasts* of the Gentiles. For the ſe is not permitted wholly to draw in vnto her ſelfe all the abilities and riches of the world, but only thereby to preferre her owne eſtate in ſafetie. For can any thing in the world be more contrarie to the nature of the Church, then to be an inſatiable gulph, ſwallowing vp into her belly whatſoever ſhe may come by? Theſe things therefore muſt be referred to the ſpiritual eſtate of the Church, namely, that by meanes hereof, God may be purely worſhipped in her, that the miniſtrie of the word may flouriſh and be advanced there; and that the may

Ne- trarieto the nature of the true Church, then to become an inſatiable gulph.

Discipline.

thereby retainē some discipline which may serue as a bridle to curbe euery one. And yet herewithall, that the faithfull must remember, it is a more blessed thing to giue then to take: Act. 20. 35, that thus they may be instructed to beare pouertie patiently, to the end they may enrich others with their spirituall riches.

Lastly he addes, that that which for a time was hidden shall be discouered: namely, the Iewes should know, that they were not elected in vaine, in regard they should feele by experience that God was careful of their saluation. But some may aske if they knew not this before they were led captiue. I answer, this banishment resembled a thicke and grosse darknesse; which comparison also our Prophet vsed in the beginning of this chapter. Seeing then that vnder this grieuous seruitude, they could behold neither the power nor glorie of God, he now drew them into the open light. Not that faith failes in afflictions: but because the feeling thereof is one thing, and experience another. Whilest we seeme forlorne, then faith soares vp aloft farre about the present miserie, and those thicke mists with which we be enwrapped. And if God be pleased to restore vs to our perfect estate, then wee perceiue the thing, not by the eyes of faith but by experience it selfe: loe here that manifest knowledge whereof hee speaks. As if he should say, after I shall haue dealt liberally with you, you shall then see by the effects that I am your redeemer.

Quest.
Ans.Faith and ex-
perience di-
stinguished.

He doth of set purpose vse the title of the mightie one of Jacob: in regard he had formerly often shewed himself to be such an one towards them. And that not onely Jacob himselfe had many waies felt Gods power by experience, but that his successors also had prooued that it was in him in whom they were to seeke assured helpe. Thus then hee calles him mightie, to the end they might acknowledge that God would be the same for euer towards them, which in times past hee had been to their fathers.

Verf. 17. *For brasse I will bring gold, and for iron will I bring siluer, and for wood brasse, and for stones iron. I will also make thy gouernment peace, and thine exactors righteousness.*

The excellē-
cie of
Christs spi-
rituall Tem-
ple described.

THE Prophet alludes to the building of the old and ancient Temple, and compares it with the spirituall and heauenly. As if hee should say, When you shall bee carried away captiue, then you will bewaile the ruine of the Temple: but I will so worke, that you shall build it after a more excellent manner. In stead of brasse then, I will bring gold, and in stead of iron, siluer; for wood, brasse, and for stones, iron. As if he had said, All shall bee full of magnificence and glorie in that second Temple which shall succeed the first. Now we know that this prophesie was neuer accomplished in the externall restoration

of this people. Nay, it is certaine that the beautie of the second Temple was farre inferior to the first: Ezra. 3. 12. 13. It follows then, that the Prophet who in spirit, saw the true redemption, recites not only that which should fall out presently after the returne of the people; but publisheth the excellencie of the spirituall Temple, which is the Church of Christ: we must therefore come by a direct line, as it were vnto Christ, if wee will attaine the true meaning of this prophesie. In his kingdom these things were fully accomplished, and the dignity of the first Temple was much surpassed: For the Lord shed abroad the gifts of his holic spirit, which farre excelled either gold, siluer, or precious stones. Wee may now then see the Temple built of precious stones, as it was in Chapter 54. 11. 12.

As concerning the word *superintendance*, others translate tribute. Neither do I doubt but the Prophet meant closelie to compare y^e miserable seruitude, vnder which the people should be held, with that excellent dignitie, to which they were afterwards aduanced. For to *peace* and *justice*, he opposeth the *exactors*, who vniustly tyrannised ouer them, whilest the Iewes were vexed with the countenance and crueltie of the Babylonians. Now he shewes that the exactors being cut off, there shall be no other superintendance then *peace* and *justice*. This was more fullie accomplished, when we were deliuered from the tyrannie of the diuell by Christ. For by his Gospell he erected a kingdom of righteousness, which is not yet finished. But wee are to wait for his last coming to see the perfection thereof: and yet in the meane while to content our selues with these first fruits.

Verf. 18. *Violence shall no more be heard of in thy land, neither desolation, nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call saluation thy walles, and praise thy gates.*

HE here more largely expresseth that which we haue said: namely, that in describing the happie estate of the Church, hee priuile opposeth the miseries and calamities wherewith shee had been diuerslie afflicted, thereunto. For which cause hee protesteth that in time to come shee should no more be vexed by them. I grant notwithstanding that many euils befell them after their deliuerance. What of that? Yet the people were neuer so vitally wasted, but some forme of a Church still remained; and by means here-of they enjoyed peace, feeling by experience that God kept and defended them by his power. Wee must not take it then as if the Prophet in these words promised them to be exempt from all trouble and encumbrance. But this consolation was added by way of comparison, in regard of the miseries to come: to wit, that the Lord will spare his Church; which shall be in fastie vnder his protection.

An amplifi-
cation of the
former do-
ctrine.

protection. And queſtionleſſe in the courſe of their delinuerance, they evidently perceiued ſome teſtimonies of this peace which the Prophet doth here ſo highly extoll. To bee ſhort, we muſt alwaies remember that which we haue ſo oft repeated; namely, that wee feele all theſe things in part onely; becauſe the kingdome of Chriſt is not yet accompliſhed.

And thy gates.] He alludes to the building of the Temple, or of the Church, as we haue ſaid elſewhere: and ſhewes that her ſafetie ſhall not conſiſt in towers, walles, or other encloſures; and that howſoeuer humane helps ſhould faile her, yet ſhould ſhee haue ſufficient ſafetie and quiet contentment in God alone. But to the ſaluation of the Church he ioyneth *praiſe*, or *ioy*: for being now in perfect ſafetie ſhee ſhould reioyce: whereas before during her oppreſſion, ſhe lay trodden vnder foote in an hopeleſſe ſilence.

Verſ. 19. *Thou ſhalt haue no more Sunne to ſhine by day, neither ſhall the brightneſſe of the Moone ſhine vpon thee: for the Lord ſhall bee thine euerlaſting light, and thy God, thy glorie.*

20. *Thy Sunne ſhall neuer goe downe, neither ſhall thy Moone bee hid: for the Lord ſhall be thine euerlaſting light, and the daues of thy ſorrow ſhall bee ended.*

HEE teacheth that the Churches felicitie ſhall not be temporarie, but eternall. For he ſeparates her from the common condition of men, among whom, nothing is ſtable nor permanent. Why ſo? Becauſe whatſoeuer is vnder the Sunne, be it neuer ſo well eſtabliſhed, yet is it ſubiect to diuers mutations and changes. But the ſtate of the Church muſt not be meaſured according to the dangers of this preſent life, in regard ſhee is preferred euen in the midſt of greateſt ſtormes. As if he ſhould ſay; Iudge not of thy ſaluation by outward appearances; but bee thou ſure that God holds that ſafely in his hand. *The Lord will bee thy Sunne*; ſo as thou ſhalt haue no more need of the light, neither of Sunne nor Moone. Feare not any change then, or conſuſion of things; for thou ſhalt inioy a perpetuall and an immouable light. And yet we muſt not take it as if the Prophet meant hereby to affirme that Gods children ſhould be deprived of the commodities of this preſent life. For ſeeing the Lord hath beſtowed them on all men indifferently, then hath hee much more ordained them for his ſeruants; for whoſe ſakes, euen all things were created of God, in regard he hath a ſpeciall care ouer them. But the Prophet meant yet to ſignifie ſomething more excellent, which the children of God onely doe inioy, namely, that heauenly light. This the wicked cannot apprehend, and therefore they deadly hate it. For howſoeuer they haue the light of the Sunne, and other like benefits; yet cannot

The Churches felicitie not temporall, but eternall.

Though the felicitie of Gods choſen conſiſts in eternall good things, yet are they not therefore to be deprived of the vſe of temporall things.

their felicitie bee firme nor ſtable, becauſe they are without feeling, which hinders them from taſting the principall good thing, to wit, that God is their Father. Our Prophet therefore diſtinguiſheth the condition of the Church, and of the faithfull therein, from the common eſtate of men in the world: to teach vs not to meaſure it according to the changes and alterations of inferior things: as alſo to informe vs, that in the midſt of the moſt palpable and groſſe darkneſſe, God vſeth to let the light of his fatherly countenance ſhine vpon his children, to cauſe them to reioyce. Though all the elements then ſhould ceaſe to doe their office, or ſhould threaten vs with an heauiſe looke, let it ſuffice vs notwithstanding that God fauours vs.

By the name of *Sunne* and *Moone*, vnder a part hee comprehends the ſtate of the whole world, which is often times changed.

Verſ. 21. *Thy people alſo ſhall be all righteous: they ſhall poſſeſſe the land for ever: the graſſe of my planting ſhall be the worke of mine hands, that I may bee glorified.*

*Or, peoples.

THE Prophet ſhewes heere, wherein the true eſtabliſhment of the Church conſiſts: truly when ſhee is ſeparated from the godleſſe, and that the faithfull onely haue place in her. But we know that hypocrites are alwaies mingled amongſt the true children of God in the Church. We haue alſo told you that the kingdome of Chriſt is heere deciphered out; not ſuch a one as it ſhall be in euery particular moment of time, but in its perfection. Chriſt at his firſt coming, began to accompliſh that which is heere ſaid, when he purged his Church in which regard, he calles his Goſpell a *ſaw*; becauſe by it the chaffe is ſeparated from the wheat: Mat. 3. 12. And he continues ſtill euery day to purge it, and will hold on that courſe euen to the day of harueſt. In the meane while, there muſt be much reſuſe mingled amongſt the good graine, which in that day ſhall at laſt bee vtterly purged and clenſed out.

The Churches is then truly eſtabliſhed, when ſhe is ſeparate fro the godleſſe, and that the faithfull alone haue place in her.

Moreouer, heere is a cloſe oppoſition betwene that prophane and wicked troope, who by their filthineſſe doe pollute the ſanctuarie of the Lord. Further alſo he ſeemes to mention the vocation of the Gentiles, when in the plural number he ſaith, that *all peoples* ſhall be righteous.

Where hee addes, that they ſhall *inherit the land for ever*, I doubt not but he had reſpect vnto Iuda, and cloſely oppoſed the time of the reſtauration, to that of the captiuitie, which was at hand. As if he ſhould ſay; Albeit I doe baniſh my people out of their inheritance, yet after ſeuenteie yeeres, I will bring them backe againe to poſſeſſe it for ever. It is alſo to be noted; that he reſtraines this promiſe which appertained to all the people of Zion, to the righteous. For thus there is a kind of correction, whereby he ſhuts out all hypocrites, who are wont vainly to vſurp & snatch

vnto

vnto them those titles, which onely belong to the true children of God. This sentence then agrees with the beginning of the 73. Psalm; Yet God is good to *Israel*, euen to the *pure in heart*. For here the Prophet attributes the name of *Israel*, which all bragged of, to the true seruants of God onely. And so in this place we may say as much of the word *peoples*, to wit, that little remnant which shall be purged from their vncleanness. This was not wholly accomplished among the Iewes: they had the beginnings of it indeed, when they were restored home vnto their Country againe; that so afterwards by their meanes, the possession of the whole world might be given vnto Gods children. And as he spake heretofore of the restauration of the Temple, which was not perfect in Ierusalem, but should bee extended thorow all the quarters of the world; so this *possession of the Land* must not bee restrained to Iudea alone, seeing it stretcheth it selfe further off, in regard all men are called to haue their part therein: that so by faith they may bee the children of *Abraham*, and consequently be made heires.

The phrases of speech vsed by the Prophets, ought diligently to be obserued.

These phrases of speech then which are much in vse among the Prophets, ought to be diligently obserued, that we may the better attaine to their meaning, and not to curtail their sentences, nor wrest them to a wrong sense. Their exposition then is too far fetched, and farre remote from the proprietie of the Prophets language; who by the *land*, vnderstand heauen & the blessed life. For the land of Canaan was giuen to the children of *Israel*, that being separated from the rest of the world, as the peculiar stocke of God, they might in that place serue him purely. And therefore to *possesse the land by rights of inheritance*, signifies nothing else, but to continue and remaine in the Church of God.

Where God affirms that *the graffe of his planting shall be the vvorke of his hands*; it serues to confirme the hope of the faithfull. For in mans iudgement it was a thing vnpossible that euer the Church should bud againe; for all esteemed her forlorne, chiefly in respect her roote lay hidden. That the might sprout afresh then, the Prophet saith, that God will plant the husband man, namely, in replanting that which was withered after it was plucked vp by the rootes. In a word, hee signifies that the deliuerance of the Church out of this miserable seruitude, shall be an admirable worke of *the Lord*, and not of men; in regard she shall be raised vp as it were from death. And truly that which belongs to the heauenly life, is not giuen vs by nature, nor obtained by our industry; but flowes vnto vs, and proceeds from Gods free bountie. Euery one of vs also ought to apply vnto himself in particular, that which is here said of the whole Church in general: for we were planted of God before the foundations of the world: Eph. 1.4. and afterwards incorporated and called; to the end we might haue assurance of our election and *plantation*. The wicked were neuer planted of God: and therefore Christ pronounceth that those whom his heauenly Father hath not planted, shall be plucked vp: Mat. 15. 13.

To conclude, the end wherefore we be planted, is by and by added, namely, that we might set forth the *praise* of God, and tell of his wonderful workes: as we are taught verie well by *Paul*, in Eph. 1. 12. And by *Peter* in his first Epistle: Chap. 2. 9.

The end why we are planted.

Verf. 22 *A little one shall become as a thousand, and a small one as a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in due time.*

HE confirms that which he hath already said, namely, that albeit they were few in number, yet the Church of God should be plentifully replenished with people. When the Prophet foretolde these things, there were great multitudes of people: but in short time after, they were so diminished, that the remainders were very few; as we haue seene in the first and tenth Chapters, yet this *small number*, saith he, shall so increase, that in processe of time, it shall become an infinit people of great power.

A confirmation of that which was said before.

Let vs know then, that whatsoeuer was said vnto the Iewes in this behalfe, is also said vnto vs at this day. For howsoeuer we be but a poore handfull of people, and seeme to be nere our vtter ruine, yet the Church cannot perish, but shall grow and increase to a great multitude, because it is the *planting of God*: verf. 21. which we must not esteeme of by outward appearances, nor by the force or multitudes of men.

Vic.

I the Lord. Now the Prophet shews to what end all his former speeches haue tended, namely, that we should not resemble God vnto men, whose counsels and induours caslie vanish and come to nothing. If they would take vpon them to alter the state of the world or of a kingdome; alas, they could doe nothing: but the *Lord* can change all these things in a moment. He speaks not then of an ordinary government, but of a rare and admirable worke, whereby the *Lord* will deliuer and multiply his Church.

In the end of the verse he promiseth to *hasten* the accomplishment of this worke: but he adde a particle that is worthy to be noted, touching the *time* of the Church. For the *relatiue* is in the feminine gender; so as they who refer it vnto God, are deceived. And those who translate, In his time, are the cause of this error, in regard this word *His*, is ambiguous. The Prophets meaning is, that there is an appointed time set, in which the Church should be deliuered. And thus hee exhorts the faithfull vnto patience, that they should not fall away; but rather depend vpon the vnchangeable decree of God, who hath skill enough to *dispose of the moments of times*.

First of all the he notes the fit time wherein it shall be most for the Churches profit to be deliuered. We cannot iudge of this: for we would haue God doe that which hee hath promised out of hand: and if he foreflow the time, we storme. But he defers for our good; & in respect that the fit time is not yet come. Afterwards

terwards he ſpeakes of *haſtning*, becauſe we imagin that the Lord is aſleepe, or takes his eaſe, when hee deferres. And yet hee ha-

ſtens, to execute all things according to that time and ſeaſon which he alone knowes to be fitteſt.

THE LXI. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, therefore hath the Lord appointed me: hee hath ſent me to preach good tidings vnto the poore, to bind vp the broken hearted, to preach libertie to the Captiues, and to them that are bound, the opening of the priſon.*



Or as much as Chriſt expounded this place of himſelfe, Luk. 4.18, therefore the interpreters doe without any difficultie reſtraine it vnto him: holding it for a principle, that

Chriſt is here brought in ſpeaking; as if theſe things onely appertained vnto him. The Iews ſcoffe at ſuch, who inconfiderately haue attributed to Chriſt alone, the things which doe alſo agree to the reſt of the Prophets. To ſpeake then what I thinke, it ſeemes to me, that this Chapter is added as a ſeale vnto the former, thereby to confirme ſuch which hath been ſaid hitherto touching the reſtauration of the Chriſtian Church. And that to this end Chriſt proteſteth, that God hath *anointed him*: which is the cauſe that he (and that very iuſtly) appropriates this propheteſie vnto himſelfe: in regard hee hath exhibited that to vs clearly and manifeſtly which others haue taught obſcurely. Yet this hinders not; but ſuch ſentence may in like manner agree to the reſt of the Prophets whom the Lord hath alſo *anointed*. For they ſpake not in their owne names, neither did they execute their offices from their private authoritie: but they ſhewed forth the authoritie and office of Chriſt; to whom it not onely belongs to publiſh theſe things; but alſo to fulfill them. This place then muſt be thus vnderſtood, namely, that Chriſt who is the Prince of the Prophets, obtains the chiefe place among theſe; and that it is he onely who manifeſts all that which is here mentioned: & alſo that *Iſaiab*, with the reſt of the Prophets, and the Apoſtles, are his ſeruants; every one of them employing theſe felues to the vtmoſt in preaching and publiſhing the benefits which we receiue from him. So as ſuch which *Iſaiab* hath ſaid ſhould be finiſhed by Chriſt, we now ſee it accompliſhed by the effects.

For this cauſe he hath *anointed me*.] This ſecond member was added in ſtead of an expoſition. For firſt it would haue been obſcure to vs, if he had concealed the cauſe, wherefore God had giuen him his Spirit: but now wee may evidently perceiue his meaning, when he ſhewes the uſe thereof: namely, that hee exerciſeth a publicke office, that ſo hee may not

bee taken as ſome priuate perſon.

Now as often as the Scripture mentions the *ſpirit of God*, and ſaith, that it *dwells in vs*: 1. Cor. 3.16. let vs conſider of his efficacy and power; and not imagine it to be ſome vaine and idle thing in vs without any effect. Wherefore after the Prophet hath ſpoken of the *ſpirit of the Lord*: in the ſecond place he addes the *anointing* thereunto: thereby vnderſtanding the *vertues* which proceed from that ſpirit. To which purpoſe *Paul* ſaith, 1. Cor. 12.4. that there are diuers gifts: but only one ſpirit from whence they flow. This place is diligently to be obſerued of vs, for no man ought to take vnto himſelfe power or authoritie to teach in the Church of God, vnleſſe he be able to ſhew that he is called therunto by the vertue of Gods Spirit. And ſo teſtiſies *S. Paul* in 1. Cor. 12.3. namely, that no man can ſay, *Ieſus is the Lord*, but by the holy Ghoſt.

But, may ſome ſay, wee fee that euery one bragges of the ſpirit. For the Pope, the Anabaptiſts and other hereticks and fanatical ſpirits haue alwaies the holy Ghoſt in their mouthes, as if hee were their gouernour. How, or by what means then may wee diſcerne of him that is ſent by God, and conducted by his ſpirit, from him that is not? By the *anointing*. That is to ſay, if he be endued with gifts anſwerable to this charge. If hee then who is ſent of God haue the graces and gifts which his office requires; then hath he aſſuredly the holy Ghoſt. But if hee will take vpon him the office of a teacher; and in the meane while is deſtitute both of knowledge and doctrine, let him be held for a ſeducer.

To preach.] The Prophet attributes not vnto himſelfe the authoritie of a teacher, till hee hath made it manifeſt that he was ſent of God. His authoritie is founded vpon his *anointing*: namely, in being fitted and furniſhed by the Lord with ſufficient gifts. It is our duties to giue him audience then, not as to a priuate perſon, but as vnto a publicke Miniſter ſent from heauen.

To the afflicted.) Others translate, To the mecke: and the word *Ananiam*, ſignifies both the one and the other. But I had rather retain the firſt ſignification, in reſpect the Prophet ſpeakes of the *priſoners*, and of thoſe that are bound. And yet, as I take it, he comprehends both. For he ſpeakes of ſuch, who being vtterly forſaken and reiected, are alſo miſerable in themſelues. Chriſt is only promiſed to ſuch as are humbled and brought low by the ſenſe of their miſeries, who hauing no conceit of their own worth, do willingly containe themſelues within the bounds of modeſty and humility. Hence we gather that our Prophet ſpeakes properly of the Goſpell. For the law was giuen to bring downe all ſoſtie imaginations,

We muſt not thinke of the ſpirit without his efficacy.

No man ought to take vpon him the office of a Teacher, vnleſſe he be able to manifeſt that hee is called therunto of God. Obieã.

Anſ.

That which is here ſaid appertaines to Chriſt as the head, and all the Prophets and Apoſtles as his ſeruants.

This Chapter is added as a ſeale vnto the things before going.

imaginations, and such as are swollen with vaine confidence: but the Gospell is ordained for the afflicted: that is to say, for such as confesse themselves empty of all good things, that by and through it they may be raised vp and comforted. For to what end are the Prophets, Apostles, and other Ministers anointed, but to restore and comfort the heauie hearts by the doctrine of grace?

To binde vp.] The Prophet vseth diuers phrases of speech that he might the better expresse one and the same thing. In the word *to binde vp*, he expresseth somewhat more then in the former member. For he shewes, that the preaching of the Gospell is no empty found vanishing away in the aire, but a medicine that is operative, which works not vpon those that are stubborne and strong, but vpon such as haue *broken* and contrite hearts. It is also the end of the Gospell to set the *captiues* at libertie. We are all prisoners and fettered, vntill Christ haue set vs free by his grace, Iohn 8.36. But let vs beware that we reiect not the benefit which he offers vs whē he is about to smite off our yrons. Generally we may note that the benefits here mentioned are distributed vnto vs by the Gospell, but none are capable hereof, except those who feeling their pouertie doe ardentlie desire the help of Christ, according as himselfe saith, Math. 11.28. Come vnto me all yee that trauell and be heauie laden, and I will refresh you.

Verf. 2. To preach the acceptable yeere of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourne.

The time when this grace should be manifested.

HE here expressed the very time wherein this so excellent grace should be spread abroad, y^e so he might take away all scruples & doubts that might come into their heads. For all vs are subiect to sundrie cares, and many incumbrances arise vp in our minds, which hold them intangled with infinite discourses, whereof we tast by dayly experience. Now the Prophet affirms that he is the Herald of the grace which is to be reuealed, the time whereof rests whollie in the disposition of the Almighty: for as himselfe was to be the redeemer of his Church, by his mere fauor, so was it in his owne power (and that by good right) to make choice of the time himselfe wherein to performe the same. It may be the Prophet alluded to the yeere of Iubile, Leuit. 25.10. Howsoeuer it be, he boldly pronounceth that they were patientlie to wait with meeke and quiet spirits, vntill it pleased God to stretch forth his hands.

The yeere of Iubile.

S. Paul in his Epistle to the Rom. 16.26. and to the Galath. 4.4. calles this *yeere* the fulnes of time. We haue also seene heretofore that the Prophet in Chap. 49. 8. said, *Behold the acceptable time, behold the day of saluation*: which sentence S. Paul in 2. Cor. 6.2. applies to his preaching of the Gospell. For when the Lord summons vs thereby, then is the gate of heauen set open vnto vs, that wee should forthwith enter into the possession of Gods graces. Wee must not therefore put it off till to

morrow; but wee must make vse of the time, and take the occasion whilst so large mercies are offered vnto vs.

But heere seemes to be a repugnancie betweene these two, namely, the acceptable yeere, and the day of vengeance. What is the reason why *Isaiah* hath ioined things so different together? Truly, because God can not worke the deliuerance of his Church, but he must therewithal shew himselfe a iust Iudge in reuen-
ging himself vpon y^e wicked. The acceptable time then is to be referred vnto the elect: and the day of vengeance vnto the wicked, who neuer cease persecuting of the Church. It is needfull therefore that in the deliuerance thereof they should be chastised. According to which Paul, saith 2. Thess. 1.6. that it is a righteous thing with God to render vengeance vnto the enemies who vnjustly afflict the faithfull, and to giue rest to the afflicted. Neither could the Iewes expect any good issue out of so many miseries, vnlesse it were by the confusion of their aduersaries.

In the meane while it is good to note the cause of this deliuerance, which must be whollie ascribed to the free grace of God, and not to our merits, worthines, or any industrie that is in vs. The Prophet seemes iudged, as I haue said, to allude to the yeere of Iubile: but yet we must principallie obserue this, namely, that our saluation consists altogether vpon the free will of our God.

To comfort.] We must remember what I haue touched before, to wit, what the end of the Gospell is: namely, That we being deliuered out of all miseries, and restored to our first liberty, our teares wiped from our eyes; we may enioy spirituall comfort and consolation. But if we be deprived of so great a benefit, let vs impute the same to our owne incredulitie and vnthankfulness, whereby we both reiect and repulse God, who freely offers himselfe vnto vs.

Verf. 3. To appoint vnto them that mourne in Zion, and to giue vnto them* beauty for ashes, the oyle of ioy for mourning, the garment of gladnes for the spirit of heauines, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.*

*Or, or establisht.
*Or, magnificence.

HE prosecutes the same argument, and declares, that the chastisement wherewith the people should be exercised, should not be so sharp, but that there was hope notwithstanding left for them touching remission of finnes. Which that hee might the better perswade the of, he saith, the Lord hath giuen him charge to publish this deliuerance, and that not to himselfe alone, but also to all the Prophets, euen til the coming of that great Embassador, to wit, Christ Iesus, who shall indeed publish and accomplish that which God would now haue diuulged for the time to come: yet therewithal he signifies, that their sorrowes shall not be able to let God from giuing them matter of ioy, whē it should seeme good

The same argument continued.

Vpon whom the Gospell works.

Who are capable of the Gospell.

good vnto himſelfe. For to *eſtabliſh*, is as much to lay, as to appoint a time, that the long delay ought not diſcourage them. Againe, by the verb, *To giue*, he recommends vnto them the efficacy of his prophecie, to the end they might be vndoubtedly perſwaded touching the euent thereof. Well, he alludes herein to the ancient Ceremonies of the Iewes, who, when any affliction in thoſe times preſſed them, were wont to couer their heads with *aſhes*, and to clothe themſelues with *sackcloth*. By theſe things then he notes out that *mourning*, and *deſormitie*, which of neceſſitie was to enſue vpon the peoples woſull condition, and oppoſeth the ſame to that ioy and gladnes which they ſhould be filled withall, after they had obtained their freedome and libertie.

But yet me thinks I can not let paſſe the anſwering of theſe words *Pſter*, and *Epher*, one to another, which ſignifie *magnificence*, and *aſhes*. For by the tranſpoſition of the letters, they ſignifie things cleane contrarie: by which elegant turning of the words vpside downe, he meant to note out the change of their eſtate.

Trees of righteouſneſſe.] By theſe words hee ſets out the peoples reſtauration. As if hee ſhould ſay; Whereas in times paſt you were rooted vp, and reſembled a withered ſtocke; now you ſhall be planted againe and eſtabliſhed. He brings them then to the conſideration of Gods power, to the end that howſoever they ſhould be overwhelmed & brought to deaths doore, yet were they notwithstanding to aſſure themſelues to bee ſo reuiued, that they ſhould take roote, gather ſtrength, and grow.

Hence we may gather a generall doctrine, namely, that we cannot be quickened, vnleſſe we be planted by the Lord. True it is that we are called his plants, Chap. 60. 21. becauſe hee hath *eleſted* vs from the beginning: Eph. 1. 4. But yet there is another kind of planting which ſucceeds this firſt; to wit, our *calling*, which by faith graſts vs into y^e body of Chriſt. This the Lord brings to paſſe by the labours of his ſeruants, the Miniſters of the Goſpell: but the whole muſt be aſcribed vnto him, becauſe it is hee onely that giues the increaſe: 1. Cor. 3. 7. Yet we are alwaies to keep in mind that doctrine, which brings vs from this firſt deliuerance, vnto the ſpirituall kingdome of Chriſt.

Hee calls them *trees of righteouſneſſe*, in whom Gods iuſtice ſhines, or, an order rightly compoſed. Yet let vs know that the Lord adopts vs vpon condition that we be new creatures, and that righteouſneſſe may rule and raigne in vs. And thence it follows that by nature we are all corrupt and peruerſe, and cannot bring forth any good fruit, till the Lord haue changed and planted vs. This alſo abolitheth that vaine and proud conceit of the Papiſts, who in forging vnto themſelues preparations, for ſooth, or, ſome helps of free will, vſurp vpon that which belongs vnto God. If we bee planted of the Lord, then it follows that by nature wee are drie and vnfruitfull.

For my glory.] See heere the end wherefore we be planted. But of this matter we haue ſpoken in Chap. 60. 21.

Verſ. 4. *And they ſhall build the old waſte places, and raiſe vp the former deſolations: and they ſhall repaire the Citie that were deſolate and waſte thorow many generations.*

The Prophet amplifies this reſtauration of the Church, and inſiſts principally thereabouts; that the Iewes might conceiue in their mindes a certaine and an aſſured hope of their deliuerance: for theſe promiſes ſeemed altogether incredible. And this is the cauſe why hee adorne the benefit of this redemption with ſo many glorious and goodly titles. Thoſe erſe, who will haue theſe words, *Of the age*, and from generation to generation, referred to the time to come. As if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; that the *building* whereof he ſpeakes, ſhall be firme and ſtable: whereas his meaning is farre otherwiſe. For he ſhewes (as I noted in Chap. 58. 12.) namely, that the old ruines of the Citie ſhould not hinder the Lord from rearing it vp againe. After the inhabitants of any Citie haue been long ſcattered heere and there, what hope is left that it ſhould be built againe? As for example; who is he that thinkes of the reedifying of Athens? So whileſt the Iewes were baniſhed for a long time into a forrain country, and that Ieruſalem lay waſte the ſpace of ſeuentie yeeres; who durſt expect that euer the Citizens thereof ſhould haue reedified it? For this cauſe Iſaiah calles deſerts of an age, the *places formerly deſolated*; the *Cities waſted*, the *ſolitarie places from generation to generation*: to ſhew that none of theſe ſhould hinder the Lord in due ſeaſon, as was noted in Chap. 60. 22. to bring backe his eleſt to Ieruſalem, and to cauſe them to dwell there.

Moreouer, theſe things ought to be applied to our deſolate times. For howſoever the Lord permits his Church to be rased, and to lie long in her ruines, without any hope at all of being reſtored; yet let vs confirme and ſtrengthen our hearts with theſe promiſes; for it is Gods power and peculiar office to *build up* and to reneue the things which for a long time haue bene ruined and lien rotting in a perpetuall conſumption. But wee haue handled this matter before in Chap. 58.

Verſ. 5. *And the ſtrangers ſhall ſtand and feede your ſheep: and the ſonnes of the ſtrangers ſhall be your plowmen, and dreſſers of your vines.*

His meaning is, that the *ſtrangers* ſhall be ready to obey them. For in reſpect that they were at that time diuided from other nations, no man would lend them their hand. And therefore hee ſaith, that the *ſtrangers* doe *ſtand*: that is to ſay, are ready preſt to meete and to ſuccour them.

H h h

Where

An amplification in this & the verſes following

Athen.

Vic.

A generall Doctrine.

Two kinds of planting.

Papiſt preparations.

Where he adds, that they shall *feede their sheepe* and shall be the *plowmen* and *vinedressers*, these are borrowed kinds of speeches. For the Prophet speaks of Christs kingdome, which is spirituall; and sets fourth the perfect felicitie thereof, vnder these figures; that we might the better conceiue of those things which are here proposed vnto vs by examples. Let vs know therefore that wee shall bee truly happie, when Christ shall reigne ouer vs: for by meanes thereof many commodities whereof the posteritie of Adam is worthily deprived, shall be restored vnto vs vnawares.

Verf. 6. *But yee shall be named the Priests of the Lord; and men shall say vnto you, The Ministers of our God: yee shall eate the riches of the Gentiles, and shall be exalted with their glory.*

THIS verse giues vs a little better light into the former: for in the second part thereof *Isaiah* foretels, that the faithfull shall eate the riches of the Gentiles, and shall be exalted with their glorie. The Iewes lay hold of these places with great earnestnesse, and greedily deuoure al the goods of other nations, as if one day they should be masters of all: and glorie, as if all the pompe of the world should fall to their shares. But for our better vnderstanding of these things, wee must especially obserue two points. First, that the Prophets minding to set forth the glorie and felicitie of Christs kingdome; borrow similitudes from things belonging to men. Secondlie, in speaking of the Church, they so conioyne the head with the members, that sometimes they rather respect him then the members.

Neither must we reape this fruition of other mens goods, as if those which should bee conuerted vnto Christ should gripe vnto themselves riches, glorie, or the dignities of others; for this would not stand with the rules of charitie. But in respect that all things should be subiected vnder Christs dominion; that so he might vnder the soueraigne rule and authoritie ouer them. This is it which I haue already said, to wit, that the Prophet hath not so much regard of the members, as of the head himselfe. But when riches are brought vnder Christs power, then they are called *ours*; because he hath nothing which belongs not to his spouse the Church. It is said in chap. 45. 14. in the same sense that the enemies of Christ shall fall downe at his feet, and make supplication vnto him: and yet this is done to the Church, in whom they acknowledge Christ, & submit themselves vnto his doctrine. See chap. 60. 14. *Isaiah* then shewes what the Father will giue to the Sonne, who hath lawfull power ouer all the world: to whom also all things ought to be subiect.

In the meane while we must not omit that which I touched erewhile: namely, that God feedes his clea^r liberally in this world, to the end thy might feele that their estate is

better then that of the infidels. For howsoeuer they may want many things, yet a little contents them; for which they giue God hearie thanks: so as their wants to them are much better, then all the wealth of the world is to the wicked.

By the word *Priests* hee shewes, that the condition of the common people shall bee much better then it was in times past. As if he should say, *Hitherunto* the Lord hath chosen you for his heritage onely: but hereafter he will indue you with more excellent giftes, for hee will make you *Priests*. Now howsoeuer all the people were a kingdome of Priests, *Exod. 19. 6.* yet wee know that the Tribe of *Leui* onlie exercised this office, *Deut. 33. 10.* But our Prophet here testifies that afterward it shall be common to all. Yet this was not manifested till Christ came. I grant that the restauration of the Church began at the returne of the people out of *Babylon*: but in the end at Christs coming, the faithfull were adorned with this dignitie.

Herunto appertaines that which is written in *1. Pet. 2. 9.* You are an holy nation, a royall Priesthood. But withall we ought diligently to note what this kind of Priesthood is: for we must no more offer vnto God any brute beasts; but reasonable men must now be offered and sacrificed to the obedience of Christ. According to which *S. Paul* saith, that hee offered up the Gentiles by the sword of the Gospell, that they might afterwards yeeld their obedience vnto God. *Rom. 15. 19.*

Hence we see how childishly y^e Papiests trifle in abusing this place to proue their priesthood: for the Pope and his chaplens ordaine Priests to sacrifice to Iesus Christ; and not to teach his people (both which *Moses* ioines together in *Deut. 33. 10.*) But Christ offered vp himself for an eternal redemption, & he only once for all hath performed this Priestly office: *Heb. 9. 12.* Minding that the fruite of this sacrifice should now be offered vnto vs by the preaching of the Gospell. They which vsurp this office are sacrilegious persons, namely, such as will reiterate, that which Christ hath by himselfe accomplished. Euery one ought rather to offer himselfe, with all that hee hath vnto God: *Rom. 12. 1.* that he may exercise this Priesthood as hee ought to doe. Secondly, the Ministers who are especially called to teach, ought to vse the sword of Gods word to offer vp, and to consecrate men vnto God. Lastly, those are indeede faithfull and true Ministers, who enterprise nothing of their owne heads, but boldly and vprightly put those commandements in execution, which they haue received from God.

Verf. 7. *For your shame, you shall receive double*, and for confusion they shall reioyce in their portion: for in their land, they shall possesse the double: everlasting ioy shall be vnto them.*

HE confirms the former sentence, where he had said that the faithfull which mour-
ned,

Who shall be truly happy when Christ shall reigne ouer vs.

Two points must be obserued for the better vnderstanding of the Prophets.

Childishnes of Papiests in prouing their Priesthood.

* Or, honour.

A confirmation of the former sentence.

ned, being covered with sackcloth and aſhes, ſhould be ſprinkled with the oile of gladneſſe: verſ. 3 Now this change of the ſermon into joy, is here againe promiſed. Some interpret double to bee in regard that the ſer whom God hath redeemed, ſhould be happie before him, and before men. But I know not whether this expoſition be ſolid enough or no. I had rather take it more ſimply then, as if the Prophet ſhould haue ſaid; The proſperitie of the Church ſhall be ſo great, that it ſhall much exceede all the calamities and aduerſities wherewith it is now oppreſſed. If the be now then diſcontented with her eſtate, ſhee muſt caſt her eyes towards *this day*, in which ſhee ſhall be moſt happy. And ſo Saint Paul oppoſeth a *weight of glory to the momentary affliction*, which are ſuddenly gone: 2. Cor. 4. 17. The wicked ſcorne vs without meaſure: for they ſeeue luſt and ſtrong; they abuſe their proſperitie, and tread vnder their feete the poore children of God: but the Lord pronoueth in ſhort ſpace, to cauſe the faithfull being deliuered from vnder their tyrannie) *to reuiſe in their poſſion*. This began to be accompliſhed when the people returned out of captiuitie: but in Chriſt we haue a more full teſtimonie of it, which daily manifeſts it ſelfe, and at his laſt coming ſhall be finiſhed, who will perfectly reue all things; and the wicked ſhall be conſumed, to the end the *poſſeſſion* of the world may be ours.

To this appertaines that which hee ſaith by way of yeelding or granting; namely, that *the land* is now indeede *theirs*. For then they vaunted themſelues as being Lords of the whole world: but in the end they ſhould feele that it is the proper and particular *poſſeſſion* of Gods children. *Euerlaſting joy* may be referred to the eternall eſtate of the Church; becauſe God daily furniſheth them with ample matter of thankſgiving: but in regard they are conſtrained to ſwallow many anguiſhes, and are iniurioned about with all kindes of incumbrances, this prophecie is not accompliſhed vntill the *joy* of the Spirit hath gotten ſtrength in vs, and obtained the full victorie in our hearts; nor till wee feele that ſweete peace which paſſeth all vnderſtanding, to raigne there; as ſaith Saint Paul in Phil. 4. 7. Col. 3. 15. which peace onely the Saints of God inioy, when they feele luely teſtimonies within them of their adoption. Hee calles it *perpetuall*, to ſhew how farre it differs from the ioy of the wicked, which is but of ſhort continuance, and ſuddenly vaniſheth away: yea, and is conuerted into gnawing of teeth,

Difference betweene the ioy of the godly, and the wicked.

Verſ. 8. For I the Lord loue iudgement, and hate robbery for burnt offering: and I will direct their worke in truth, and will make an euerlaſting covenant with them.

An exhortation added to the former confirmat.

The Prophet not onely confirms that which he hath promiſed in the name of God, but alſo exhorts the Iewes to repentance, and ſhewes them from whence they were to

looke for ſaluation, and with what a terrible Iudge they had to deale. For he reaſons from the nature of God; and thence ſhewes after what manner they were to frame their lues, that ſo they might not reiect this grace of God now offered them by their owne rebellion.

Vnder the word *iudgement*, he comprehends all iuſtice and equall dealing. For hee oppoſeth this word to thoſe idle inuentions wherby the Iewes thought to ſatiſfie God withall, which yet were but cloakes for their wickednes. But as we haue often ſcene heere tofore, the Lord cares for none of theſe masks and vaine pretences, but onely requires the true puritie of the heart and hands, purged from all iniquities. He then that will be approved of God, with all that he performes in his ſeruice, muſt needs haue a pure heart, and leade a blameleſſe life.

Having robbery for burnt offerings.] Vnder a part he comprehends all the ſained ſeruices of God. And by burnt offering is vnderſtood all ſacrifices. There is nothing then more hatefull, then that men ſhould ſacrifice their robberies and coſenages vnto God: or, when they mingle their lies, hypocriſies, and filthineſſe of heart therewith; or, in defrauding God maliciously of his right, doe corrupt his pure worſhip.

Whoſe ſeruice it is that God approves of.

But this is a vice not onely practiſed of that age, but in all times. For euery one will ſeeme to ſerue God, and the wicked themſelues will be aſhamed to be without the appearance of deuotion, in regard the ſenſe and feeling of the diuine nature is ſo ingrauen in the hearts of all men, that it cannot be riced out. But in the meane while, the moſt part of men doe but triſle & dallie with God, and labor to ſatiſfie him with pretie gawdies and toys. *Iſaiah* therefore condemnes and deteſts ſuch an hypocriſie; and teacheth that the Lord rather requires *mercy* of vs, then *ſacrifices*: Hoſ. 6. 7. Mat. 9. 13. and 12. 7. For wee cannot ſerue God, unleſſe wee obſerue the duties of the ſecond table, namely, in abſtaining from all violence and fraudulent dealing: for he who either deceiues, or offers violence to his neighbours, doth alſo therewithall offer violence vnto God himſelfe. To bee ſhort, the Prophets meaning is, to teach vs the true meanes to attaine repentance: firſt, in caſting off all hypocriſie, and in reiecting all inuentions of men, the ſeruants of God doe giue themſelues to the duties of brotherly loue.

The meanes to attaine true repentance.

I 2

I will direct their worke.] Some expound, The reward of their worke. But I rather thinke heereby are vnderſtood all the enterpriſes of this life, vnto which the Lord promiſeth an happie ſucceſſe. That which men purpoſe in themſelues to doe, comes not to a good end, either in regard they neglect to aſke counſell of God, or becauſe they doe not things vnder his conduct and leading. And therefore they worthily beare the puniſhment of their boldneſſe: for they either truſt in their own counſels, or depend vpon chances. Now in any of all theſe things there is not ſo much as a dramme of *truth*, but onely a deceiueable ſhadow of it. On the other ſide, it is no man-

Why mens affaires haue commonly ill ſucceſſe.

well if all things prosper well in their hands, that are gouerned and directed by the holie Ghost, and doe whollie cast both themselves and their affaires vpon the prouidence of the almightie: for all prosperitie doth absolute-lic flow from his onely blessing.

Moreouer, by the word *truth* is vnderstood an equall course: for the vnbeleeuers are sometimes puffed vp with a worldly ioy, but it forthwith vanishes into smoke. In the end of the verse hee shewes the cause of this stabilitie; namely, God doth not only guide them with his hand for once, and so away: but directs them in their way continually. Loe here the solid stay and vpholding of our perseverance: to wit, in that he vouchsafeth to make an euertlasting covenant with vs; where- in he binds himselfe voluntarily; and freelic bestowes all things vpon vs, albeit in truth he owes vs nothing at all.

Verf. 9. *And their seed shall be knowne among the Gentiles, and their buds among the people. All that see them shall know them, that they are the seede whom the Lord hath blessed.*

An ampli-
fication touch-
ing the en-
largement of
the Church.

THE Prophet discourseth here more clearely touching the aduancement and growth of the Church which was then shut vp within a narrow scantling, and in an out corner of the world, and were afterwards much diminished and lopped: as wee haue seene in the first and tenth Chapters. *Isaiah* then speakes of the Church, which after so many diminishings shall spread againe ouer the whole world, and that in such wise, as she shall be viewed of all nations. And yet this fell not out, nor vnder the reigne of *Salomon* whilst the Iewes flourished in greatest abundance of riches and glorie: 1. King. 10. 21. 27. now this seemed incredible. This is the cause also why the Prophets insist so much in perswading the Iewes, repeating it ouer againe and againe: to wit, that they should not measure this restauration according to their carnall sense, nor to outward appearances.

Quest.
Ans.

Now it may be asked, whē these things came to passe. I answer (as I haue often done) that they began to be accomplished, when the people came home into their countrie: for then, and afterwards in succession of time they tasted many waies of Gods fauour towards them. Yet in regard there were but a few small sparkles of these things to be discerned in those times: therefore the perfect beautie of them shined in Christ, vnder whose kingdome these things were whollie accomplished. For then religion was as it were buried; *Abrahams* posteritie began to sprout; in respect that strangers were by faith ingrafted into the bodie of the elect people. And thus the barbarous nations came to know, that the Iewes were the blessed seed of God: namely, when they vnited themselves vnto them in the same confession of faith. Neither was this only accomplished once, but

is euery day more and more fulfilled. Where- as the Iewes were first preferred, and obtained the chiefe place in Gods covenant, it must be attributed vnto Gods free mercie as *S. Paul* teacheth in Rom. 3. 2. For hauing there shewed that they differ in nothing by nature from the Gentiles, and that hee hath subiected them to the same condemnation with them: he therewithall shewes that they had this excellent priuledge to be the first vnto whome the word and promises of God were giuen. But that all these things proceeded meerelic from Gods free grace, and not from their merits or deserts.

Verf. 10. *I will greatly reioyce in the Lord, and my soule shall be ioyfull in my God: for hee hath clothed me with the garments of saluation; and covered mee with the robe of righteousness: he hath decked mee like a bridegrome, and as a bride tireth her selfe with Iewels.*

THE Prophet here brings in the Church giuing of thanks vnto God, the better to perswade them of the truth of that which he hath said heretofore. And it is a liuely description, as it were, wherein he paints out the thing done in a table, and placeth it before their eyes, that hee might remouee all scruples. For naturally wee are inclined to distrust: and withall so inconstant, that wee will rather giue credit vnto mens dreames, then to the word of God. But touching this kind of confirmation wee haue discoursed both in Chap. 12. 1. and 26. 1. as also in other places.

For he hath clothed me.] Surely these things were yet very farre off. But it was necessarie they should be seene and comprehended by faith. Yea, it is very needfull that wee lift vp our eyes to heauen, when the Prophet preacheth to vs the doctrine of righteousness and saluation. There is nothing visible here, and much lesse can we apprehend so great a felicitie: seeing all things are still bending towards a dissolution. But in regard that euen at this day such a beauty, as this appeares nor in the Church, which (for the most part) on the contrarie is vnder the horror of the crosse, and therefore contemptible to all the world: it is needfull here that faith should come betweene, which comprehends celestially all and inuisible things.

To what men
are naturally
inclined.

Justice is ioyned with saluation, in regard the one cannot be separated from the other. These similitudes of garments & robes, are well enough knowne: and it is as much as if the Church should haue said, that *injustice* and *saluation* were giuen her together. Seeing it is the Lord then who distributes these benefits, let vs conclude in our selues, that it is onelie he, of whom we must aske them, and none but he, from whom we must expect them. In these words, *he hath decked me*, there is a figuratiue kind of speech, which they think to be taken from the Priests garments: for which cause some haue descanted here vpon the Priesthood

priesthood of Christ. But as I thinke, the Prophet meant not to speake so subtilly, in vsing the similitudes of the bride & bridegroom. The Church was in miserable plight before, and euey one contemned her as a *uife diuorced from her husband*. But he hauing receiued her into fauour againe, *shee shines vs ish wonderfull beausie*. And the place in Hosea, 2. 20. answers vnto this. Such an ornament was giuen at the coming of Christ, and we also receiue it daily, when the Lord *clothes vs with righteousnesse and saluation*. But all these things shall bee fully accomplished at Christs last comming, as we haue often said.

Verſ. 11. *For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden cauſeth to grow that which is ſowne in it: ſo the Lord will cauſe righteousneſſe to grow, and praife before all the heathen.*

THE Prophet confirmes the former promises, by another goodly similitude: for he brings the Lewes to the ordinarie power of God, which shines in his creatures. Wee see that the earth brings forth her bud euerie yeere; the *gardens grow greene* after they haue bene *sown vs ish seedes*: to be short, the grasse and plants which in winter seemed as good as dead, doe reuiue againe in the spring time, and recouer new strength. Now these are in-

fallible testimonies of Gods power, and of the good will which hee beares vs. Seeing these things then come thus ordinarily to passe, should men doubt thereof? Hath hee giuen this *vertue and power vnto the earth*, and will he not much more manifest the same for the deliuerance of his people? Will not hee cause *the elect seede to bud*, and bring forth; which as he hath promised, shall alwaies remaine in the world?

[Before all the Gentiles.] Hee shewes againe that the bounds of the Church shall no more bee so narrow as they were; because the Lord will cause her to replenish the whole world. Afterwards he mentions *righteousnesse*, which was fully reuealed at such time as the Lord redeemed his people: but Gods *righteousnesse* did then especially appeare, when Christ was manifested vnto the world. Not that he concealed it till that time, but in regard men attained not to such a cleere knowledge of it. It is as much then as if he had said; The Lord will so deliuer and restore his Church, *that all shall know his righteousnesse*: for deliuerance is an excellent testimonie thereof.

He addes *praife*, in respect that such a benefit ought to be accompanied with thanksgiuings: for the end of righteousness is Gods glory. And therefore he exhorts vs to beware of ingratitude, seeing it were too vnworthy a thing to haue our lippes shut vp, after the receiuing of so many benefits from God.

I
2

THE LXII. CHAPTER.

Verſ. 1. *For Zions ſake I will not hold my tongue, and for Ieruſalems ſake I will not reſt, vntill the righteousneſſe thereof breake forth as the light, and the ſaluation thereof as a burning lampe.*

The causes of these oft repetitions.



In regard that this sorrowfull exile approached neere, which should in a maner vtterly extinguish the name of this people, it was needefull for the faithfull to bee confirmed and hardened with many words, that in sure and steadfast confidence, they might bee supported with these promises, vnder the heauie burthen of the Crosse. In this verse the Prophet discharging that office which was committed vnto him, plainly protests, *that hee will no way be idle* in the performance of his dutie; neither *will he cease to speake*, till he hath cheered *up the hearts of the faithfull in the hope of their saluation to come*, that they might know and bee perswaded that God would deliuer his Church. For himselfe (good man) might be discouraged in beholding the peoples incredulitie, and might be driuen to forsake all,

in regard he knew things would grow euerie day worse and worse. Adde also, that he well foresaw this horrible vengeance to bee at hand. But as one vtterly neglecting all these incumbrances, hee notwithstanding *vowes* a constant perseuerance in his course: to signifie vnto all, that *neither the common calamitie, nor yet the peoples dissidence*, should be able to hinder God from the performance of his promises, when the appointed time thereof was come. Now it was needfull that these things should be often repeated vnto them, because the peruerſitie of our minde is such, that we presently forget Gods promises.

In that he saith, *hee will not hold his peace*: hee therewithall admonisheth *others also of their duties*, that they might be courageous, and with assurance of faith to wait for their redemption, though it were deferred for a time: yea, that their *hope* should not cease to answer Gods voice, which sounds continually in their eares. We haue daily experience of the necessitie of this dutie, when Satan labours with might and maine to turne our feete out of the right way. Thus then the Prophet not onely shewes what hee himselfe would doe, but by his example teacheth what end all faithfull Ministers should propound vnto themselves; to wit, wholly to imploy their vtmost inducours for the benefit of the Church, For when he saith, *for Zions sake*,

What ought to be our principall care.

Hhh 3

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it is to shew that our principall care ought to extend it selfe about the procuring of the perpetuall safetie and prosperous estate of the Church: as also that such deserue not the titles of good and faithfull Pastors, vnlesse they haue taken the care of her welfare so to heart, that they refuse no paines whatsoever, for the bringing thereof to passe.

Some referre these words to praiers: but I had rather referre it to preaching; and so the sense agrees best, namely, that the Prophet will not be discouraged for any incumbrance or iniurie, that he should meete withall in the way: neither would he suffer his zeale to bee cooled, for any impediment whatsoever, from pursuing his office of publishing that which God had inioined him, touching the Churches deliuerance, For had he liued vntill this wofull desolation fell out, no doubt but hee should haue suffered many outrages, by reason of the multitudines infidelitie, as well as other Prophets did. But what euer came, hee protests that he is fortified with such inuincible constancie, that he will neuer be ashamed for any disgraces that men shall offer him, but will manfully hold on his course. By this phrase of speech also he shewes, that his prophecies are all true, and therefore addes the more authoritic vnto them, that after his death they might neuer cease to found in the cares and hearts of the faithfull.

Hee takes *righteousnesse* for the Churches right, which during the time of her affliction, seemed to be condemned. Her *righteousnesse* braue forth and appeared then, when shee was restored vnto her perfection, and had recouered her first estate: for this *righteousnesse* was hid as long as they were captiues.

Saluation is coupled with righteousnesse: for whom God *iustifies* or maintains their right, such recouer their *saluation* by the same means. Hence we gather that wee are most miserable and succourlesse, whilst God withdraws his grace, in regard of our forwardnesse. The Prophet therefore in other places hath attributed that *righteousnesse* vnto God, which he now faith belongs vnto the church. Wee are vndone then when we are deprived of Gods grace; that is to say, whilst wee lie sporting in our sinnes, and God manifests his iust iudgement in punishing vs for them.

Moreouer, the verbe *to braue forth* signifies, that the righteousnesse of the Church was hidden and buried as it were for a time. Truly shee deserued to haue been consumed and brought to nothing before God. Nay, more then that, her great iniquities were come to such an height, that there was nothing to be expected but the iust vengeance of God. Verily it was in respect of men, who gaue the Church thus afflicted, for lost; and by their pride and crueltie, deiected her euen almost to the bottome of hell. To be short, he compares her with the world, in respect whereof she is righteous, when hauing been purged from her filthinesse, God beginnes to take her cause into his owne hands. By this then the Prophet aduertiseth vs alwaies to hope well touching the restauration of the

Church, though for a time she be plunged into an horrible darknes, yea euen into death it selfe. For howsoeuer for a moment she seemes to be ouerwhelmed and forlorne; yet hath she God still for her defence in the heauens, who after he hath corrected her in measure, (as it is in Chap. 27. 8.) will at last manifest the care he hath ouer her. For it must needs be that his righteousnesse should *braue forth* and be manifested; namely, in the saluation of such as he hath chosen for his people and heritage.

Verf. 2. *And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousnesse, and all Kings thy glorie: and thou shalt bee called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.*

Now he shewes more fully, why hee protested before that hee would not hold his tongue; euen becaufe the faithfull might bee assured that saluation was not promised them in vaine. *Glory* is heere taken for saluation. In this place wee see with what argument the Prophets must furnish themselves to preferre their constancie; to wit, that the Lord is faithfull, who will in the end accomplish that which he hath promised, albeit hee deserue for a time.

The word *Kings*, serues for amplification: as if he should say, Not only the commonaltie and meaner sort should see and admire the *glorie* of God; but that euen *Kings* themselves, who were wont proudly to contemne that which in it selfe is precious and honourable: for their owne glory so blinds them, and their greatnesse so bewitcheth all their senses, that they cannot willingly acknowledge any dignitie but their owne.

The *new name* is taken heere for magnificence: for the people were in such wise scattered and dispersed, that there was no certaine body of them to be seene, but seemed as vtterly forlorne. I grant the multitude of them which were carried into captiuitie was very great; yet in respect they were mingled here and there among the Babylonians, they were rent one from another, as a body diuided into many peeces: so as they could not well bee said to retaine so much as *the name* of a people any longer: which also they had beene forewarned of. But at their returne home, they beganne to bee knit into a bodie againe: and thus recouered that *name*, of which they had been deprived. Notwithstanding *new* is taken for vnaccustomed. As if the Prophet should haue said, your *glorie* shall bee singular, and such as was not heard of before. Which we know in processe of time came to passe. For this handful of people which inhabited the country by way of entreatie, were not able to get vnto themselves such a magnificence by any greatnesse, or signes of honour: but at length after the preaching of the Gospell, the *name* of the Iewes was both knowne and renowned.

Now *Isaiah* confirms that which was hard

The reason of the Prophets vehemencie in verf. 1.

Kings do not willingly acknowledge any dignitie but their owne.

hard to bee beleued, by adding that *God* ſhould be the author of this *glorie*. For it was not in the power of man thus to raiſe vp the poore Church, being then couered ouer with ſhame and diſhonour: but *God who raiſeth the needie out of the duſt*, was able in a moment to adorne and beautife his Church with new honour. For example, was there ſo much as any face of a Church to bee ſeene amongſt vs within theſe 40. yeeres? The Lord had indeede a ſmall ſeede (ſcattered here and there) but it was ſo conſuled and couered, that there could be no viſible Church of God perceived. And yet hee gat his Church a name, when it pleaſed him to gather the ſame by the preaching of the Goſpell. This ſo admirable a worke of God then, ought to confirme vs in this point, namely, that God will neuer utterly abandon his church. For albeit the wicked do rent & reare vs in peeces with curſed ſpeakings, and that they ſlander and abhorre vs; endeuouring by all meanes poſſible to make vs an abomination in the eyes of the world: yet let vs remember that they cannot plucke *Gods righteouſneſſe from him*, but that he will make our *glorie to ſhine here below*, ſeeing hee hath bene pleaſed to write our names in heauen: Luk. 10. 20.

Orlers expound this more ſubtilly, namely, that in ſtead of being called Iſraelites, they ſhould be called Chriſtians. But I rather ſuppoſe, that the former ſenſe ſutes beſt with the ſcope of the Prophets text: as alſo with that language which he is wont to vſe. Moreouer, we ought diligently to obſerue and marke theſe phraſes of ſpeech, which are peculiar vnto the Prophets; that wee may acquaint our ſelues with their ſtile. In ſumme, *Iſaiah* meant to ſay, that the people, which ſeemed to be rooted out, ſhall be reſtored: and ſhal receiue a *new name*, not from men, but from God.

Verſ. 3. *Thou ſhalt alſo be a crowne of glorie in the hand of the Lord, and a royall diadem in the hand of thy God.*

HE proſecutes the ſame argument; which wee are not to wonder at. For, to iudge thereof according to humane reaſon, what man could euer haue conceiued in his mind, or by hope expected a thing of ſo great conſequence? Beſides, his meaning was by theſe words to raiſe vp the hearts of the faithfull to looke towards the kingdome of Chriſt: which it behooued him to beautife and adorne with theſe glorious titles, by how much the more it was then obſcure and farre remote from them. For it was needfull to preuent a twofold danger, leſt the Iewes in ſeeing themſelues ſo farre recoiled backe from their firſt dignitie, ſhould neither deſpiſe the grace of God, nor reſt themſelues in theſe ſmall and firſt beginnings. And thus in ſetting light by Chriſt, they ſhould ſuffer themſelues to be glued onelic to the commodities of this life preſent. It is the Prophets drift then, as you ſee, to aduertife the Iewes, that their returne home ſhall

be as a preparatiue to this honour, which they were to looke for in the manifeſtation of Chriſt in the fleſh.

As touching the firſt member; theſe poore baniſhed exiles, and bondmen could apprehend nothing at all but matter of deſpaire, in conſidering the outward eſtate of things: yea, after they were returned and ſetled in their countrie, yet they proceeded but ſlowlie forward in building of the Temple. Hee therefore ſtirres them vp to looke vnto God, that from him they might expect that *glorie* which now was hidden, in reſpect of mans reaſon. And in as much as they were aſſured that they were deare and precious in his ſight, that they ſhould content themſelues therewith, till he ſhould more liberallie endow them by the hand of Chriſt.

Hee calles the Church the *crowne of God*, in reſpect that he will haue his glorie to ſhine in vs. Wherein wee haue great cauſe with admiration to conſider of the ineffimable goodneſſe of God towards vs: who though we are by nature corrupt and vnclane, and more vile then the filth in the chancell; yet he vouchſafes *to adorne vs*, as to make vs the *diadem of his kingdom*. Let vs be prouoked then by this goodneſſe of God to hunger and thirſt after holineſſe of life, that ſo his image may daily bee reformed in vs more and more.

Verſ. 4. *It ſhall be no more ſaid vnto thee, forſaken; neither ſhall it be ſaid any more to thy land, deſolate: but thou ſhalt bee called Hephzi-bath, and thy land Benlab. For the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land ſhall haue an husband.*

HE now meetes with a difficultie which might trouble the minds of the faithfull, whileſt they ſaw themſelues reiected and leſt deſtitute: and yet in the meane while had theſe glorious titles giuen them, of a *crowne* and a *diadem*. For might not theſe titles ſeeme ridiculous; ſeeing the Iewes were hated and abhorred of all nations, yea now and then their enemies trampled them vnder feete; and no ſuccour appeared: and yet notwithstanding that they ſhould be exalted vp to heauen, and *inloſed in the hand of God*? Thus his meaning is to ſay, that howſoever the people were for a time, as a *woman leſt and forſaken of her husband*: yet they ſhould be reſtored againe in ſuch wife, that their *name and condition ſhould be changed*. As if he ſhould ſay, *this ſhall bee no perpetuall diſorce, for God will at length marrie thee againe vnto himſelfe*. Howſoever the Church then ſeemes to be contemptible, and in outward appearance bee like a woman reiected and put away, yet will the Lord one day put an end vnto her miſerie and calamities.

But withall the Prophet teacheth, that this proceeds onely from Gods *deſire*; that is to ſay, from his free fauour: leſt any thing ſhould bee attributed to the merits or dignitie of men.

Hhh 4

1. Sam. 3. 8.

God will neuer forſake his Church.

God ineffimable goodneſſe ſingularly ſeefoo. th.

The preuentiod of an objection.

The ſame argument further proſecuted.

Though for a time the Church ſeeme contemptible, yet ſhall ſhe not remaine ſo alwayes.

men. To which purpose hee saith in Hosea; *I will marrie thee vnto me in mercy and compassion.* Hof. 2. 19. Thus then the Prophet shewes that their prosperitie shall spring from none other fountaine then this, namely, because God will be pleased of his owne infinit loue, freely to be reconciled with those whom hee hath reiected. Now howsoeuer this appertaines properly to the Church; yet generally are we hence to learne, that Cities and Kingdomes also are restored to their first estate, by the fauour and good will of God: which whilest his wrath and indignation lay vpon them, seemed as vtterly forlorne.

The Prophet then discouers vnto the Iews, the originall of all calamities, in witnessiug that their happinesse rests onely in Gods being *well pleased* with them. For hence wee may gather, that God was displeas'd with them before, whilest they were afflicted. Moreouer, the similitude of *marriage*, whereby he notes out the peoples restauration, is very notable, and contains two points in it. First, that the discord betwene God & his Church shall cease. Why so? Because she that before was *divorced*, shall be receiued againe into the place of a *wife*, Gods anger being pacified; and secondly, that the multitudes of the people shall abolish the shame of their widowhood. For the land is married with her inhabitants, as the trees with the vines: on the other side, it is called a widow, when it is destitute of those who were wont to inhabit there.

The good pleasure of the Lord is in thee.] *Isaiah* repeates and confirms that which wee said euen now; to wit, that it is of *Gods free fauour*, when the Church is restored and seled in her first estate, and that the land receiues her inhabitants. For if he turnes his louing countenance away from vs, and reiects vs, there is nothing to be expected but desolation: neither can we then expect any thing that shall doe vs good, either from the power or policies of men.

Verf. 5. *For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sonnes marrie thee, and as a bridegroom is glad of the bride, so shall thy God reioyce ouer thee.*

This verse onely contains the exposition and confirmation of the former. But there seemes to bee some repugnancie betwene them, because in the latter member hee makes God the sole husband of his Church; and in the first he assignes her many. Yet the solution is easie: for when we speake of this marriage of the Church, she hath but one husband, that is, God; who alwaies attributes this title to himselfe. Now this is accomplished in Christ, to whom the Pastors *marrie and couple the Church, as a chaste and pure virgin*; as Saint Paul speakes, 2. Cor. 11. 2. Notwithstanding, this hinders not that this similitude of the marriage should not be transferred to expresse the vnitie of faith, which all the children of God haue with their mother the Church: yea, God is so her husband, that

yet hee marries her with all nations that are gathered into her: for whilest shee is left destitute of children, she is after a sort left as a desolate and solitarie widow. This therefore is spoken in regard of God, who by his wisdom, ratifying the holy vnion betwene the members of his Church, extends the fruit of this marriage to all the body.

From this verse we must gather, that then the Church of God shall bee truly peopled; that is to say, *shall haue many children when shee shall be married vnto her husband*; namely, vnto God: for at him we must beginne, that he may raigne ouer his Church, and that vnder his conduct we may be gathered into her lap. Then indeed shall this marriage be holy: but if this be wanting, it is not the multitude of people that makes the Church, but rather a filthy brothell house. As in the Papacie, where Gods name roles vp and downe amongst them, and yet his Maiestie is no where more defaced with horrible sacrileges.

Verf. 6. *I haue set watchmen vpon thy walles, O Ierusalem, which all the day and all the night continually shall not cease: yee that are mindfull of the Lord, keepe not silence.*

The Prophet minding to describe the perfect felicitie of Christs kingdom, collectes into a summe all things that belong to the *prosperous and flourishing estate of a Citie or Country*. To the rest of the former benefits then hee adds *garisons and watch*; because the abundance and sufficiency of all things would serue to small purpose, vnlesse we were well fortified against the rage of the enemy. Hee therefore shewes, that the Lord will not onely furnish the Church with all things necessary, but will also plant sufficient gardes about her, to defend her from the eues & enemies: that thus it might appeare how God is the author both of the inward and outward blessed life.

Shall not cease.] To hold ones peace, is heere taken to be quiet. As if he should say; They shall euermore be vpon their watch, to espie a far off imminent dangers.

But in the next place he shewes what these watchmen are; to wit, those that are *mindfull of the Lord*: that is, such as haue his name in an honourable estimation. The Angels also may bee put in the number of these *watchmen*, for we know that is their office: Psal. 91. 11. But in regard they watch willingly and cheerefully for the saluation of the Church, Heb. 1. 14. and haue no neede of being quickened vp by exhortations, the Prophet directes his speech to other watchmen.

The verbe which he vseth is somewhat ambiguous. For sometimes it signifies Remember, and sometimes To call to minde: either of both expositions sute not ill. But me thinks the Prophet meant simply to say; that these *watchmen* should be *Ministers of God*, to celebrate his name. Some translate; *I hope* which

Doctrin.

God is the author not onely of inward graces, but of outward defences.

Simile.

An exposition & confirmation of the former Verfe.

which publiſh or preach the Lord. But this is too conſtrained, and breaks off the Prophets ſentence: for ſuch expoſitors keep not themſelves to the ſimilitude of watchmen of a Citie, which the Prophet here vſeth. Albeit indeed his meaning was to teach without any figure; that the Church ſhall be freed from all dangers, in regard ſhee hath God for the protector of her ſituation.

And yet reſpect muſt alwaies be had to the nature of Chriffs kingdome here on earth. For it is not maintained, neither by weapons, nor force of men: but as it is in it ſelfe ſpiritual; ſo is it upheld by ſpiritual armour, and defences. The Lord then will haue his Miniſters, whoſe ſeruiſe hee will vſe for the preſeruation of his Church by the ſword of the ſpirit, which is the word of God. ſhee ſhall be ſafe lie kept then, not by mans helpe; but by the ſecret and ſpiritual power of God.

And the Prophet in ſaying, *You that remember the Lord*, expoundeth himſelfe. Now howſoeuer this ſentence appertaines to all the faithfull, who are commanded as much as in them is to extoll the name of God in all places: yet hee alludes eſpeciallie to the Priests, who being public officers were to leade the way into others, and to bee giuen withall their affections to the ſetting forth of Gods praifes. Beſides, the Paſtors are here admoniſhed of their duties: for it is not enough to feede the Lords ſocke, vnleſſe therewithall they defend the ſame againſt the aſſaults of wolues and robbers. *They muſt be vigilant then, and ſtand day and night in their watch-tower*, if they meane to diſcharge their duties as they ought. The Lord forbids them to be ſilent: for he would haue them carefull and diligent in their places. In which hee ſhewes what great care he hath ouer his hurch. This text alſo witneſſeth that it is a ſingular fauour of God, when he ſends faithfull Paſtors amongſt vs that are careful of our ſaluation. For we lie open to infinite dangers, and are by and by inuironed with Satans nets, if the Lord preferue vs not by his ſuccours. We ought therefore euermore to begge of him that hee would furniſh vs with meete helpes, which he knows to be neceſſarie for vs.

Verſ. 7. *And giue him no reſt till hee repaire, and vntill he ſet vp Ieruſalem, the praife of the world.*

Hitherunto the Prophet hath diſcourſed touching the office and dutie of teaching. But becauſe this would not ſuffice without prayer were added, hee exhorts the Miniſters thereto. For as I take it the particle *him*, muſt be referred vnto God. We ought therefore to be inſtant, and to importune y Lord continually, that he may be pleaſed to giue good ſucceſſe vnto our labors, which otherwiſe would become vnfruitfull. So then whileſt we ſhall diligently employ our ſelues in preaching the word, and forcible reſiſt and withſtand the prauiſes of Sa-

tan with all our might, let vs learne therewithall forthwith, to turne our hearts towards God, beſeeching him by humble prayer, that hee would not ſuffer our labours to be in vaine. Euen as in the beginning of the Chapter then, hee referred ſilence vnto doctrine, ſaying, *That hee would not hold his tongue*: ſo in this place hee referres it vnto prayers, by which we obtaine ſome fruit from the doctrine. Yea the very Angels whet on our diligence by their example to this affection of prayer: For one of them, as we reade in Zach. 1. 12. praies with great ſeruenſe for the reſtauration of the Church.

Till hee repaire.] Hence let vs gather that theſe are two diſtinct benefits, firſt, in enjoying faithfull paſtors which watch for the ſaluation of the Church: ſecondly, that the Church is reſtored and vpheld in her eſtate by their paines. But God who ſpeakes here, doth properly attribute y beſtowing of theſe benefits to himſelfe, as in many other places. How ſhall they preach, ſaith S. Paul, vnleſſe they be ſent: Rom. 10. 15. It is Gods peculiar office then to eſtabliſh good paſtors: for otherwiſe no man would cuer bee ſet to exerciſe ſo difficult & inſupportable a charge: 2. Cor. 2. 16. Againe, hee onlie ſets forward the reſtauration of the Church by their means, for their endeouours would proue vtterlie vaine and fruitleſſe, if the Lord gaue them not good ſucceſſe. Here we ſee then, that mens external labours, are ioyned to the efficacy of the holie Ghoſt. For albeit the Lord himſelf alone begins, and makes an end, yet hee vſeth inſtruments by whom hee ſerues his turne for the erecting & building vp of his Church. This admoniſheth vs, not to be out of hart, no, though we ſee nothing but ruines, and a woſull ſcattering. But let vs pray that the Lord would bring all conſuſions into a right order: which he for his part hath alſo promiſed to doe.

Where he addes, *vntill he ſet vp Ieruſalem*, it is as much to ſay, As to cauſe the Churches beautie to appeare: ſo as matter of ioy may proceed thence. For as long as wee onlie feele Gods ſeueritic, wee become mute and confounded: but when he ſrees vs from trouble, therewithall he reuiues vs and opens our mouths in furniſhing vs with matter of praile and thankſgiuing.

Verſ. 8. *The Lord hath ſworne by his right hand, and by his ſtrong arme, ſurely I will no more giue thy corne to be meate for thine enemies, and ſurely the ſonnes of the ſtrangers ſhall not drinke thy wine, for the which thou haſt laboured.*

Iſaiah proſecutes the ſimilitudes which hee vſed before. For in regard Chriffs kingdome could not otherwiſe be deſcribed, by reaſon of the ſhallowneſſe of our capacities, it was requiſite it ſhould be repreſented before vs vnder ſuch borrowed ſpeeches. Euen as heretofore then, hee hath promiſed

Prayer muſt
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Paſtors in
his Church.

The nature
of Chriffs
kingdome.

Paſtors muſt
not onely
feede but alſo
defend the
Lords ſocke.

To the dutie
preaching, he
addes prayer.

*Or, if I
giue.

The ſame ſi-
militudes
proſecuted.

Verf. 3, 4.
Verf. 6.

promised abundance of all good things: and secondly, a faithfull gard, who should carefully watch for the good estate of the elect: so in this place hee promiseth *peace and tranquillitie*, which the faithfull should quietly inioy, and should *never be disappointed thereof*. As if he should say; Whatsoever thou possessedst heeretofore, was exposed to pillage and to the spoile: but now all things shall be secured vnto thee, and thou shalt be abundantly satisfied *with thy wheate, and with thy wine*. In a word, *thy felicitie shall bee full of tranquillitie*.

But in regard our pueruositie is such, that we cannot beleue in God, though he makes vs neuer so large and liberall promises; therefore *Isaiah brings in the Lord binding himselfe with an oath*: for the Lord stoopes so low vnto vs, as to sweare, the more to reprove our distrust and obstinacie. *Now he sweares by himselfe*, because hee hath no greater to sweare by; as the Apostle speaks, Heb. 6. 16. Now he also mentions *the right hand of God*: that is to say, his power; because it was fitting for this purpose. As if hee should say; *If there bee any power in mee, then will I manifest the same for your saluation: and lest your mindes should wax drowie in so difficult a thing, I sweare by my invincible hand, that conquers all things, that you shall remaine safe and sound by my meanes, whatsoeuer dangers can befall you to the contrary*. As oft then as hee promiseth vs saluation, let vs forthwith bethinke vs of his *verue and power*.

If *to giue*, is a phrase of speech wherein more is vnderstood then that which is vttered: and it teacheth vs with what holinesse and feare we ought to vse an oath. The words themselves are as much in effect as if he had said; Let mee not be beleued hereafter, if the euent of these things doe not manifest the truth of these promises.

When hee promiseth a peaceable inioying of *wheat and wine*, it is to shew, that when the Church is deslituted of them, that it falls not out by chance, but by the iust iudgement of God. For as oft as the enemies spoile and rob vs of them, let vs assure our selues that this falls out by Gods permission, according as he threatens vs in his Law: Deut. 28. 33. As on the contrary, it is by the speciall blessing of his hand, when every one sits in peace vnder his owne vine, and vnder his owne figgetree: 1. King. 4. 25.

Verf. 9. *But they that haue gathered it, shall eat it, and praise the Lord, and the gatherers thereof shall drinke it in the Courts of my sanctuary.*

See heere both the exposition and confirmation of the former sentence. For hauing protested that hee would no more suffer the goods of the church to be exposed for a pray, he now addes, that shee shall inioy them. In the meane while he shewes, that we may iustly call wheat and wine *ours*, when wee haue obtained them by our honest labour: for those who rob others of their bread, or get it by

vnlawfull meanes, hold it not by any right from the Lord; neither can they attribute goods gotten, to his blessing, as if they iustly possessed them. To which also, answers that in Psal. 228. 2. *Thou shalt ease the labour of shine hands: thou shalt be blessed, and is shall goe vrvell with thee*.

But seeing he assignes food to such as shall till the ground; wherefore saith he, that they shall giue thanks to God? Wherefore should men praise the Lord when they reape the come, and gather in the grapes by their labour and industrie? This might seeme to be but a fained thanksgiving, seeing it is attributed to mens good husbandry, and that God should deserue no thanks for that which a man hath achieved by his honest paines. But wee must note that after the Prophet hath taught them the lawfull meanes of getting their liuing, he therewithall addes, that our labour shall be in vaine, if the Lord himselfe doe not by his blessing of the same, furnish vs with things necessarie. For all that we inioy, belongs of right to him: and to him alone, ought we to giue the honor of all that which we haue gotten.

When he addes, in *my holy courts*: he alludes to the solemnitie of the sacrifices. They might drinke any where else: it was in euery ones power to eat at home. But he alludes to the custome which they held in sacrificing their first fruits vnto God, at what time they consecrated the reuenues of the whole yeere, as the Law inioined them: Leuit. 2. 12. and 23. 10. And this sentence is very frequent in the bookes of *Moses*; Thou shalt eat and reioice in the presence of thy God: Deut. 12. 18.

Verf. 10. *Goe thorow, goe thorow the gates: prepare you the way for the people: cast vp, cast vp the way, and gather out the stones, and set up the standard for my people.*

From the former words he concludes, that they shall freely passe thorow the gates of the Citie, which were either shut vp, or broken before: *shut vp*, during the siege of the encmie: *broken*, when the Citie was destroyed and rased euen with the ground. Thus his meaning is then, that the Citie shall be so restored, that the inhabitants thereof shall be gathered in great troopes, and that they shall often passe to and fro.

Some thinke that this speech is directed to the Pastors, namely, they should enter into the gates, and passe thorow before others, as their leaders. But the sentence is generall and figuratiue; wherein hee compares the Church to a Citie well peopled, which notwithstanding had been laid waste for a time, and desolate, as Ierusalem was. Others descant more wittily, and say; that the gates of the Church shall be open, when remission of finnes is there preached; by meanes whereof, God calls men vnto himself. But if we will haue the Prophets true meaning, then let vs note that all this is spoken figuratiuely, as wee touched before.

Cleanse

Why God
bindes his
promises
with an oath.

With what
reuerence we
ought to vse
an oath.

God the
author both of
weale and
woe.

An exposition
& confirmation
of the former
sentence.

Obiect.

Anf.

*Or, paue it
with.

Cleanſe the way for the people.] See wherein the office of the Paſtors properly conſiſts, but the Prophet hath ſpoken generally, and addreſſeth his ſpeech to all ſuch whoſe ſervice God vſeth to prepare the way for his people. Then, he ſpoke to the Medes and Perſians, through whoſe means the Lord gaue the Jewes paſſage to returne home, but afterwards he comprehends all others, by whom God reſtored his Church. Now he commands all men with authoritie to *cleanſe and make the way plaine*, that the Jewes might know how euery impediment ſhould eaſily be removed, and that their greateſt enemies ſhould forthwith yeeld obedience to Gods commandement: and herewithall he alſo bids the faithfull to *ſit themſelves in good earneſt for their iourney*, as if many workmen were already preſt to ſecond them. And the weight which is in the repetition of the words ought to be noted, for they ſerue for the further confirmation of the matter.

Paue it with ſtones.] The verb *Sakal*, ſignifies as wel to take away the ſtones as to paue. And I had rather take it in this latter ſignification, though the expoſitors for the moſt part be of the contrarie opinion. Hereunto appertaines that which he ſaith touching the ſetting vp of the *ſtandard*. For his meaning is, that the nations ſhall as readily obey Gods commandement, as the ſubiects doe their Princes. For they aſſemble and runne together when the *enſigne* is diſplaid, and employ their endeours to bring back the people. He ſpeakes very magnificentlie then of Gods power, that the Jewes might be well aſſured to be reſtored to their firſt eſtate one day.

Verſ. 11. *Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed to the ends of the world: tell the daughter of Zion, Behold thy Saviour commeth: behold his wages is with him, and his worke is before him.*

The Prophet meant to ſay, that ſo Lord in working miraculoſlie beyond all hope and conceit of fleſh and blood will cauſe all nations to know, that this was done by his commandemens. For ſome might obiect, How can it be that the nations who now proudly reſiſt God ſhould come to yeeld him obedience? He answers, Becauſe the Lord will *proclaime* your returne, in ſuch wiſe, that they ſhall vnderſtand how you muſt be reſtored by his commandement.

But as touching that he addes, *Tell the daughter of Zion*, it properly appertaines to the Prophets and Miniſters of the word, to whom the Lord giues this charge, to promiſe ſaluation and deliuerance vnto his Church. Hence wee gather that theſe promiſes ought not to be reſtrained to one particular time, but muſt bee extended euen to all ages, till the ſecond appearing of Chriſt. For if wee beginne at the returne out of Babylon into Iudea, wee muſt paſſe along ſtill to the coming of Chriſt, becauſe then this prophecie was truly fulfilled, and the end of the deliuc-

rance came; becauſe the Saviour then appeared, when the grace of God was publiſhed by the Goſpell. In a word, he affirms that Gods voice ſhall one day ſound from the Eaſt to the Weſt, and ſhall not be vnderſtood of one people onely, but of all. Now this voice is; *Behold, thy Saviour commeth*: which we know is the proper voice of the Goſpell. He therefore inioines the Teachers of the Church to raiſe vp the hearts of the faithfull, *with the coming of the Lord*; though vnto the people it ſeemed a thing far remote.

But this promiſe belongs chiefly to Chriſtes kingdome, who fully and perfectly did accompliſh theſe things, for he indeed ſhewed himſelfe to be the ſaviour of the world, as we haue ſcene heretofore in Chap. 40. 10. And left any ſeruple might remaine, he furniſheth the Lord with power, when he ſhall appeare, as it is in that very place which we before alleaged; for hee vſeth the very ſame words there which are heere mentioned, as if he meant to ſhew, that as ſoon as it ſhould pleaſe God to ſtretch forth his hand, the effect will in a moment appeare: for whileſt he either ceaseth or deſerres, fleſh and blood eſteemes him idle. Wee alſo ſee that many fantaſticall ſpirits forge I know not what diuinitie, as if they meant to paint out a dead image. The Prophet therefore very aptly addes the *worke* and *reward* before God, to ſhew that he is the juſt iudge of the world in the time of neede.

Verſ. 12. *And they ſhall call them, the holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, and thou ſhalt be named a Citie ſought out, and not forſaken.*

HE ſets forth the benefit of the Lords comming, namely, that in ſhewing how his elect are as deare vnto him as his owne heritage, he will make it knowne to all the world that the couenant of Adoption by him contracted with *Abraham*, is not in vaine: for this cauſe he calles them *the holy people*, in regard the Lord had ſeparated and conſecrated them vnto himſelfe, for though he gouerned all the nations of the world, yet he vouchſafed to chuſe the poſteritie of *Abraham*, to haue a ſpeciall care thereof. And in this ſenſe God meant to ſay, that his people *ſhall be holy*, when he ſhall appeare their *saviour* and *redeemer*. And as the people are called prophane when they be plunged in their dregs, being afflicted and vexed by the ſcoffings of the wicked: ſo on the contrarie they are ſaid to be *holy*, when the Lord ſhewes himſelfe by effects to be the God of their ſaluation, which came to paſſe in their wonderfull deliuerance, for then God ſhewed indeed that he remembered his *holy couenant* touching his heritage which he had (as mans reaſon deemed) utterly reiected and caſt off. For in theſe words *ſought out* and *not forſaken*, we muſt note the oppoſition betweene the time wherein the Lord ſued out this diuorce againſt his people: and that wherein he reconciled thoſe againe vnto himſelfe whom he had put away.

The fruit of the Lords comming.

Chap. 57. 1. 4.

An obiectiō preuented.

Obiect.

Anſ.

Doctrinē.

THE LXIII. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Who is this that commeth from Edom with red garments from Bozrah? he is glorious in his apparrell, and walketh in his great strength. I speake in righteousness, and am mightie to saue.*

A prevention of a dangerous temptation.



THE expositors Christian haue misinterpreted this place, as if that which is heere said should appertaine vnto Christ, seeing the Prophet speakes simple of God himselfe, and thus they haue made a *tes-*

sus died all ouer with red, in regard he was thorowly bathed in his owne blood which he shed vpon the Crosse. But the Prophet had no such meaning at all. The true and plaine sense is, *That the Lord presents himselfe here clothed with red garments before the people, to aduertise all that he would maintaine the cause of his chosen, and be auenged on their enemies.* For whilst the people of God were pressed with infinite miseries, and that the Idumeans, with the rest of their aduersaries (who were as it seemed out of all danger) overflowed in all excess of riot: it might dangerouslie tempt the Iewes to thinke, either that these things were guided by fortune; or that God made light account of his children: or that at least he chastised them: with ouer great seueritie. So then, if God corrected the Iewes because of the contempt of his name and religion; how much more were the *Jdumeans* and other enemies to bee roughlie dealt withall, being the sworne enemies thereof? The Prophet meetes with this so cumbersome a temptation by bringing in God the auenger, Psal. 94. 1. *retuening from the slaughter of the Edomites, as if hee had been stained all ouer with their blood.*

The naturall meaning of this verse.

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The force of interrogations.

Now this description is liuely and full of efficacie, when hee saith, *who is this?* For such an interrogation rauisheth the minds of the hearers into an admiration, and affects them more, then if it had been vttered in plaine termes. The Prophet did the rather vse it, that hee might thereby awaken the Iewes, who were become drecuzie and besotted. We know that the Idumeans were somewhat akin to the Iewes, in regard they were descended from the same ancestors with them. For they were thus called of *Esau*, who was also called *Edom*: Gen. 36. 1. These hauing corrupted the pure worship of God, though they had the same marke of circumcision, notwithstanding persecuted the Iewes most despitefully. And besides, they exasperated the rage of other enemies against the Iewes; manifesting to all what great pleasure they tooke in the ruine of this poore people, as it appears by their egging on of the Babylonians. Remember O Lord, saith the

See Obad. 10. 11.

Church, Psalm. 137. *the children of Edom, who in the day of Ierusalem's ruine, said, downe with it, downe with it euen to the ground.* Thus then the Prophet denounceth, that the Edomites shall also keepe their turne, in being iudged according to their deserts, that none might otherwise thinke, but they should surely be punished for the barbarous crueltie by them exercised against their brethren. For the Lord wil so auenge himselfe of the wicked and enemies of the Church, that hee will thereby shew what care hee hath ouer her.

Now howsoeuer blood doth vsuallie spot and staine him that vanquisheth, yet *Isaiah* affirms that God shall bee glorious in his apparrell, after he hath made hauocke of his enemies. As in chap. 34. 6. we haue seene that the slaughter of the wicked there was compared to the sacrifices, in regard Gods glorie shined therein. For what garment could hee put on more glorious then his iustice? Therefore that he might speake honourable of Gods iust reuengings, hee shewes that the blood wherewith he is besprinkled by the slaughter of these desperate wicked ones, is glorious and excellent. As if hee had said, Thinke not that God resembles any common person: for though hee hee died ouer with blood, yet shall not this hinder, but that his Maiestie and glorie shall shine therein.

The Iewish expositors take the word *ualking* diuerſlie: for some among them referre it to the people whom the Lord should bring backe from the captiuitie: others, to the nations, whom the Lord would transport into other countries, notwithstanding they then seemed to haue a settled habitation. But I thinke it will better sute to the scope of the Prophets text, if we take it absolute. The Prophet then describes the glorious *ualking* of God, and his noble presence, by which he will manifest his admirable power.

I am, that speake.] The Lord himselfe answers: which carries much more maiestie with it, then if the Prophet had spoken in his owne person. And herein he brings the faithful to the former prophesies, to enforce them, that not only Gods righteousnesse and goodnesse, but also his faithfulnesse should appeare in these iudgements. As if he should say, Now you see the accomplishment of that which hitherunto I haue declared vnto you by my seruants. For this effect of my promises, plainly demonstrates that I am true of my word; and that I speake from my heart without faining, so as I will not by any meanes disappoint your expectations. Now the vision of it selfe had not bene forcible enough, vnlesse the Iewes had therewithall bin put in mind of the things they had heard of before. Seeing the end thereof was to settle their hearts vpon the saluation of God, hee

The certainty of the prophesies noted.

hee therewithall attributes vnto himſelfe, an extraordinary power and might to ſaue.

Verſ. 2. *Wherefore is thine apparell red, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine preſſe?*

HE protecuets the ſame argument. But becauſe the bare recitall would not haue been of ſufficient weight, therefore he doth not at once manifeſt from whence this red colour in Gods garments did proceede, but rather continues his *Interrogation* ſtill, that he might the better rouze vp their ſpirits, to the conſideration of ſo rare & vnwonted a thing. For his meaning is to ſay, that this ſprinkling with blood is a matter extraordinary, and not ſcene before. And therefore the ſimilitude of the *preſſer* of grapes, ſutes very well. For *Borab*, which hee mentioned in the firſt verſe, was ſituated in a countie of vines: as if he would haue ſaid, *the grape gatherings* ſhal be much differing fro the old wont: for *blood*, in ſtead of the *iuce of grapes*, ſhall now bee ſqueezed out.

Verſ. 3. *I haue trodden the wine- preſſe alone, and of all the people, there was none with mee: for I will tread them in mine anger, and tread them vnder foot in my wrath, and their blood ſhall be ſprinkled vpon my garments, and I will ſtaine all my raiment.*

NOW the Prophet expounds the viſion, and ſhewes wherefore the Lord is thus *died with blood*; namely, becauſe he muſt be auenged on the Idumeans, and other enemies, who haue vſed his people very inhumanly. It ſhould bee a thing ridiculous to reſerre this verſe vnto Chriſt, in regard he hath redeemed vs *without the helpe of any man*: for the Prophets meaning is, that the Lord will ſo puniſh the Idumeans, that he ſhall ſtand in need of no mans helpe, becauſe *himſelfe* will bee ſtrong enough to roote them out. For the Iewes might obiect, that the Idumeans were mightie: that no warre was made vpon them, but that they flouriſhed and liued at their eaſe. But the Lord ſhewes y this ſhall not hinder him from ſmitting them, when him liſteth. I grant he vſed mens helpe, when hee auenged himſelfe of the Idumeans: but yet in ſuch wiſe, that it was apparant to all how the whole action was managed by his owne hand: neither could any thing therein be aſcribed either to the *counſels, or forces of men*. For they were ſurprized with a ſudden and v unexpected deſtruction: in reſpect whereof the people could not doubt, but that *God only* was the author thereof, ſeeing they had been ſo often aduerted of it before.

Where he ſaith, *And of all the people there was not one with him*; it is to ſhew, that howſoever ſome ſhould be, raiſed vp to bring deſtruction vpon Edom, yet Gods worke

therein ſhould be ſeparate from theirs. For the infidell enemies neuer dreamed of auenging the vniuſt cruelties of the Idumeans. The Lord would then that *his iudgement* ſhould ſhine and be conſidered of in the clattering of the harneſſe and weapons, and in theſe violent moouings.

I will goe vpon them. For mine owne parte I willingly retaine the *future ſeace*, in regard the Prophet ſpeakes of things to come, and not yet accompliſhed. For the Idumeans were to bee ſeuerely puniſhed for their cruelty: though for the preſent, they were at their eaſe, and in great tranquility.

Wee haue alreadie in part touched the cauſe why the Prophet hath vſed the ſimilitude of a bloodie preſſer, which is both a hideous and woſull ſight: yet therewithall he addes, that the puniſhments and vengeance of God againſt his enemies are properly his owne, as if himſelfe had gathered them together, when he ſhall either conſume or ſcatter them. Euen as in Chap. 34.6. ſuch an execution is called a ſolemne ſacrifice: to teach vs that wee are no leſſe to glorifie God, when hee executes his iudgements, then when hee manifeſts the tokens of his mercie. In the meane while hee expreſſeth his ſingular loue towards the Iewes, ſeeing for their ſakes he vouchſafeth to *ſprinkle* himſelfe with the blood of his enemies ſo farre; that hee vſeth the verbe to ſtaine, or to deſile.

In my vwrath.] The Prophet ſhewes that this alone ſufficeth for the deſtruction of the Idumeans: namely, that the Lord is *angrie* with them. As if he ſhould ſay, No man ſhall be able to deliuer them when God ſhal haue to doe with them. Hence we are to gather, that mens ruine proceeds from no other cauſe but Gods *vwrath*: as on the contrarie, our ſaluation depends wholly vpon his meere grace. To conlude, the Lord meant here to teſtifie that the Idumeans ſhould not eſcape vnpuniſhed, ſeeing they had bin perſecutors of his Church.

Mens ruine proceeds from Gods wrath.

Verſ. 4. *For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the yeere of my redeemed is come.*

I N the firſt member of this verſe, the Prophet ſignifies that God will not ceaſe to performe his office: though he executes not his iudgements at the firſt but deferres them to a fit opportunitie which hee foreſees to bee beſt fitting. Neither indeed ought wee to preſcribe vnto him either the time when, or the manner how he is to doe this or that; but to commit it as well to his ſecret counſell, as leaue vnto him the time when to execute all things, according to his good pleaſure. Let vs not thinke then that hee ſleepes, or is idle, when hee deferres.

In the latter member hee ſhewes, that all theſe things are done in reſpect of his loue to the faithfull, when he ſpeakes of the *yeere of his redeemed*. *Day and yeere*, are here taken for one and the ſame terme. Onely the word

Though God ſeeme for a time to deferre, yet he will pay home at length.

The former argument ſtill protecuets.

Verſ. 1.

The viſion expounded. Verſe 1.

Obiect. Anf.

yeere notes out the length of the banishment, to the end the Iewes should neither despaire, nor be discontent, if their deliuerance was foreflood. Thus then the Lord punisheth and destroies the wicked, for the deliuerance of the faithfull, and for the redemption of his Church, to which hee hath a special regard. And this ought greatly to comfort vs, that when the signes of Gods wrath against the wicked appeare, wee may therewithall know, that the fruit of the blowes which light vpon their backs, shall be ours. By this also wee may euidently perceiue, that our gronings have been heard; namely, because that when God is minded to succour the afflicted, we see he armes himself with strength, for the confusion of his Churches enemies. Wherefore, howsoever the crosse lie heauily vpon vs, & presseth vs downe with the weight thereof, yet in vndergoing it patiently, let vs learne by hope to raise vp our hearts to this yeere, which God hath limited for the execution of his vengeance.

Verf. 5. *And I looked, and there was none to helpe; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: there fore mine owne arme helped mee, and my wrath it selfe sustained mee.*

A further illustration of the former Doctrine.

Albeit the Iewes were destitute of all helpe, and that no man relieved them either by words or deedes, yet he shewes that the onely arme of the Lord shall suffice to punish the enemies, and to set his Church at libertie. Hee teacheth them then to looke for saluation from God onely; that they should not gaze heere and there, but depend wholly vpon God, who stands in no need of other mens helpe. For this cause he brings him in wondering, that no man reached him forth his hand, when he was about to execute his iudgements, the better to imprint this doctrine in the hearts of the faithfull, namely, that God needs no mans aid, but is al sufficient of himselfe to obtaine saluation for his people. And by this circumstance he further illustrates that succour, which he was determined to giue vnto the faithfull; partly to correct their distrust, and partly to exhort them to thankfulness for the time to come: for when God saith he wounded, and was vterly astonished; hee puts vpon him another person, because this astonishment was indeed properly in the Iewes, who neither would, nor could belicue more then what men were able to doe. He therefore opposeth his arme to all meanes whatsoever; shewing that hee will satisfie himselfe with the inuincible power thereof, as well to manifest himselfe the Sauour of his Church, as to scatter and ouerwhelme all the wicked.

Verf. 6. *Therefore I will tread downe the people in my wrath, and make them drunken in mine indignation, and will bring downe their strength to the earth.*

The conclusion.

From the former sentence hee concludes that Gods wrath is strong enough to con-

found the wicked, without hauing aid from any other; lest the power of the enemies might any way daunt the Iewes from conceiuing good hope.

To make drunken, must heere bee taken in a contrary sense, to that which it is in some other places, which we haue expounded heretofore; as in Chap. 29. 9. one while we are said to bee drunke when God takes from vs our senses, or smites vs with giddinesse; or when as at length hee giues vs vp into a reprobate mind. But it here signifies no other thing, but to fill, or to beate them to the full, as we commonly say: and this similitude is often, vsed of the Prophets.

I will bring downe their strength: that is to say; though they thinke themselves inuincible, yet will I bring them downe and confound them. The summe is, that the Iewes being afflicted, ought not to despaire of their saluation, as if God hated them; neither to wax obstinate vnder his rods, as if they were smitten at all aduenture; because the rest of the nations, who now oppressed them, should be punished, things should be changed, and those that cried victory before the conquests, should not escape in the end. Now he cullies out the Idumeans for a particular instance and example herof, becauie they dwelt nearest, and were better knowne then others, who also most molested them.

Verf. 7. *I will remember the mercies of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, *according vnto all that the Lord *Or, as vpon. hath giuen vs; and for the great goodnesse towards the house of Israel, which hee hath giuen them according to his tender loue, and according to his great mercies.*

Isaiah comforts the people in this so miserable and wofull case, and by his example commands the Iews that in time of their extreme affliction, they should call to mind the former mercies of the Lord, and should beate take them to their praier; that so they might not resemble hypocrites, who neuer haue any taste in Gods goodnesse, but in time of prosperitie. For in aduersitie they are so cast downe, that all the promises in the Bible will not be able to comfort them. Now when the Lord chastens vs, we ought to remember his former benefits, and to breake out into the extolling of them, still hoping of better for the time to come: for God is alwaies like himselfe, and neuer changeth neither his counsel, nor will. And therefore, if we giue place to his mercy, we shall neuer be cast off. This I take to be the context, though others take it otherwise, namely, that the Prophet hauing spoken heretofore of the peoples captiuitie, comforts now himselfe by this assurance of Gods mercy, because God was purposed to saue some. But they are deceiued, in regard they thinke that Isaiah bath hitherto spoken of the Iewes; as if God meant to punish none but them. Whereas he on the contrary

What ought to be our meditation in the day of affliction.

relieves,

teſtifies, that other nations ſhould alſo be chaſtiſed, that the Iewes ſhould not perſwade themſelves that God only hated them: For which cauſe he now exhorts them to celebrate the memorie of thoſe benefits which God had beſtowed vpon their fathers, that by their example they might the better come to apprehend Gods loue towards themſelves. The ſcope of the text alſo ſhewes, that the Iewes are conioined with their fathers, to the end the covenant common to them both might encourage them to hope for better times.

According vnto all things.) He ſteth this particle *As*, to ſhew, that in aduerſitie theſe benefits of God giuen vnto his people ſhould forthwith come vnto our remembrances, no leſſe then if they were preſent before our eyes, though otherwiſe they may ſeeme to be worne out with age. For if they appertained not vnto vs, it were but labor loſt to remember them, which the Prophet alſo confirms by the particle *For*. Why ſo? Becauſe the Iewes being members of the ſame body, he had good reaſon to account them as the right ſucceſſors of their grandfathers, and other anceſtors. Truly *Iſaiab* felt not theſe benefits paſt which he heere mentions, but in regard they had bin beſtowed vpon the Church, the fruit of them reached in part vnto him, becauſe he was a member of the ſame.

And queſtionles this communion of Saines whereof we make profeſſion, ought to be of ſuch value with vs, as to thinke that whatſoever the Church receiues from the hand of God, is alſo giuen to vs. For there is but one Church of God; and that which is now, hath nothing ſeparate from that which was in times paſt.

Iſaiab alſo expounds himſelfe when hee adds, *for his great goodnes towards the houſe of Iſraell*. Seeing then the Lord ſhewed himſelfe a liberall benefactor towards his people, we ought at this day to expect the like, in regard that we be of his *houſhold*, and members of his Church. Wel then, albeit we feele him angry againſt vs for our ſinnes, yet muſt we cheere vp our ſpirits through a liuely hope, and arme our ſelves againſt all diſtruſt, becauſe God can not forſake his Church.

In the meane while we haue to note that the Prophet highly extols and magnifies *Gods mercie* heere, thereby to reach vs, that the foundation of our ſaluation and of all other benefits flowes from thence. And this ſhuts out all merits of men, that ſo no man may preſume to attribute any thing at all vnto himſelfe. But to the end this doctrine may be the better vnderſtood, let vs conſider *the time* whereof *Iſaiab* ſpeakes. Religion and Iuſtice then principallie bare ſway and flouriſhed: for howſoever the people had corrupted themſelves, yet *Moses*, *Aaron*, and other holy perſonages ſhewed forth good teſtimonies of their innocencie and holines. And yet the Prophet reacheth, that all the good things which *Moses* and the reſt received, were not to be aſcribed to their merits, but to *Gods mercies*. But what are we in compariſon of *Moses*, that wee ſhould thinke to merit ought at Gods

hands? Thus then as theſe repetitions of *Gods great goodnes, tender loue, and great mercies*, doe greatly ſerue for the raiſing vp on high the weak and broken hearted, that they may overcome their greateſt temptations, ſo ought the ſame to put to flight and to ſwallow vp all thought and conceit of mens merits.

Verſ. 8. For he ſaid, ſurely they are my people, children that will not lie: ſo he was their Saviour.

HE ſpeakes of the peoples election, and brings in God diſcourſing of it, to put vs in mind of the end of our vocation, namely, that he will haue a people *ſeparated* vnto him from the world, in the miſt of whom his name may be worſhipped and called vpon. And yet therewithall he accuſeth the Iewes ingratitude, who deceiued God of his expectation: not that the Lord was indeed deceiued, ſeing he forſaw well enough what they would be, which he had alſo teſtified by *Moses*, Deut. 32. 15. 16. But the ſcripture ſpeakes thus, when men by their ynthankfulnes care not to deſtroy the Lord of his due, as wee haue ſeene in Chap. 5. *I looked that it ſhould haue brought me forth grapes, but behold, wilde grapes.* He ſpeakes not of Gods ſecret counſel, but ſpeakes after the manner of men, to ſet forth the mutuall conſent which ought to be betweene God and the faithful, that all thoſe to whom he vouchſafes his preſence as their father, ſhould be readie for their parts to answer when he calles vnto them: for this foundation remains ſure, namely, that none of Gods elect can periſh, becauſe God knows who are his. 2. Tim. 2. 19. And yet we know that the end of our vocation is to lue in holines & righteousnes, as all the Scripture witneſſeth, and alſo according to that which hath bin often ſaid in many places: Chap. 43. 21. & 55. 5.

The Lord had iuſt cauſe therefore to ſay that he had choſen the people to be holy and true, and that he might haue children farre from lies and vanitie. But the people did falſifie their promiſed faith, and reuolted from that ſimplicite of heart which they ought to haue followed: for they were whollie replete with fraude and hypocriſie; and yet the Prophet giues them hope of pardon, if ſo be they would ſeek the Lord, and humble theſelves before him with true repentance.

He alſo notes out that which is the principall in Gods ſeruite, to wit, that we bring with vs thereunto a pure and ypriſt heart. Whence it alſo follows, that the Lord neuer forſakes vs, till we haue bin diſloyall towards him in breaking our faith. Seeing this people then pleaſed themſelves in their vices, it was needfull they ſhould be firſt convinced of their infidelitie, that being conuerted vnto God, they might in the end feele him their ſaviour.

*Verſ. 9. * In all their troubles he was troubled, and the Angell * of his preſence ſaued them: in his loue and in his mercie*

God looks that our conuerſation ſhould answer our vocation.

How wee ought to eſteeme of the communion of Saines.

The foundation of our ſaluation.

* Or, in all their anguiſh there was no anguiſh. * Or, of his face.

he redeemed them, and he bare them and carried them alwaies continuallie.

The inestimable loue which God beares to his Church.

HE amplifies and sets forth Gods goodnes towards his people, shewing, that he bestowed benefits vpon their fathers whilst they suffred themselves to be conducted by him: yea, he had such care ouer them, that himselfe was troubled in their troubles, and bare their miseries and anguishes. In speaking thus, he notes out the inestimable loue which God beares towards his chosen. And the Lord also the better to draw and allure vs to come vnto him speaks after the manner of men, attributing vnto himselfe all the affection, loue, and fatherly compassion that can possible be in them. And yet it is impossible to thinke of any loue or good will of men in this world, which he farre surmounts not.

No loue comparable to Gods loue.

Iyterly reiect not the other exposition, to wit, that the people were not troubled in their trouble; because God alwaies supplied them with some remedies for y allwaging of their sorrowes. But in my iudgement, the learned expositors haue hit the marke, in taking the first sense: wherein the Prophet testifies that God laid vpon himselfe the whole weight of the peoples burthen; to comfort them in their calamities and anguishes. Not that he can any way be grieved: but hee attributes to himselfe humane passions by a figure much vsed.

God no way touched with humane afflictions.

Afterwards he manifests the effect of this care, namely, in that he alwaies saued them by his Angels, whom hee calles the *angell of his face*: because he was a witness of Gods presence; and as it were his herald to execute his commandements. To teach vs, that the Angels runne not before they bee sent, neither that they intrude themselves into this office of succoring vs, by any priuate motion of their owne. For the Lord vseth their seruities; and manifests his presence to vs by their means. The Angels can doe nothing of themselves, neither doe they yeeld vs any succour further forth than as the Lord sends them to bee the Ministers of our saluation: Heb. 1.14. Les vs not stay our thoughts vpon them then, seeing their office is only to lead vs directly vnto God.

The seruice of Angels.

If any had rather say that the liuely image of God, is here noted out by this *Angell*; who being the conductor and protector of the people, did therein openly manifest the face and presence of God as in a glasse; such a sense will not be amisse. And for my part I doubt not but that the office of *sauiug* ought to be attributed vnto Christ, who as we know, is the great Angell of the couenant, vnder whose leading, sauegard and protection the Church hath euer hitherunto been vpheld in safetie.

Mal. 3.1.

The cause from whence all benefits proceede.

In his loue he redeemed them.] The Prophet shewes what the cause is from whence these great benefits proceeded: namely, Gods loue and good pleasure. As Moses also teacheth, Deut. 4.37, and 7.7.8. Whence is it that God hath gathered thy fathers, saith hee, but because hee loved them, and did set his heart vpon

them? And thus he meant to dispossesse them of all opinion that they might conceiue touching any merit: for in themselves they were proud and arrogant and insulted more then they had cause. Now yee see the reason why he shewes, that Gods onelic free bounty was the cause of so many blessings.

In the next place *Isaiah* takes vp the similitude which *Moses* vsed in his song: namely, that God bare his people, as an Eagle; which teacheth her young ones to flie: Deut. 32.11. Vnlesse any had rather referre it vnto *sheepe*, as we haue noted, in Chap. 40.11. He shall feed his stocke like a shepheard: hee shall gather the lambs with his arme, and carrie them in his bosome, &c. And yet this similitude of a mother agrees very well: for shee not onely beares the child in her wombe: but also nurces it vp, till it be come to a competent age.

The sum is, that when the people were deliuered, it was not the first fauour that they receiued from God, but they had tasted so sufficiently thereof in the whole course of their liues, that it was to him only, to whom they were to ascribe all the benefits which had been bestowed vpon them.

For this cause the clause, *alwaies continually*, is added: for the Lord is neuer wearie in doing good, neither contents he himselfe to manifest the tokens of his fauour to one age only: for he neuer ceaseth to enrich and adorne his Church with diuers and fundrie gifts.

God neuer wearie in doing good to his Church.

Verf. 10. But they rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore hee was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against him.

THE Prophet now descends to the second member, in which hee shewes that the Lord was turned to be y aduersary of his children, because they rebelled, and turned back from him; as if the people (in a word) should thus haue obiected, God shewed many tokens of his louing kindnesse to our fathers for a long time together; wherefore taste we not of the same also? Is hee now of another mind. No, God forbid. But wee our selues by our disloyaltie, haue been reiected: yea, we haue thereby repelled and put backe his benefits from vs: Ier. 5.25. And yet the Prophet condemnes not onely the men of his age, but those also of the ages before. For we see that vnder the conduct of *Moses* himselfe, they rebelled and murmured against God, Exod. 17.2. Numb. 20.3. Hence it came, that God who tenderly loued them, as it is in verf. 7, became their enemy, by their owne rebellion. Are they punished for their iniquities then? Let them thanke themselves for it. For the Lord is inclined to nothing more then to shew mercie, neither is any thing more acceptable vnto him, then to pursue vs with his fauours.

The preuention of an obiection.

Now he saith by a phrase of speech borrowed from men, that wee vex the holie Ghost by our rebellion: to teach vs to haue care in the greater detestation; because it prouokes

Mich. 7.8.

provokes the holy one of Israel to anger and indignation; And seeing it is one and the same Spirit, by which God workes our saluation, the Prophet aduertiseth vs that our sins doe estrange vs faire from Gods, by breaking the band of our conjunction. Vnto which tends Saint *Pauls* exhortation, Ephes 4.30. *Griue not the holy Spirit of God, by whom yee are sealed vnto the day of redemption.* From this text also we are to note, that we haue no cause to accuse those, by whom wee are molested and persecuted, because it is the Lord himselfe who *fight* against vs, and by their hand auenge himselfe vpon our sinnes. Let vs rather accuse our sinnes, and condemne them: for thereby wee are exposed to all the miseries, vnder which we are pressed.

Verf. 11. *Then hee remembered the old time of Moses and his people, saying, Where is hee that brought them vp out of the sea, with the shepheard of his sheepe? Where is he that put his holy Spirit within him?*

*Or, in the midst of whom.

The fruit of this chastisement.

This is the end of the chastisement; namely, that the people might bee awakened out of their drowziness, and bee brought to thinke vpon the things they had forgotten before; because prosperitie so besets vs, that the remembrance of God is vterly buried. These rods therefore serue to recall those thoughts which were abolished in vs; to wit, where is that God which in times past shewed so many mercies to our fathers? For I referre these things to the time past, and therefore haue translated, *from the daies of old*: for the word *age* agrees not in this place, seeing the Prophet mentions that time wherein *Moses* gouerned the people of God. The true sense therefore is, *that the Iewes being miserably oppressed, called to minde the ancient times; in which the Lord manifested his power for the preservation of his people.*

Whereas some referre this vnto God, as if he had wrestled with their obstinacie, and had rather graued the vngatefull, the leaue that worke imperfect, which hee had begun: this seemes harsh, and too far fetched. The Prophet rather recites the sighes and complaints of this poore people, after by chastisements they had learned how miserable a thing it is, not to bee vnder Gods protection.

By the *Shepheard*, he means *Moses*. Neither see I any reason why it should be translated in the plurall number, rather then in the singular. He also expresth the means by which he guided the *sheepe*; namely, in that hee was indued with singular graces of the *holy Spirit*: for to *put his Spirit in the midst of him*, is as much to say, as to manifest the power of his Spirit.

Others had rather referre it vnto the people. Neither contradict I their opinion: but in regard that God had chosen and ordained *Moses* to be the conductor of his people, it is he principally of whom it is said, that *the holy*

Spirit was put within him. Now this Spirit was giuen him for the good of the whole people, that he might be an excellent Minister of Gods grace, and might *set them at libertie*. And so by consequence, the power of the *Spirit* of God appeared in the *middest* of all the people.

Verf. 12. *Hee led them by the right hand of Moses with his owne glorious arme, diuiding the waters before them, to make himselfe an everlasting name.*

Hee here prosecutes that miraculous deliuerance of the people, who vnder the conduct of *Moses*, were brought out of Egypt, and also continues to recite the complaints: which might happily come into the mindes of the faithfull. We see here two things ioined together; to wit, *the right hand of Moses*, and *the glorious arme of the Lord*. Who so vseth *mans traile*, that his praise and glory ought at no hand to be lessened or darkened: for these things were so done vnder the conduct of *Moses*, that they ought wholly to be attributed to the power of God.

He goes on in describing the peoples deliuerance out of Egypt

As at this day, when it is said, that the Ministers of the Gospell remit sinnes, (which yet belongs to God onely) doth this diminish ought from his authoritie and Maiestie? Truly no: for they are but instruments, who bestow their paines for God, to whom all the glory thereof must be attributed. Alas, what could the fillic *hand* of man haue done, if the *arme* of the Lord had not fortified it?

8. Cor. 3. 5.

For this cause in the end of the verse hee expressly addeth, that God at that time wrought after so admirable a manner, to *make himselfe an everlasting name*: whereof, seeing it is vnlawfull to despoile him, so it shall bee no more lawfull to attribute the least part of praise vnto a mortall man.

Verf. 13. *Hee led them thorow the deepe, as an horse in the wildernesse, that they should not stumble.*

14. *As the beast goeth downe into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord gaue them rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thy selfe a glorious name.*

This is added to amplify and set forth so great a benefit. He also coniaines similitudes thereto, to expresse this so great and admirable a power of God; namely, *as the horse* in the desert, and as the *beast* in the plaine: that is to say, hee led his people as nicely, as one doth an horse vpon the downes. For the word *desert*, signifies not that desert of *Paran*, where the people were by the space of fortie yeeres: but according to the common phrase of the Hebrew tongue, it signifies the pastures where sheepe and herds of beasts walke at their pleasure. Which yet better appears by the verse following, where in stead of desert, he names the *plaine*. And so one and the same sense flowes from them both, namely,

These verses are added as an amplification of the former.

lie, that the people walked ouer deepe pits without stumbling, as horses doe in the wildernesse.

In a word, his meaning is, to teach that the red sea did no more let or hinder the people from passing ouer, through the midst of deepe places, then if they had walked vpon a plaine and leuelled ground.

In v. 12 he called his name, *euertlasting*; and here he calles it *glorious*; but the sense is one. The people then obiect against the Lord, that if hee once made himselfe a glorious name; then he ought still to haue the same care. Otherwise it will come to passe that the remembrance of the benefits, which hee in former time bestowed vpon their fathers, would vanith quite away.

Verf. 15. *Looke downe from heauen, and behold from the dwelling place of thine holinesse, and of thy glorie. Where is thy zeale, and thy strength, the multitude of thy mercies, and of thy compassions? They are restrained from mee.*

The application of the whole.

HAuing mentioned the benefits of old in the name of all the people: now hee comes to apply the same vnto his purpose, and intreats the Lord that hee would looke downe from heauen vpon them.

[*Looke downe, &c.*] By these words hee signifies that the power of God is not diminished, though it appeare not at all times alike. For there must be an opposition supplied, namely, that God had then as it were hid himselfe, neither shewed he himselfe such a one towards them, as hee had done towards their fathers. As if they had said, *Albeit O Lord, that we see no tokens of thy presence, but that thou hast withdrawne thy selfe from vs, as if thou wert shut vp in heauen, so as thou seemest utterly to neglect vs; yet we beseech thee vouchsafe to looke downe once againe from heauen, and from the dwelling place of thine holinesse, behold our miseries.* See how we ought to separate the vnbeleeuers from the faithfull, who acknowledge God to bee both mightie and mercifull: yea euen then when they can discern no signes at all, either of his power or bountie. And thus they cease not to call vpon him still, though he hides himselfe farre away from them. For the Lord neuer ceaseth to haue care ouer his people, seeing without wearinesse, hee orders and gouernes all the parts of the world.

How to distinguish between vnbeleeuers and the faithfull.

[*Where is thy zeale?*] By this interrogatiom it seemes the faithfull after a sort vpbraid the Lord, in regard hee is no more toucht with his wonted zeale toward them; or that his power is diminished. But the Prophet hath another meaning. For hee mentions these benefits, as I haue said heretofore, because he meant thereby to confirme the hearts of the faithfull in good hope: thereby also teaching them that God is alwaies one and the same, and neuer puts off the bowels of compassion towards his Saints. And this will be euident enough by which follows.

He takes the multitude of bowels and mercies, for the infinit goodnesse of God; for he discouers and powres out his bowels as it were, in shewing himselfe a liberall benefactor towards vs. And these said fauours are so great, that wee cannot possible esteeme nor value them as we ought. But it is no new thing to see the faithfull prest with griefto powte out their complaints familiarly in the presence of God, charging him that hee hath shut his bowels from them. I grant they retain this principle, that God is alwaies mercifull; in regard his nature is vnchangeable: and howsoeuer they impute it to their sinnes, that they feele him not such a one to them, yet to preserue themselves from despaire they expostulate vnto him, how it can be that hee should handle them so seuerely. Yea, in shewing them nothing but the signes of his wrath, as if he had forgotten himselfe.

The faithfull euer retain this principle, namely, that God is alwaies mercifull.

Verf. 16. *Doublelesse thou art our father: though Abraham be ignorant of vs, and Israel know vs not, yet thou O Lord, art our father, and our redeemer: thy name is for euer.*

THE Lord permits vs familiarly to powre out our hearts before him. For prayer is nothing else but a manifesting of the heart in the presence God; so as the best remedie we haue to releue our cares and anguishes is to lay them vp in his bosome. Cast thy burthen, saith *Dauid*, vpon the Lord, and he shall nourish thee: Psalm. 55. 21. and 37. 5. The Prophet then hauing numbred vp Gods benefits towards the Iewes, whereby his power and goodnesse was sufficiently manifested; and yet that men by their sinnes deprived themselves from tasting the fruit thereof: he now comes to this point; namely, that Gods goodnesse is so great, that it ouercomes mens stubbornnesse.

A definition of prayer.

He calles him *father* in the name of the whole Church. For all cannot call him thus; because it is a priuledge that peculiarly belongs to the Church of God to call him *father* in his presence. Thence we may gather, that Christ as the first borne, or rather as the onely sonne of God, hath alwaies borne the chiefe sway ouer the Church: for God cannot be called *father*, but by him. And againe, here wee see that the faithfull contend not with God: but onely draw arguments vnto themselves from his nature, whereby to overcome all temptations, and to settle their hearts in good hope.

The Churches priuledge.

God hath neuer been called vpon as a father in the Church, otherwife than by Christ.

[*Though Abraham know vs not.*] Some aske here why the people say that the Patriarke knew them not. *S. Jerome* thinks it was because they were degenerate, and therefore were not worthe of so great an honour. But I take this exposition to be ouer curious. The true sense is, That albeit our forefathers disauiou vs, yet God still holds vs for his children, and shewes himselfe a father towards vs. Those who say that *Abraham* and the rest of the

Quest. Anf. Saint Ierom.

the faithfull had cast off all care, touching the affaires of this life, doe too subtilly writt the Prophets words to a wrong sense. I speak not of the thing in it selfe; but I say these words proue not that the Saints are altogether carelesse of vs. The most natue and pure sense is this; Lord, we acknowledge that in regard thou art our Father, it is a thing so firme and iure, that albeis our fathers after the flesh should faile vs, yet v wilt thou neuer cease to bee a father vnto vs: *Plal. 27. 10.* So as all rights of nature shall cease, rather then thou shouldst cease to shew thy selfe a father vnto vs: or that thine holy adoption should bee made void, seeing it is established in thine immuable counsell, and ratified by the death of thine holy Sonne.

And yet in the meane while we may hence gather, that the holy men so pray and present themselves before God, that they looke not to the intercessions of others: for praier is inioined them vpon this condition, that wholly resting themselves in the fatherly loue of God, they reiect all other confidences. But if our Prophet taught the Iewes not to direct their hearts toward *Abraham* and *Jacob* (who yet had receiued so many precious promises) to be heard of God: then is it certaine that we haue now no more cause to runne to *S. Peter*, to *S. Paul*, and the rest, then to them. For this is not a priuate praier made by one or two, but publike, and appertaining to the whole Church in generall: as if the Prophet had heere set them downe a forme of praier. And questionlesse our confidence ought so to be fetted vpon Gods fauour and fatherly goodnesse towards vs, that we should shut our eies against all intercessions of men, whether aliu or dead. In a word, the faithfull heere protest, that they gaze not heere nor there, but rest themselves in God alone.

But some may aske now, why hee onelie names *Abraham* and *Jacob*, and makes no mention of *Isaack*? The reason is, because the couenant was more solemnly ratified with these two heere noted. I grant that *Isaack* had no lesse part therein then they; but yet hee neither receiued so full, nor so many promises.

Our Redeemer. Redemption is heere expressed as a testimonie of this adoption: for by this experiment, God shewed himselfe the Father of this people. And therefore the people pray vnto God, and with assurance call him Father, in regard he had manifested vnto them so admirable a signe of his fatherly good will, which gaue them encouragement to hope well. But redemption simply in it selfe, would not haue sufficed, vnlesse the promise had bin therewithall annexed. Euen as then hee did once redeme them, so doth he promise to be their father for euer.

The clause, *from all time*; sets forth the steadfastnesse and stabilitie of Gods fatherly loue. For we haue not deserued the name of children; but in regard that his will onely, by which hee hath once adopted vs for such, is vnchangeable. Seeing the Lord then hath an eternall name, it thereupon followes, that the title and grace which is therunto conioined and flowes from this eternitie, shall indure for euer.

Verf. 17. O Lord, by hast thou made vs to erre from thy wayes, and hardened our hearts from thy feare? Returne for thy seruants sake, and for the Tribes of thine inheritance.

Or, where-
loue shall
thou, urned.

Because these phrases of speech seeme harsh and tart; some thinke the vnfaithfull are here brought in murmuring against God, and blaspheming him: for their malice turnes into rage, whe they haue lost all hope. But the scope of the text crosseth this conceit. For the Prophet shewes the fruit which should proceed from these miseries and calamities of the Iewes. How? Because being humbled and brought low, they should cease eather to be proud, or to please themselves in their vices. They were ashamed then that in times past they had erred so farre out of the right way, and acknowledge their owne offences. And so say the truth, when they attribute their sinnes to the wrath of God, their meaning is not to exempt themselves from blame, nor to abolish their faults.

But the Prophet vseth a phrase of speech very ordinary. For the holy Ghost is wont to say, that God causeth men to erre, hardens, and giues men vp into a reprobate mind: *2. Thef. 2. 11.* *Rom. 9. 18.* and *1. 28.* Now when the faithfull speake thus, they meane nothing lesse then to make God the author of euill, and of sinne, as if themselves were innocent; or as if they meant to extenuate their crime. But they aime at an higher marke, and rather confesse that their sinnes haue separated them from God, and is the cause why they are left destitute of his holy Spirit. Tea, that thence it came to passe, that they haue been plunged into infinit miseries.

Those who say that God leads vs into error by priuation, that is to say, in regard he be-reaues vs of his spirit, he nor the very hire. It is said that God both hardens and blinds when he deliuers men vp to be blinded by Satan, who is the minister and executioner of his wrath, for otherwise we should euer be a pray vnto the will of the diuell: but in regard he is able to doe nothing of himselfe without Gods commandement, to whose becke he is subiect, we truly affirme, that God is the author of this blinding and hardening, which also the scriptures doe witness in many places. And yet it followes not thereupon that he should be the author of sinne, because he punisheth mens ingratitude by such a blinding. And thus the faithfull in this verset confesse that God hath left them, but their sinne was the cause, so as they still acknowledge Gods iust reuenging hand vpon them. In like manner after *Moses* hath said, *I hat thither vnto God had not giue the people eies to see, nor an heare to vnderstand, hee layes not the blame thereof vpon God, but shewes the Iewes where they were to seeke the remedies of such a benummednes: vvhich of they were conuincid, Deut. 29. 14.* But these seeme to take another pretext heere, in that they aske a reason, and expostulate the matter

God the au-
thor of blind-
ing & hard-
ening, yet
not the au-
thor of sinne:

The true
sense of this
pl.

Saints not
to be praised
vnto.

Quest.
Ans.

Anf.

with God, as if he had bin bound to haue handled them more mildly. But I answer, that the faithfull haue still an eye to Gods goodnes, whilest they confesse that their afflictions are the iust recompences of their sinnes.

Some referre these words to the captiuitie, as if the faithfull complained of the Lord for suffering them to languish so long a time in the same. As if the Prophet should say, That their obstinacie increased, because the Lord gaue them no taste of his grace. For the faithfull are often surprized with a very dangerous temptation, when they see the wicked overflow in all abundance, and are almost discouraged, as *Dauid* hath well expressed it in *Psalm*. 125. But the Prophets sentence seemes to be more generall: for the faithfull acknowledge themselues to haue erred, because they were not guided by the Spirit of God: whereof they complain not, but rather desire that this spirit may bee giuen them, by which their fathers in former times were gouerned and obtained all things profproullic.

Why haast thou caused our hearts to turne from thy seare?] Some translate, Wherefore hast thou hardned; but because this sutes not with that which followes, *from thy seare*, I had rather translate, To turne backe. And the verbe also signifies so much.

Some thinke these words, *returne for thy seruants sake*, appertaine to all the people. As the Scripture indeede is wont to terme all the household of faith by the name of *Gods seruants*. But I thinke it is properly to be referred vnto *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Iacob*, which surelie is much more probable. Not that the people rested in their intercession, but in regard that God had made the couenant of grace with them, that they might deliuer it ouer from hand to hand vnto their successors. Thus then the faithfull set not these Patriarkes before them as common persons onely, but in the qualitie of Ministers, witnesses, or mediators of the couenant, with the foundation of their faith: as in that song; *Lord, remember Dauid*. In which place, the name of this good Patriarke is not set before the Lord, as if the faithfull thought hee had been their aduocate; but in regard the promise, which was made vnto him touching the restauration of the eternall kingdome in his familie, did appertaine to the whole body of the people.

The Papiſts snatch vp these words with great ioy, as if by them the intercession of Saints were proued. But by the true exposition of the place, we may plainly see how easie a matter it is to answer them. For it is spoken of the Fathers, not as if they deserued ought at Gods hand of themselves, or were now intercessors betweene God and vs; but because the free couenant, which not onely appertained vnto them, but also to all their successors, was contracted onely with them.

To the Tribes.] That is to say; Returne to thy wonted fauour towards thy people. By this we see that the things aforesaid, tend to no other end, but onely that the people doe

labour, thereby to prouoke the Lord to mercie, after they haue laid before him their miseries and calamities. Here then we see the maner how we are to adresse our selues vnto God; namely, by putting him in minde of his former benefits, and by manifesting in his sight our griefes and sorrowes. Thus we must doe if we would obtaine deliuerance.

How wee must come to God.

Of thine heritage.] That is, because God had chosen this people as his proper portion. As if hee should say; What shall become of thy people if we perish? Not that God was tied to this people, but in respect hee had giuen them his faith by oath. Thus the people durst very well vtge God with his promise, and importune him by their praiers, in regard hee had voluntarily obliged himselfe both vnto their fathers, and to their children.

But now, seeing all promises are ratified and confirmed in Christ, 2. *Cor*. 10. and that we haue the truth of all things, we ought to bee built vp in so much the greater confidence: for the couenant is not onely contracted in his hand, but it is also confirmed and sealed with his blood. I grant he was the mediator as well for the fathers as for vs; but all things are now more cleere and manifest, in regard they then stucke in many obscure shadowes.

Verf. 18. The people of thine holiness haue possessed it but a little while: for our aduersaries haue troden downe thy sanctuarie.

IT is a wonder y the Prophet saith y people possessed the land *but for a very little space*, seeing 863. yeres were expired since they began to possesse it, and 1400. yeres and more since *Abraham* entred into the land of *Canaan*. But the promise must be considered, in which it was said, that *Abrahams* posteritie should inioy the land, as an euerlasting possession: *Gen*. 17. 8. and 49. 4. This was *but a little while* therefore, if it be compared *with eternitie*. The people of God then obiekt this short time vnto him, not as accusing him of breach of promise; but to put him in mind of his couenant, and that he should rather haue respect to his owne goodnesse, then to the chastisements which they had iustly deserued. And after this manner the ancient Church complains, in *Ps*. 102. 23, 24. that her strength was abated in the way, & that her daies were shortened: and therefore praies, *that God would not cut her off in the midst of her daies*, because the fulnesse of time depended vpon the coming of Christ.

Our aduersaries.] This complaint was much more grieuous; namely, that the wicked prophaned that land, which God had consecrated vnto himselfe. And the truth is, this went neerer to their hearts, then all the rest of their miseries. And good reason; for we ought not so much to respect our selues, as Gods seruice and religion. And this is the end of deliuerance, to wit, that there might be a people which might praise and worship the Lord purely.

Verf.

Psalm. 132. 1.

How Papiſts wrest these words, to proue their intercession to Saints.

Or, a long
time.

Verſ. 19. *Wee haue been* * as they
ouer whom thou neuer haſt rule, and
vpon whom thy name was not called.

Ob that thou wouldeſt breake the
heauens, and come downe : and that the
mountaines might melt at thy preſence?

Maſter Cal-
uin makes
this part of
the 19. verſe

THe Prophets ſenſe may admit two expoſi-
tions. For ſome take this place as if the
people obiected vnto God, that they were
choſen when other nations were reiected,
and that this couenant was ratified from the
time of old. The other expoſition, which I ra-
ther follow, is this; that the people complain
and reply vnto God, that there is no diffe-
rence betwene them and the heathen; in
regard they had no ſuccour nor refreshing at
all in their aduerſities; which they hold to be
an abſurd and an vncomely thing. This is a
notable ſentence, and very worthy of memo-
rie : for heere wee ſee it is lawfull for vs to
powre out our complaints vnto God, when
afflictions preſſe vs aboue meature; and to ſet
our calling before him, to moue him to ſuc-
cour vs; thereby teſtiſying what great diffe-
rence hee makes betwene vs and ſtran-
gers.

ouer v whom thy name is not called vpon.] This
comes all to one ſenſe. For the peoples mean-
ing is, that Gods calling ought not to be
aboliſhed. And indeed it is not the Lords will
that wee ſhould call vpon him in vaine : for
prayers are vnprofitable, and vaniſh in the
aire, vnleſſe the Lord haue reſpect vnto vs.
Heere note alſo one marke of the Church;
namely, that Gods name is there called vpon.
The wicked cannot call vpon him, becauſe
there is no acceſſe vnto him but by his word;
of which, they haue no knowledge; and there-
fore faith is neuer ſeparate from praier. For
where faith is, there is alſo praier; and if it be
not there, let vs know for a ſuretie that there
is no faith nor hope at all.

A note of
the Church.

Faith brings
forth praier.

OH that thou wouldeſt breake!] The He-
brew particle, as I take it, comprehends
a wiſh. For though it hath many ſignificati-
ons, yet the ſcope of the text ſhewes, that this
agrees better to this place then any other.
For the faithfull heere enter into a more ar-
dent praier; as often it fallies out when in the
ſharpeſt afflictions, a ſet ſorie of words, would
want ſufficient vehemencie to expreſſe our
deſires. He ſaith, that God *breakes the heauens*,
when hee ſuddenly ſhowes ſome memorable
and rare ſigne of his power. And the reaſon
of this maner of ſpeech is not onely in regard
that men being in great diſtreſſe, are wont
to liſt vp their eyes to heauen, from whence
they expect helpe; but becauſe miracles alſo
make way for them, by breaking the ordina-
rie courſe of nature. Now it ſeemes that God
is ſhut vp in heauen, whileſt hee neglects to
ſuccour vs, and lets all things in the world to
goe at ſix and ſeuen. For this cauſe then it is
ſaid, that he opens and breakes the heauens, when
he giues vs ſome ſigne of his preſence, as ſuch a time
as we iudge him to be farre remote from vs. But
theſe things are ſpoken according to our natu-
rall reaſon, as is alſo the claufe, That thou
wouldeſt come downe : for what neede is there
that God ſhould change his place? Hee ap-
plies himſelfe thus to our weakeneſſe, that we
might the better comprehend that which is
ſaid to vs of him.

That the mountaines would melt.] That is to
ſay; Oh, cauſe thy Maieſtie and glory to ap-
peare in ſuch wiſe, as the elements being a-
ſtoniſhed at the feeling thereof, might bow,
to giue way vnto thee : as ſhall bee declared
more at large by and by.

THE LXIII. CHAPTER.

That which in our bookes is made the beginning of this 64. Chapter, is in
the Commentarie annexed to the laſt verſe of the 63. Chapter, where
you ſhall find it expounded.

Verſ. 2. *As the melting fire bur-
ned, as the fire cauſed the waters to boile
(that thou mighteſt declare thy name to
thy aduerſaries) the people did tremble at
thy preſence.*

3. *When thou diſt terrible things
which wee looked not for, thou cameſt
downe, and the mountaines melted at thy
preſence.*

WE may reade all this in the future
tence, or in the ſubiunctiue. As
if hee ſhould ſay; Lord, if thou
wouldeſt come downe, the peo-
ple would tremble at thy preſence, thine ad-
uerſaries would forthwith melt away. But I

thinke it to be more natuie, as I haue turned
it; for it is very ſure that the Prophet alludes
heere to Mount Sinai, Exod. 29. 30. where the
Lord manifeſted himſelfe openly vnto the
people. Hence alſo it appeares how vnaduiſe-
dly this Chapter was diſtinguiſhed, ſeeing
the contents thereof is reuiſed for the con-
firmation of the former *viſiſh*, which ſhould
haue been placed in the beginning. We haue
elſewhere ſeene, that when the Prophets
mention the relieſes which God hath giuen
to his people, they ſtill bring in teſtimonies
concerning the deliuerance out of Egypt.
And as oft as they ſpeake of this hitorie, they
therewithall comprehend whatſoever bene-
fits God beſtowed vpon his people; not onely
when hee deliuered them from vnder Phara-
ohs tyrannie, and appeared vnto them in

Moſes

A confir-
mation of the
former wiſh
in this and
in the verſe
following.

Note.

mount Sinai: but that also, when by the space of 40. yeeres he furnished them in the desert with all things necessarie; who hauing subdued and wasted their enemies, did put them in quiet possession of the land of Canaan. To bee short, they comprehend all the testimonies, whereby in times past he shewed himselfe gracious to his people; and terrible to their enemies.

The Prophet saith, that the *fire made the waters to boile*: in regard that contrarie to their wont, *fires and lightnings*, were mingled with violent raines and tempests. As if hee should haue said, This fire (kindled by the Lord) was so fierce, that it melted all things, were they neuer so hard; and drunke vp euen the very *waters*.

To this appertaines that which is added touching the *melting of the mountaines*, before his face. For hee opened a way for his redeemed, euen throw the greatest incumbrances that they met withall. Hee saith also, that the Israelites *saw things which they neuer looked for*: in regard, that altho God had aduertised them, and had acquainted them with many experiments of his power; yet this terrible spectacle whereof he speaks, greatly surmounted their capacities and understandings, yea, and all the reason of man.

Verf. 4. For since the beginning of the world, they haue not heard, nor vnderstand with the care, neither hath the eye seene another God besides thee, which doth so to him that waiteth for him.

This verse confirms that which wee haue said before; namely, that the faithfull desire nothing here which is strange and vnheard of: but only that God would but shew himselfe such a one towards them, as in times past he had done to their fathers; and that hee would continue forth his liberallitie.

And withall, seeing it hath been his custome to succor his people, and to giue them some assured testimonies of his presence; that he would not now discontinue the same for the tunc to come: that so his almightie power might still shine more and more. For you must note, that he so brings in the people praying vnto God, that therewithall they should confirme their hope from the remembrance of the time past, and with the more boldnesse might haue their recourse to the throne of grace.

The eye hath not seene.] Doubtlesse the Prophets meaning is to magnifie Gods goodnesse by mentioning these so many benefits, which God in former times had bestowed vpon his people. This manner of commendation also, is very high and excellent: when being rauished with admiration in regard thereof, he cries out, that *there is no God but he*. Likewise, that the things which God hath done for his peoples sake, were *neuer heard of before*.

But this may be read two waies; for the word *God* may be taken in the accusatiue, or

in the vocatiue: O Lord, *none but thou hast seene the things which thou hast done to those that wait for thee*. But the other reading is more receiued; namely, *They haue neuer heard nor seene such a God*. In this last reading the particle of similitude must be supplied; for without that, the sentence would be imperfect. No care then hath heard, neither hath the eye seene such a God, as doth such things. And thus God is here separated from idols; from which the superstitious sort thinke they obtaine all blessings: but they are onely the deuices of mans braine, which can neither doe good nor hurt. Contrariwise, God deales forth his benefits of all sorts liberallie to those that serue him.

It seemes S. Paul expounds this place otherwise, 1. Cor. 2.9. and applies it to another sense. Yea, he cites it in other termes: because hee followed the Greeke translation. The Apostles made no scruple touching this point, in regard they rather respected the sentences then the words: and thought it sufficient only to point out this place of Scripture vnto the reader; whither they might resort to be satisfied touching the things which they taught. But where S. Paul seemes to haue added of his owne, Neither hath it entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them which loue him: this he did, that his speech might be the better vnderstood. For nothing is added which agrees not very well with the Prophets doctrine. And that wee may the better perceiue this agreement, wee must consider his drift. In that place hee disputes about the doctrine of the Gospell, which hee shewes doth farre surpass all the reach of mans wit. Why so? Because it contains such a knowledge, as is contrarie, and wonderfullie farre remote from the wisdom of the flesh. In a word, that it is an hidden wildome. For which cause S. Paul worthilie breakes forth into this *admiration* in weighing and pondering of the same. And our Prophet calling to mind these rare and famous works of God, as one astonished cries out; that there was *neuer such a thing heard of*. So concerning this grace which surmounts all the rest, namely, when Christ is offered vs in the Gospell, we may breake forth after the same manner, and say, O Lord, *the mercie which thou shewest vnto thy people, farre surmounts all our reason*. Neither eye, ear, hart, nor spirit, can attaine to such an height. S. Paul then you see applies this place like to his disputation: neither doth he corrupt the Prophets sentence, when he exalts about all things in the world that excellent and peculiar grace which God hath bestowed vpon his Church.

There yet remains another difficultie, namely, that the Apostle transferres that to spirituall benefits; which is here said of temporall. But we may affirme, that *Isaiab* simple respected the cause from whence these benefits of God issued, though hee therewithall had an eye to the estate of this life present. For all the good things which God hath giuen vs here below for the sustaining

Obiect.

Anf.

S. Pauls drift in allegating this text
1. Cor. 2.9.
Obiect.
Anf.

and

and cheriſhing of our naturall life, are ſo many teſtimonies vnto vs of that fatherly loue which he beares vs. And it is alſo the propertie of faith to aſcend by viſible benefits, to inuiſible graces. Thus then howſoeuer the Prophet ſeemes to meddle onely in matters touching their bodily deliuerance, and other things appertaining to this life preſent: yet aimes he therein at an higher marke, and eſpecially reſpects thoſe benefits which in particular manner belonged to the people of God. For what a fortiſhneſſe were it, if whileſt we inioy benefits temporal, wee ſhould not by them mount vp to the weſpring from which they flow; namely, from Gods meere loue and mercie: Both good and bad doe indifferently inioy theſe common good things: but that particular fauour wherewith he enertaines vs, appertaines to none but to his houſhold ſeruants. Hence it is that wee not onely conſider that which appears to our outward ſenſes, but wee forthwith aſcend vp to the very cauſe. Vnto which point, though neither eye, nor eare can reach; that is, to comprehend therein the grace of adoption, by which the Lord proteſts that hee will be our Father; yet hee reucales this vnto vs by the witnes of his *holy Spirit*.

It is alſo very likely that the Prophet hauing ſpoken of a particular benefit of God, takes occaſion thereby to ariſe vnto a generall conſideration. For when the matter concernes the meditation of Gods workes, the faithfull are wont to aſcend from one kind of them, to the conſideration of the whole in generall. And therefore this onely example of ſo wonderfull a goodneſſe of God, might well rauish the Prophets mind ſo high, that in his meditations he conſidered of this infinite abundance of bleſſings laid vp in heauen for the faithfull. Yea, we manifeſtly perceiue that this honourable commendation comprehends vnder it the free covenant, by which the Lord adopted vnto himſelfe *Abrahams* poſteritie, into the hope of eternall life. The ſumme of all comes to this; that ſeeing the goodneſſe and power of God is ſo great, we ought not to diſtruſt him; but our confidence ought ſo to be ſetled thereupon, that we ſhould aſſuredly relie vpon his helpe. And to this belongs theſe excellent benefites which the Prophet heere mentions:

Verſ. 5. *Thou didſt meete him that reioiced in thee, and did iuſtly: they remembered thee in thy waies: behold, thou art angry, *for wee haue ſinned, yet in them is continuance, and wee ſhall bee ſaued.*

*Or, and.

In this and in the verſe following, the Iewes beuaile their miſeries.

HE proſecutes the ſame argument. For the people beuailes their miſerable condition, in regard they felt no reliefe nor eaſe in their aduerſitie; though God was wont to be ſo good vnto their forefathers. The faithfull then ſpeake vnto God on this ſort; *Thou wert vnto mee our fathers, but thy fauour is now turned away from vs: and it ſeemes thou wilt*

be no more appeaſed, ſeeing wee haue gained nothing by calling vpon thee. For whence comes thy aduerſitie, but from this; that as if thou wert now become changeable, thou ſhewſt thy ſelfe otherwiſe to vs, then thou didſt to our fathers in times paſt?

In the next place they confeſſe they were iuſtly chaſtiſed, becauſe they had ſinned. I haue heretofore ſhewed, that there is nothing better for vs in afflictions, then to remember Gods benefites: and not onely thoſe wherof we haue had experience, but thoſe alſo which are recorded in the Scriptures. For we can not be ſenced with a buckler that is more thick nor large then it, againſt all kind of temptations.

Thoſe who thinke theſe words, *him that reioiced, and did iuſtly*, ſhould be read together, as if he ſhould ſay, Thou didſt meete them which ſerued thee willingly, and delighted in well doing; doe ill expound this verſe, as I thinke. I rather thinke that by the *reioycers* thoſe are vnderſtood who are ioynfull in proſperitie, in regard the people were then in ſorrow and leauiues. For there is a cloſe oppoſition, thus, Thou wert wont in times paſt to meete our fathers, before they were preſſed with any grieſe, and didſt glad ſhem as thy coming: but now thou art farre off, and ſuffreſt vs to languish with grieſe and diſcontentment. To this belongs that which is added, That they remembered God, becauſe they enioyed his preſent grace, and felt him both the author and vpholder of their ſaluation. Thus by the *reioycers* of God, he vnderſtands all proſperitie: be it that he was more neere vnto them by handling them tenderly, and cockering of them as his children: or in regard that he naturallie is inclined to doe good. But becauſe he hath ſaid that God was wont to meete him that did iuſtly, the *remembrance* may be referred to the *loſe of pietie*. To wit, that they gaue themſelues careleſſe to the ſeruiſe of God: in which ſenſe, theſe words are the expoſition of the former member, which is a thing vſual with the Prophets, who are wont to confirme their ſpeeches with many words.

To remember God, ſignifies, to be ſo ſweetly allured with thinking on him, that we wiſh for nothing beſides, and place our whole felicitie in him. For there is nothing which more reioyceth vs, then the remembrance of his mercie: as on the contrarie, if we feele him angry, then the remembrance of his name is terrible vnto vs.

And *wee haue ſinned*,] The Prophet renders a reaſon of that aboue ſaid, for they murmur not againſt God becauſe they felt him otherwiſe to them then he was towards their fathers, but they lay the whole blame vpon themſelues. Hence let vs learne, neuer to thinke of the afflictions wherewith the Lord viſits vs, vnleſſe therewithall we call our ſinnes to remembrance, that ſo wee may both acknowledge our faults, as alſo confeſſe that we are iuſtly chaſtiſed.

The word *perſeuall* may either be referred to *ſinners*, or to the *reioycers* of the Lord, To *ſinners* thus: Although we haue bin obſtinate in our ſinnes, and worthe to be an hundred times condemned:

The beſt fence againſt afflictions.

condemned, yet hitherunto we haue bin faued through thy mercie. If we referre it to the *waies* of God, he renders the reason wherefore the people were not consumed, to wit, in regard the waies of the Lord are firme and perpetuall, and because there is no end of his mercie. And this sense I thinke agrees best to this place.

Some supplicke, that perpetuitie was founded in the waies of the Lord. But I had rather take the words simple as they sound, as *Dauid* in the 30. Psalm saith, That the Lords anger indures only for a night, but he is appeased, and shewes mercie for euer: for he is not prouoked nor violently carried away with anger, as men are; but hee continues constant and stedfast in his fauour and in well-doing.

But yet we haue not attained the Prophets full meaning: for he saith, that the people are *saued*, who in the meane while were led into captiuitie, as into a sepulchre, wherein they bewailed their miserie. And therefore I take the time past for the future tence; to wit, *we shall be saued*, for, We haue bin saued: for it is rather a wish or praier, then an affirmation. The faithfull then boast not of that they haue obtained, but rather in complaining of their pouertie, they haue their recourse to Gods perpetuall mercies. They extoll that then which they desire, and not that which they had already attained.

Verf. 6. *But wee haue all been as an vncleane thing, and all our righteousnes is as filthy cloutes, and we all doe fade like a lease, and our iniquities like the wind haue taken vs away.*

The faithfull continue their complaint. For they lament their miserable estate because God regarded them not. Moreover, the Hebrewes agree not about the exposition of these words, *filthy cloutes*. Notwithstanding it is certaine, that they signifie a base and vile thing of no price. Yea, such a thing, which in regard of the lothsomnesse thereof, stinckes in mens nostrils.

But two things are here to be noted, first, that the faithfull confesse they haue offended, and are iustly punished: Secondly, that they cease not to complaine touching the weight of the blowes which they received. Not by way of pleading against God; but to moue him vnto compassion. As when a malefactor would endeouour to pacifie his Iudge, he laies fourth all his miseries and calamities before him.

Many vexed and wearie themselves here, because the Prophet speaking of the filthinesse of finnes; comprehends all the Iewes without exception: though there were among them many of the true seruants of God. But they haue no reason for to doe, for he speaks not here of euery one in particular; but of the whole bodie in generall, which hee compares to *filthy cloutes*; in regard it was trampled vnder feete; and extreamelie afflicted.

Some haue been wont to alleage this place to proue that it is so farre off from meriting any thing by our workes; that euen our workes themselves are infected and lothsome before God. But this seemes, as I thinke, to be farre from the Prophets intention; seeing he speaks not here of all mankind in generall; but describes their complaints, who being led captiues, felt Gods wrath heauie vpon them. For which cause, they confessed, that both themselves, and their righteousnesse, were like *filthy cloutes*. First of all then, he exhorts them to confesse their sinne, and to acknowledge their offence: secondlie, to aske pardon. And that the meanes how to obtaine the same is, first, to acknowledge our miserable and wofull condition: and therewithall to confesse that wee therein receiue the iust recompence of our offences.

Wee all said. This is a very apt comparison: which shewes that men *wither* and wanze away as soone as they feele Gods wrath. Which point is notable described in Psalm. 90. 5. and 103. 15. and in chap. 40. 6. We are rightly compared to *leaves*; then; because our *iniquities* are the *winds* which *carrie vs away*.

Verf. 7. *And there is none that calleth vpon thy name, neither that stirreth vp himselfe to take bold of thee: for thou hast hid thy selfe from vs, and hast consumed vs because of our finnes.*

The Prophet confirms that which was said before. For hee admonisheth the faithfull to acknowledge that they are worthy of such a reuenging hand of God, how sharpe and seuerer soeuer it seemed. Now he mentions some *capitall finnes*. And because it had bin too long to haue stood deciphering thereof out one by one, he strikes at the roote it selfe, and saith, that *Gods seruice was condemned*.

Under the word *Inuocation*, hee comprehends the whole seruice of God, according to the vsuall phrase of the Scriptures. For the principall part thereof is, that we *call vpon God*; thereby testifying that our whole trust is in him. It is very certaine that *prayers* and *vowes* were alwaies in vse among the Iewes: but because they wanted the affection of the hart; and that it was farre remote from God; therefore he esteemed none of these fained deuotions. Which hee yet better explains in the particle following; where it is said, that *none stirred vp himselfe to seeke God*. But all of them vanished away, and fell to nothing through their owne slothfulness.

First hee shewes that the thing we ought chiefly to desire is, that we may be fully conioyned with God. For when we are estranged from him, it must needs follow of necessitie, that all things should turne to our destruction and woe. Now by nature we are exceeding idle and slothfull: for which cause we haue need to be quickned vp with the spurre. Seeing then that we take pleasure

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ſure in our careleſſneſſe; it ſtands vs in hand to hearken aduſedly to the Prophets counſell, leſt wee become utterly ſenſeleſſe. Otherwiſe it will come to paſſe in the ende, that the Lord for his part will diſdaine and reiect vs. For the Prophet deſcribes the miſerable eſtate of this people, who had no deſire at all to take hold vpon God: neither was there any meanes left to awaken them vpon a ſincere deſire of godlineſſe.

And haſt conſumed vs.] They complaine againe that they were ouerwhelmed with the weight of their miſeries, without being any thing at all releued or caſed by God. For Iſaiah propounds theſe things, in the name of the whole people: and intreats the Lord not to ſuffer them to languish any longer vnder ſo great calamities.

Verſ. 8. But now, O Lord, thou art our father, we are the clay, * and thou art our potter; and we all are the worke of thine hands.

After they haue bewailed their miſeries, with which they were almoſt ouerwhelmed; now in plainer termes they deſire the Lord to pardon and caſe them of their ſinart, and wuball doe more boldly profeſſe themſelues now to bee his children notwithstanding. For it was adoption onely that could raiſe vp their hearts vnto a liuely hope: ſo as notwithstanding the burthen of afflictions wherewith they were preſſed downe, yet they ceaſed not for all that to reſt vpon God as vpon a father. This order ought to be well obſerued: for to attaine to a ſound and ſincere humilitie of heart, it is needfull that wee be deſected and laid on all ſoures, as they ſay. But if deſpaire enſue, let vs haſten to this conſolation: for ſeeing God hath vouchſafed to reſt vs for his children, it is our parts to hope that he will ſaue vs, euen then when things ſhall ſeeme moſt deſperate and confuſed. Thus then, in regard of the free couenant, the Iſraelites proteſt they are Gods children, that they might feele his fatherly good will towards them in ſuch wiſe, that his promiſes might nor be in vaine.

By way of compariſon they amplifie and ſet forth Gods grace, in confeſſing that they were formed of the clay, for they ſeek for no excellent matter in themſelues: only in their originall they extoll Gods mercie, who of mire and clay, hath bin pleaſed to create them his children. In the ſecond member, where God is called their former, and the people the worke of his hands, it comes all to one ſenſe, for they whollie attribute vnto God their being, and the author of all they had. And this is a right acknowledgment: for God is robbed of his due honor whilſt men glorie in themſelues, be it neuer ſo little. But Iſaiah ſpeakes not here of the common creation of men, but of their regeneration, for which reſpect the faithfull are in particular called the workemanship of God, Chap. 17. 7. and 19. 25. and 22. 11. and 27. 11. and 37. 26. and 43. 1. 15. Ephes. 2. 10. They heere acknowledge then a ſingular fauour that God hath done them,

firſt, in electing them for his people; and then in enriching them with ſo many and excellent benefiſts.

Verſ. 9. Be not angrie O Lord aboute me, neither remember iniquitie for euer: loe, we beſeech thee, behold, we are all thy people.

The people pray that God would mitigate both his wrath and their afflictions. Not that God euer exceeds meſure, but in regard they ſhould be utterly ouerwhelmed if he would ſtand to examine the to the vtmoſt. They pray then that their paines ſhould be moderated. As Ieremiah ſaith, Correct me O Lord, but in iudgement, that is to ſay in meſure, Ier. 10. 24. For he oppoſeth iudgement to wrath, as in 2. Sam. 7. 14. it is ſaid he chaſtiſeth vs with the rods of men, becauſe he wil not come againſt vs himſelfe to vter all his force in puniſhing vs, leſt we ſhould be forthwith ground to powder.

But it is worth the noting, that they do not ſimply deſire to be freed from Gods iudging of them, but ſo offer themſelues to be chaſtiſed, that the blowes may not daſh them to pieces. And this is the cauſe why they deſire that the memorie of their iniquities may be blaſted out: for if God ſhould not ſhew the mercie this way, there ſhould be no end of their miſeries.

The Prophet repeats that which he had ſaid before in verſ. 8. namely, that God had choſen Abrahams poſteritie. For the beſt aſſurance they had to obtaine pardon was, that God being true of his promiſes, could not reiect thoſe whom he had once aduerſed. In ſpeaking of all, he means not euerie one in particular, but comprehends the whole body of the Church. And howſoeuer the greateſt part of them were cut off by their wicked reuolt, yet this was true, that the Iewes were Gods peculiar people. Neither was this prayer made for all iudiſt gentlie, but only for the little flock of the faithfull. Now the people ſet not forth their merits before God, but reſt to his free couenant by which they were adopted. For this indeed is the ſure and only reſource the faithfull haue: this I ſay is a remedie againſt all miſchietes, and that is the reaſon why Moſes and all the Prophets doe ſo often reſeate the ſame, Deut. 32. 13.

Verſ. 10. Thine holy cities lie waſt: Sion is a wildernes, and Ieruſalem a deſert.

The Church here againe recounts her miſeries, that the might thereby bow the Lord to compaſſion and forgiuences. She ſaith, the Cities were waſted; and for an amplification ſhe adds, that Zion is become a wildernes; for it was the ſeate royall in which God would be called vpon. Then he addes Ieruſalem, wherein Zion was, For it ſeemed ſtrange that the Citie which God had conſecrated to himſelfe, ſhould be laid on heapes and waſted by the enimie.

The Prophet calles them Cities of holines, in reſpect that as God had ſanctified the people, ſo was it his will that the Cities, yea the whole countrie, ſhould be conſecrated vnto him. Seeing the Cities then were dedicated vnto

* Or, thou art, &c.
* Or, former.

After the laying forth of their miſeries they crye for pardon in his, and in the verſe following.

The Iewes pray not ſimply againſt afflictions.

Behold we are thy people.

God is robbed of his glory, whilſt men glorie in themſelues.

The Church recounts her miſerie againe in this, and in the verſe following.

What Cities
deserve to
be call'd
Gods holi-
nesse.

God, they were rightly called *holy*, because God reigned therein, and was called vpon in them. And thus we may call those Cities of holinesse, in which God is purely worshipped, haue abandoned all superstitions.

Verf. 11. *The house of our sanctuarie and of our glory, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt vp with fire, and all our pleasant things are wasted.*

The sanctuarie is otherwise attributed to the people, then to God. For it being a pledge of that holy vnion betwene God and the people, it is often called the *house of God*, because it answered to his holinesse. Here the faithfull call it *their sanctuarie*, in regard they were thence to draw their sanctitie: which they yet confirme more apparently by the word *glory*. For they confesse they had *nothing to glory in but the Temple*, wherein God was pleased to bee worshipped and serued.

And yet we see that *this their reioicing*, was often vaine; in so much that *Jeremiah* reproues them for it, saying; Trust not in lying words; to wit, *The Temple of the Lord*, The Temple of the Lord: this is the Temple of the Lord: *Jer. 7. 4.* But as the boasting of such as made faire shewes, and grew insolent, in regard of some titles was vaine: so on the contrary, they reioiced rightly, who honoured Gods ordinance; & laid it vp in their hearts; and also resting vpon the testimonie of the word, were assured to dwell vnder his protection, who had chosen out a perpetuall habitation for himselfe in the midst of them. For the Temple was built by the commandement of God; so as the Iewes might well boast that they had God for the vpholder of their saluation.

But because his seruice was then marred and corrupted, and that all in a manner ran riot after superstitions and impietie, the Prophet mentions the *time past*, and not the time present. As if he should say, *Albeis we ee haue not yelde d thee that obedience which we ought so haue done, yes behold it is thy Temple still, where in our fathers serued thee purely: and wilt thou suffer is to be prophaned, and to lie waste? VVill not this reproch redound to shine oune dishonor, see-*

ing this building was erected for thy worshippe? The Iewes plead not their merits here, neither dawbe they ouer their sinnes; no, they rather confesse and lay them open: onely they put God in minde of his seruice, that in remembering his holy covenant, hee would not permit his promises to bee fruitlesse. And all the faithfull ought to imitate their example.

The verbe *To praise*, is taken to giue thanks: as if he should say; In this Temple, the lamentable ruine whereof breaks the hearts of the faithfull in sunder, in times past thy praises were wont to sound, when thou diddest entertaine thy people there, in thy mercy and compassion.

Verf. 12. *Wilt thou hold thy selfe still at these things, O Lord? Wilt thou hold thy peace and afflict vs aboue measure?*

The people fortifie themselves in vndoubted hope, that God will not suffer his glorie to be thus trampled vnder foote, though he be prouoked to wrath by mens infinite offences. Hypocrites reape no consolation at all by this, but these things indeed belong onely to such as are touched with a true sense of Gods mercy. Such conclude, and are certainly perswaded, that howsoever death doth menace them; yet God hauing regard to his owne glory, will at the least bee mercifull to some; that so the whole seed perish not.

Wilt thou afflict vs? *Isaiah* shewes that God cannot forget his mercie. Why so? Because he cannot deny himselfe: for his glory is ioined with our saluation. And this is a thing diligently to be noted: or hauing spoken before of Gods glory, now he addes, *wilt thou afflict vs aboue measure?* The Lord then will moderate his corrections; for his glory requires it, that wee bee deliuered from death: which glory he can in no wise neglect. Let vs then take vp this prayer, as oft as our enemies invade vs: not after the manner of hypocrites, who make a great craking of Gods glory, whereof they haue neither taste nor feeling. But let vs come vnto it with faith and repentance, that so wee may truly reape the fruit of this glory.

Gods glory
ioined with
our saluation.

vs.

THE LXV. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *I haue been sought of them that asked not, I was found of them that sought me not: I said, Behold me, behold me, vnto a nation that called not vpon my name.*

In this verse
the Prophet
turnes from
the Iewes to
the Gentiles.



Ow the Prophet passeth over to the handling of another point of doctrine. For he shewes that God hath iust cause to reiect and cast off the Iewes, because neither admonitions, nor

threatnings would serue the turn to reclaim them from their errors, nor to bring them againe into the right way. But to the end they should not imagin that the covenant of the Lord should therefore be broken; he addes, that another people, which then were of none account, should come to him; and that his name should be honoured and magnified in the places where he was unknowne before. The Iewes thought this very strange, and iudged thereof altogether contrary to that covenant which God had contracted with *Abraham*; namely,

namely, that ſuch a grace ſhould be communicated to any other nation, then to his poſteritie. But the Prophet meant to plucke this vaine confidence away from them, to the end they ſhould not imagine that God was onely tied to the poſteritie of *Abraham*. For the Lord bound not himſelfe vnto them, but vpon a certaine condition : which if they happened to breake, they were to be held as traitors and diſſoiall; and ſo by conſequence, deprived of the fruit of this covenant. Beſides, the covenant was not onely made with *Abraham* and with his poſteritie, according to the ſcriptures, but alſo with all ſuch as ſhould be ingrafted into the familie of this Patriarke by faith. But it ſhall be more conuenient for vs to beginne at the ſecond verſe, that ſo wee may the better vnderſtand, the Prophets meaning : for there the cauſe of this reiection is expreſſed.

Verſ. 2. *I haue ſpread out mine hands all the day vnto a rebellious people, which walked in a way that was not good, euen after their owne imaginations.*

HERE hee accuſeth the Iewes, and complaines of their ingratitude and rebellion; wherein he ſhewes that they haue no occaſion giuen them to affirme, that the Lord offered them any wrong, if he made others partakers of the ſame grace with them. The Iewes proudly inſulted againſt God, as if their merits had been the cauſe of their election. But for this their inſolencie and vnthankfulneſſe the Lord reiects them as vnworthie : and vpbraides them, that hee hath but loſt all his time, in ſtretching forth his hand vnto them, to draw and vnite them to himſelfe. For by ſtretching forth of the bands, he ſignifies a daile ſummoning of them. Now the Lord is ſaid to ſtretch forth his hand diuers waies. For hee drawes vs to him either by his workes, or word : but he principally reſpects the latter in this place. The Lord neuer ſpeakes vnto vs, but hee therewithall ſtretcheth forth his hand to vnite vs vnto himſelfe, and cauſeth vs to feele that hee is neere vnto vs. Yea, he ſo manifeſts his fatherly loue, & ſo willingly accepts of vs, that if we yeeld not obedience vnto his voice, we ought iuſtly to impute the ſame to our owne forwardnes. Moreouer, the claue, *all the day long*, aggravates the fault greatly, namely, that God ceaſed not for the ſpace of many yeeres together, to ſend his Prophets one after another; yea, as it is ſaid in *Ier. 7. 13.* and *35. 14.* *He roſe early*, and ſtinted not his care and paines vntill the evening.

First, hee calles them rebellions, or diſobedient. Next, he ſhewes what this rebellion was; to wit, the people walked after their owne imaginations: for nothing is more diſpleaſing vnto God, then when men are giuen to follow their owne reaſon : which he will haue vs to renounce, that wee may be fit to comprehend the true doctrine. The Lord heere protests then that he was not to be blamed, for not vpholding the peoples good eſtate, and

that he fauoured them not as he was wont : but that themſelues, through their folly, had reuolted, and loued rather to ſticke to their owne inuentions, then to follow him.

Now hauing ſpoken of this reiection, it remains that wee come to touch the calling of the Gentiles, who ſucceeded in the roome of the Iewes: for it is not to be doubted but hee ſpeakes thereof in the firſt place. Now the Lord had long before prophesied of this by *Mofes*; ſo as this was not to ſeeme any new thing. As they haue prouoked me, ſaith the Lord, to ielouſie, with that which is no God, and haue ſtirred me vp to wrath by their vanities: ſo alſo will I moue them to ielouſie by that which is no God, and will prouoke them by a fooliſh nation: *Deut. 32. 21.* In a word, the Prophet now pronounceth the ſame threatening which Chriſt thundered forth afterwards, *Matth. 21. 43.* when the time of their blinding drew neere; *The kingdomes of God, ſaith he, ſhall be taken from you, and ſhall be giuen to a nation that will bring forth the fruits of it.*

Where hee ſaith in the former verſe, that God manifeſted himſelfe to them that asked not after him; it is to ſhew, that the Gentiles were preuented with this grace of God, without giuing him any occaſion to receiue them into fauour, either by merit, or yer by any worthineſſe at all of theirs. Which manifeſtly agrees with that place which we haue alleaged out of *Deut. 32.* where *Mofes* calles them a fooliſh nation. Wherefore vnder this generall title, he makes it apparant what men are, before the Lord hath preuented them by his free grace: for they neither call vpon him, ſeeke him, nor ſo much as thinke vpon him. This place then ought to be well noted, to eſtabliſh the certaintie of our vocation, which is as it were the key which opens vs the doore into Gods kingdom. By this our conſciences are quieted and appeaſed, which otherwiſe would alwaies hang in doubt, and be in perplexities, were they not vpheld by ſuch teſtimonies. Wee ſee then that this was not written at a venture, nor vpon ſome ſudden motion, namely, that wee are called the people of God, and are ſo accounted, becauſe it was thus foretold long ſince by many prophecies.

S. Paul from this place ingeniouſlie diſputes to prouoe the calling of the Gentiles : and ſaith, that *Iſaiah* cries, and boldly pronounceth, that the Gentiles were called by the Lord, *Rom. 10. 20.* How ſo? Becauſe our Prophet expreſſed more here then the circumſtance of his times would permit. Thus then by this text we perceiue that wee were called by an eternall decree of God, long before the thing it ſelfe came to paſſe.

In that he twice repeats, *Behold me, behold me*: he further confirms that God will manifeſt himſelfe ſo familiarlie vnto ſtrange and prophane nations, that they ſhall be well aſſured of his dwelling in the middeſt of them. And queſtionleſſe it was needfull that this ſo vnlooked for a change ſhould be thus eſſeſſualie confirmed, becauſe it was verie hard to be credited. Although euen in this oueltie; the Prophet meant to magnifie Gods

Kkk 2 v unexpected

Here hee ſhewes the reaſon of their reiection.

The key that opens vs the doore into Chriſts kingdom.

Our vocatiō long ſince prophecied of.

Nothing diſpleaſeth God more, then when wee follow our owne inuentions.

The summe
of this text.

vnexpected grace. The summe is, that after God shall be offered to the Gentiles, and that they shall bee received into the holy race of *Abraham*: then there shall bee a Church in the world, out of which the Iewes shall be expelled. Now wee see that all these things which our Prophet here mentions, were accomplished by the Gospell, wherein the Lord truly manifested and offered himselfe vnto strange nations, As oft then as this voice of the Gospell sounds in our eares: or as oft as we reade these holy prophesies, let vs know that the Lord is neere, and offers himselfe; that being familiarly knowne wee may with boldnesse and assurance call vpon him.

Vle.

Verf. 3. *A people that prouoked mee euer vnto my face: that sacrificeth in gardens, and burneth incense vpon briches.*

The fruit
that came
from wal-
king after
their owne
imaginati-
ons, in this
and the next
verse.

HE shewes and prosecuteth more at large, in what things the Iewes rebelled against God: namely, that hauing forsaken his commandement, they defiled themselues with sundrie superstitions. Heretofore he had said that the Iewes had revolted from God, in regard they wandred after their owne inuentions. Now he sets forth the fruit of this their wandring: namely, that hauing giuen their thoughts free scope, they ouerthrew the pure worship of God. And this in deepe is the fountaine, from whence all superstitions proceede: euen when men please themselues in their inuentions, chusing rather to bee wise in their owne eyes, then to restrain their senses within the lists of Gods law. It is but in vaine then that the superstitious alleage their deuotions and good intentions, as they call them: for God so abhorres and detests them, y^e those who rest therein are tainted of high treason, and are guiltie of the breach of Gods couenant; because we ought to enterprise nothing of our owne braine: but to yeeld our obedience to Gods commandement. In a word, the beginning and perfection of his pure seruice consists in teachablenesse.

The spring
of all super-
stitions.

By the verb *to prouoke*, *Isaiah* sets forth the impudencie of the people, who prouoked the Lord of set purpose: neither had they any such reuerence of his Maiestie, as to subiect themselues vnder his gouernement. And this he further amplifies, in adding *vnto my face*. For seeing those that are admonished by the word haue him present as: it were before their eyes; they sinne with an hie hand, and are more guiltie of impudencie and rebellion, then such as neuer heard tell of the word.

He also mentions the *gardens* which they had dedicated vnto their Idoles; and affirms that God was prouoked by them. Some think it should be spoken of *briches* here, by way of contempt; and that they are secretly opposed to the Altar, vpon which God would haue them onely to sacrifice. And thus they thinke the roofes of the houses are here meant; where y^e superstitious sort were wont

to sacrifice, in regard they were made of *briches*. But I rather thinke this word simple signifies the Altars, which they had erected to their idols. In the meane while, howsoeuer they had a faire pretence to imitate the forme of that Altar ordained by the Lord: yet he abhorred such an excuse, because it was contrarie vnto his word.

Verf. 4. *Which remaine among the graues, and lodge in the deserts, which eat swines flesh, and the broth of things polluted are in their vessels.*

HE reckons vp other sorts of superstitions. Which albeit by reason of the breuitie of the words, it bee somewhat obscure; yet from other places of the Scriptures, it may easily bee gathered what they were. For as Necromancy was a thing much in vse among profane nations, so also the Iewes went into the sepulchers and deserts, to aske counsell of diuels; whereas they should onely haue sought counsell at the mouth of God. And in supposing to fetch answers from the dead, they delighted to be decied by the illusions of wicked spirits.

Now by the 18. of Deuteronomie, vers. 11. and other places, it appears, how expresse the Lord had forbidden this. And we haue touched it somewhat before, in Chap. 8. We are here taught in generall, that the Lord requires nothing more of vs then obedience, which hee accepts about all sacrifices: 1. Sam. 15. 22.

Which eat swines flesh.] He complained before that Gods seruice was polluted by their superstitions. Now he adds, that they reiected all difference of things: so as they discerned not between *the pure and vnclane*. And he recites one kind: namely, that they abstained not from *swines flesh*. This seemes but a light matter. Yet is it not so for all that. For we must not iudge how great this sinne is, by our rule: but according to that which the Lawgiuer hath prescribed. Neither is that sinne to be esteeme light, which God hath forbidden. This appertaines to the externall profession of faith; by which the Iewes should haue shewed, how farre off they were from the prophanations of the Gentiles. Wee must not recoile then from that rule which God hath giuen vs: no, not the thicknes of our naile.

Verf. 5. *Which say, Stand apart, come not neere to me: For I am holier then thou: these are a smoke in my wrath, and a fire that burneth all the day.*

HE notes out a grosse impietie that was among the Iewes; namely, that of an obstinate mind, and an vntamed rebellion, they opposed themselues against y^e true seruants of God: neither would they obey any admonitions. For whilest we giue eare to admonitions and reprehensions, there is some hope of repentance: but if wee reiect them, then is it certain

certaine that we be paſt cure. Now howſoever the Prophets words in appearance ſeeme to be obſcure; yet the ſumme of them is, that hypocrites doe diſdainfully, and malepaſſly thruſt backe thoſe, who faithfully admoniſh them, becauſe they attribute unto themſelves, either a ſhew of holineſſe, or, in reſpect that their pride cannot indure that any ſhould reprove them: for hypocriſie is neuer ſeparate from diſdainfulneſſe & pride. Let vs not meruaile then if thoſe who be tainted with this vice, doe inſolently exalt themſelves, bragging of their holineſſe, and thinke that they excell therein about all others: and if we at this day alſo doe find the like qualities in the hypocrites of our time, which Iſaiah hath deſcribed to bee in thoſe that then lived. For Satan hath ſo blinded them, that whilſt with a vaine bragging of words, they ſet their deuotions to ſale, they baſely eſceme of Gods word.

The expoſitors thinke this ſhould be a generall ſentence, which reproves the Iewes for not ſubmitting themſelves vnto the Prophets: but we thinke the circumſtance of the place ſhould be conſidered, which they haue not ſufficiently reſpected, namely, that this verſe depends ſtill vpon the former: ſo as the Iewes are ſharply reproofed for reuolting from the true religion. And beſides, for that they had maliciously followed their owne inventions, ſo farre forth, that they commanded ſuch to bee pacifying, as ſoothed them not up therein. For this word, *Goe backe*, ſignifies nothing elſe but *get thee hence*; as if they ſhould ſay, *We will not needle v with ſuch as ſhew vnto vs the way to life and ſalvation.*

Verſ. 6. *Behold, it is written before me; I will not keepe ſilence, but will render it and recompence it into their boſome.*

The Prophet alludes to the cuſtome that is among Iudges, who haue lying by them vpon record, the informations, teſtimonies, acts, and other pieces of euidences, that when neede requires, the offender may bee eaſily conuicted: for we uſe to leaue thoſe things in writing, which we would haue poſteritic to remember. The Lord then teſtiſies that theſe things can neuer bee forgotten, becauſe they bee written before him. For howſoever hee winkes at things for a time, yet ſhall not the wicked eſcape vnpuniſhed, but ſhall well perceiue in the end that hee is a iuſt Iudge.

Hence let vs gather, that wee ought not to abuſe Gods patience, if hee forbearcs vs long, and liſts not vp his hand by and by to inflict his iudgement vpon vs; for he ceaſeth not for all that to keepe a register of all our faults; for which we may be ſure he will one day puniſh vs, vnleſſe we repent. I grant the Lord hath no neede to write for his memories ſake: but it pleaſeth him to uſe this phraſe of ſpeech, that wee ſhould not imagin him to be forgetfull of any thing, when hee defertes the execution of his iudgements. Nay, in Ier. 17. 1. he ſaith yet more expreſly, that the ſiue of

Iudah was written with an iron pen, and with the point of a diamond.

To render into their boſome, is a phraſe of ſpeech much uſed in the Scriptures, Pſal. 79. 12. Ier. 32. 18. becauſe men thinke their finnes are either covered, or that they ſhall not come into account. And thus, either they lay the raiues of their concupiſcences in their owne neckes; or in attributing their faults to others, they become vtterly ſcareleſſe. This is the cauſe why God threatns to recompence their ſiue into their boſome, to the end they may bethinke themſelues what Iudge it is with whom they muſt haue to doe.

Verſ. 7. *Your iniquities, and the iniquities of your fathers ſhall bee together (ſaith the Lord) which haue burnt incenſe vpon the mountaines, and bliſſephemed mee vpon the hilles: therefore will I meaſure their old worke into their boſome.*

*Or, for they.

Heere he amplifies that which hee ſaid in few words in the former verſe. For hee ſhewes that it was not of yesterday that the Iewes were guilty of ſuch a diſloyaltie; but that it is the example of their fathers, whoſe ſteps they now followed: euen as heerebefore the Lord complained that he had a long time forborne this people, and was ſo wearie at laſt, that hee could beare them no longer. Thus then the Prophet aggravates their ſinne, when he tels the Iewes that they haue followed the example of their fathers. As if he ſhould ſay; *ſuch birds, ſuch egges*. For if men haue been often and diligently admoniſhed, their obſtinacie is ſo much the more to bee condemned, if they repent not. Heere we ſee that after they had reiected all admonitions and threatnings, they perſeuered many yeeres in their corruptions and impieties, which is heere laid to their charges, that they ſhould no longer plead their excuſes to couer their faults withall; but that they ſhould rather labour to confeſſe themſelues worthy of moſt exquisite torments.

The former verſe amplified.

Heere alſo wee may perceiue it to be ſo far off, that the corruption iſſuing from the fathers, ſhould any way excuſe the children; (as the ignorant are vſually wont to make this a buckler for their defence) that it rather ſerues as a meanes to pull vpon them a more heauie puniſhment.

The bad example of our fathers not to be followed.

Are together.] As if the Lord ſhould haue ſaid, that hee gathered and bound vp in one bundle, both the iniquities of the fathers and of the children, that in the end he might reuenge himſelfe of them: not that the children are guiltie or puniſhed for the fathers wickedneſſe, Ezech. 18. 20. but in regard that they followed the wicked courſe which their fathers liued in. Therefore it is juſt with God to wrap them vp with them in the ſame guiltineſſe, and to condemne them according to the ſame ſentence, eſpecially ſeeing their diſcaſes were growne incurable.

For they haue burnt incenſe.] The Prophet

Kkk 3 heere

Hypocriſie neuer ſeparate from diſdainfulneſſe.

Doctrine.

Gods patience muſt not be abuſed.

heere recites one particular, vnder which he also comprehends all other kindes of vices. For hee signifies all such reuolts as whereby the people were gone backe from Gods pure worship, and had giuen and dedicated themselves vnto strange gods. See here the height of iniquitie: for when the feare of God is stolen out of the heart, then is there no soundnesse nor vprightnesse left behind. He heere points out vnto vs then, the fountaine of all disorders: which wee are diligently to obserue, in regard that men flatter themselves, thinking themselves worthy of great praise, when they serue God after their owne fantasies; and in the meane while, consider not that there is nothing more abominable in his sight, than such a seruice as is deuised according to the appetites of our carnall imaginations. And no doubt but the people heerein desired that God should accept them, whilest they burnt incence vpon the mountains. But we must not Iudge of their worke by their deliberation or good intention, as they call it: Wee must hearken to Gods voice, who protests that he is in this way greatly dishonoured, rather than to all the men in the world; lest otherwise by seeking to rest vpon our intentions: we make our selues double guiltie before his Maiestie.

I will measure their vvorke. The word *old* may be diuerslie expounded, Either, I will measure againe with their oldnesse: or, in the first place; or, in times past; or, from the beginning. But the circumstance of the place must be considered. For by that we shall the better attaine to the Prophets meaning. You know he spake ere-while touching the works of their fathers: there is no doubt thereof but he here derides the children, who placed their defence in them. For it is but a silly and vaine shift to oppose against God the customes of our fathers, that is to say, a corruption of great antiquitie. Why so? Because in thus doing, we pull downe a more heauie iudgement vpon our owne heads. And yet many are so bewitched with this excuse, as they thinke a man ought not at all to reiect the same: neither can you get them an inch further. Truly, antiquitie is honourable: But no man is so to prize it, that he should therefore in the least thing diminish any of that honour which is due vnto God. See here an excellent place to conuince such as will needes maintaine superstitions by succession of yeeres; as if an old error were to be held for a law.

Verf. 8. *Thus saith the Lord, As the wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it, so will I doe for my seruants sakes, that I may not destroy them whole.*

THe Prophet here moderates his former sentence. For other wise it had been a thing to seuerely the iniquities of the fathers should thus be called to mind, to the end the Lord might destroy their children with them. Yea, this might so haue affrighted the faith-

full, that it had been enough to haue driuen them from all hope of saluation. We ought then you see, to stand carefull vpon our watch, and to consider for what cause the Lord is displeas'd with vs. For his meaning is so to astonish vs, as that therewithall hee would draw vs to himselfe: and not thereby to throw vs headlong into despaire. Hee leaues some hope for the faithfull here then, lest they should waxe fainthearted: and in proffering them *refreshing*, hee allures them to repentance, of which he reaped neither pleasure nor profit.

He confirms this by a similitude. As if a man minding to plucke vp a vine, yet finding some fruitfull branch thereon, *hespares, and reserves it*: euen so will the Lord take heed how he pulles vp those, in whom he finds any sap or vigor. In the fifth Chapter he complained, that the people was vnprofitable: yea, worse than that; for they brought forth sower fruits. *Isaiah* retains the same similitude: but he applies it otherwise. For howsoever the people were like vnto a bastard and barren vine; yet there remained some fruitfull branches, which the Lord would not suffer to perish.

But this may be taken two waies. Either that the Lord will preferre his people for the elects sake: or, that hauing rooted out the reprobates, he will saue the faithfull. There is great difference betwene these two interpretations. As touching the first, wee know that the wicked are sometimes spared for the godlies sake, whom the Lord will neither destroy nor wrappe vp in one common calamitie with them. And this is manifest enough by diuers examples in the holy Scriptures. The Lord would haue spared Sodom and Gomorah, had there been found but ten righteous persons there: Gen. 18. 32. All those which were in the ship with S. Paul to the number of 276. persons were giuen him of God, and saued from shipwacke; that so the power which he shewed in his seruant, might be the more euident: Act. 27. 32. The Lord blessed the house of Potiphar and made him to prosper in all things for Josephs sake, who dwelt in his familie: Gen. 39. 5. Many like examples there be which euery one may collect by himselfe. But I rather approue of the other exposition; namely, that the Lord so punisheth the sinnes of his people, that yet notwithstanding he hath respect to his beloved ones; and wrappes them not vp all in one, and the same ruine. Neither is it his meaning onlie that the faithfull shall be saued, but that there shall be a remnant left, in the midst of whom God will haue his name called vpon. And this is worth the noting. For he shewes that the remnant shall be very small, in comparison of that great multitude which was then in the land: as wee haue seene in Chap. 1. 9.

Now whereas the faithfull are often punished with the wicked, let vs not thinke God doth them any wrong: For the Lord will easily find faults sufficient in euery one of vs to afflict and punish vs. Besides, his meaning is to instruct and awaken vs by his rods: for being

God reiects our good intentions, if we haue not his word to warrant them.

Notte

God neuer threatnes so seuerely, but he leaues some hope of pardon for the faithfull.

God sometimes spares the wicked for the elects sake.

1
2

The faithfull muſt not murmur, if God ſometimes wrap them vp in the ſame judgement with the wicked.

ing knit, and as it were grafted into the body of a people, it is no wonder if we be ſmitten with the ſame blowes, in regard we are members that haue drawne infection from the ſame. In the meane while, God moderates theſe chaſtiſements, leſt hee ſhould utterlie teare vp the choſen plants.

Verſ. 9. *But I will bring a ſeed out of Iacob, and out of Iudah that ſhall inherite my mountaine: and mine elect ſhall inherite it, and my ſervants ſhall dwell there.*

An explanation of the former ſentence. We muſt not iudge of the Churches eſtate by outward appearance.

THe Prophet explains the former verſe in other words, and ſhewes that the Lord will reſerue a ſeede vnto himſelfe, which ſhall call vpon his name. For he hath been wont ſo to chaſtiſe his people, that hee hath ſtill continued a Church, in which his truth and pure religion might be kept. For which cauſe alſo S. Paul calles her the pillar and ground of truth: 1. Tim. 3. 15. Wee are not to Iudge of the Church then, by the eſtate of things here below (ſeeing there is nothing ſtedfaſt in this world) but by the counſell of God who cannot endure to lee her either o-uertrowne or deſtroyed. Let vs carefullie remember this then, that ſo no calamities, ruines, nor deſolations of the Church may aſtoniſh vs.

He calles thoſe *inheritors of the mountaines*, who being ſet free from vnder their captiuitie, ſhould returne home againe into their countrie. Iudeah was full of *mountaines*, as we know. Againe, hee expounds that which might ſeeme obſcure: for hee ſignifies that the Iewes ſhould returne vnto their firſt ſtate, and that by right of inheriſance they ſhould inioy that land out of which they had been exiled. For ſoone after, Iudeah was exceedingly waſted: but the Lord proteſts that it ſhall not continue ſo long. For the greater confirmation whereof, he briefly mentions the *covenant*, by which this land was ordained for them to poſſeſſe as their *heritage*.

Thus albeir they were a long time retained as priſoners, yet this word *heritage* ſerued to put ſome life into them, that they might come to an aſſured confidence touching their being reſpoſſeſſed thereof. But it is to be noted that this grace is reſtrained to the *elect* and true *ſervants* of God, leſt all indifferentlie ſhould preſume to applie the ſame vnto themſelues.

Verſ. 10. *And Sharon ſhall bee a ſheepfold: and the vallie of Achor ſhall be a reſting place for the cattell* of my people that haue ſought me.*

* Or, ſor.

BY theſe figures he meanes nothing elſe but that the land which was waſte, ſhal be againe inhabited. For we haue here a ſecret compariſon thus: howſoever after the baniſhment of her inhabitants into a farre cuntrie, ſhee ſhould remaine ſolitarie and empty: yet ſhal ſhee againe be inhabited, and that in ſuch wiſe, as there ſhall be *abundance* of

ſtockes, and beards: of fruitfull paſtures, and commous: and ſhould alſo furniſh them in plentifull manner with all things neceſſarie for the ſuſtentation of men.

Sharon and *Achor* were places for paſtures; but the one was apt for ſmall beaſts, and the other for great. And here we ſee that Gods promiſes not onely containe in them the things belonging to the life to come, but alſo to that which is preſent; to the end wee might taſte his bountie and liberalitie to the full. For by earthly benefiſts, we are invited to ſeeke for greater and more excellent things touching the heauenlie life.

Godlineſſe hath the promiſe of things belonging to this life, as well as of thoſe to come.

Whereas the Lord extends his liberalitie euen to the *brute beaſts*, which were created for our uſe: thence are wee to conceiue a more ſure and confident hope touching his fatherly kindnes towards vs. For if hee bee pleaſed to take care of beaſts which are ordained to ſerue vs, much more will hee furniſh vs with all things conuenient both for this life, and for that to come. And yet wee muſt keep in mind that doctrine (whereupon we haue inſiſted heretofore) which brings vs from temporall bleſſings, to the ſpirituall kingdome of Chriſt: Which the Prophets are wont to deſcribe out vnder figures.

If God take care of beaſts, much more to vs.

For my people.] Here he excludes the reprobates, who with braſen faces, will ſtand to bragge of Gods name falſely and vainly. But howſoever they dare malepertly bragge of Gods promiſes and ſacraments, yet are they neuer the nearer for getting any part with Gods children therein, but are deprived of all hope of Gods bleſſings, that ſo they may bee fitted to receiue the recompence of their iniquities.

In adding, *who haue ſought mee*, hee ſhewes yet more plainely who they bee that haue their part in theſe benefiſts: that ſo hee might ſtop the mouthes of all reprobates and hypocrites, as wee haue ſaid. See here then the true marke which ſeparates the ſheepe from the goates; and the lawfull heires from baſtards: namely, *in ſeeking* the Lord. For it is not enough to ſhroude our ſelues vnder ſome name or title; but wee muſt *ſeek* the Lord in puritie of conſcience, that ſo wee may cleaue vnto him with our whole hearts.

A note how to diſcerne Chriſts ſheepe from goates.

Verſ. 11. *But yee are they that haue forſaken the Lord, and forgotten mine holie mountaines, and haue prepared a table for the* multitude, and furniſh the drinke offering to the number.*

* Or, armie.

LEST hypocrites ſhould beguile themſelues with theſe promiſes, or, leſt they ſhould imagine that this which is ſpoken touching the reſtauration, belonged vnto them; hee once againe direſts his ſpeech vnto them. He calles them *Apoſtataes*, becauſe they had *forgotten the mountaine of Zion*: that is to ſay, had reuolted from Gods pure worſhip. For by the mountaine of *holineſſe*, he ſignifies the rule of holineſſe contained in the word

A preuention.

of the Lord. For the Temple was built by his commandement, that in it he might be called vpon: with the altar also, whereupon hee inioined them to offer sacrifices. Thus all sacrifices and oblations were abominable, were they offered in any other place then that; or, to other gods; or otherwise then that which the law prescribed. For it is vnlawfull for men to doe any thing in this behalfe, after their owne fantasies; because the Lord requires nothing but obedience, 1. Sam. 15. 22. which cannot be done without faith, neither can faith be separated from the word, Rom. 10. 17. out of which it is not permitted vs either to seeke or aske of God.

In saying, *who haue prepared a table*; he recites their superstitions. The word *Gad*, is diuersly expounded: for some thinke he meanes Iupiter, or his starre: others, fortune. Saint *Jerom* translates; Who prepared the table to fortune: thinking that this word notes out happy euents. But it seemes more probable to me, that this word is taken for a band or multitude; yea, euen for an armie: and the etymologic of the word futes well enough with the icope of the text. There is one notable place amongst the rest in Gen. 30. 20. which serues for the vnderstanding of this word, where *Leah* reioiceth for the increase of her children: for it seemes her speech should be thus expoude; *into a band*. As if she should say; I haue now a great number of children: for the had many before; in so much that the called *Gad*, her sist soane. So in this place, I thinke *Gad*, should be taken for a band, troope, or armie: the reason is, because they had so many gods, that they were scarcely able to count them for their multitudes.

To furnish, may be taken heere two waies; namely, that they *furnished* all things for the seruce of their Idols, liberally and magnificently: for superstition can keepe neither end nor measure. And those, who when the matter concerns Gods worship, will not spare a penny; will steely bestow all they haue to set vp their Idols: or that there is not the meannest of their puppets, to which they haue not offered somewhat: and I rather content my selfe with this second exposition. For Idolaters thinke they haue neuer done enough, vnlesse they honour euery Saint; yea, and the more they serue them, the better they thinke to prosper in their busineses. And of this, we haue but too much experience at this day in the Papacie.

By the *number*, hee signifies that which hee meant by Armie: and this repetition is much vsed in our Prophets language. Thus his meaning is then, that the *Table was set vp*: that is to say, they sacrificed not to one Idoll alone, but to an infinit number: that by this hee might shew, what sore punishments these Idolaters were worthy of.

Verf. 12. *Therefore will I number you to the sword, and all you shall bow downe to the slaughter, because I called, and yee did not answer; I spake,*

and yee heard not, but did euill in my sight, and did chuse that thing that I would not. *Or, before mine eies.

The Prophet alludes to the number of gods, whereof hee spake in the former verse: and shewes, that the Lord will easilie comprehend their great numbers; for he will number them to the sword. By this it is euident that hee spake not in the former verse of the two planetes, Iupiter and Mercurie, as some imagin; but in not satisfiing themselves with one God onely, they gathered together an armie of Idols.

Their coniecture is friuolous, who by the word *Meni*, which we haue translated, Number, vnderstand Mercurie, because *Mena* signifies to number; and that Mercurie was the god of the Merchants, who haue their bookes of accounts. For the Prophets meaning is plaine enough, in that he shewes the people shall be numbred to the sword, because they reioiced in an heape of gods, and refused to rest vpon the onely true God.

Because *I haue called*, he amplifies the greatness and hainoufnesse of this reuolt, in regard the Iewes sinned of a set malice, and rather against knowledge, then of ignorance. For they had been often taught and instructed, but they insolently reiected all admonitions. In which respect, they were much lesse excusable then those to whom the Prophets were not sent. For as no man liue can pretend any cause of ignorance; so yet the Iewes much lesse, and those to whom the word of the Lord hath been published: who for this cause shall haue a sharper sentence of condemnation pronounced against them then, and shall be mote seuerly punished then any other.

Hee sets downe the meanes of this call; namely, that hee had exhorted them by his Prophets. For by the clause, *I spake*; hee repeats one and the same thing twice, according to the custome of the Hebrewes, as wee noted before.

To hearken to the Lord, is to obey his word: for it were to little purpose to lend an eare, vnlesse wee follow that which the word proounds vnto vs. For otherwise, what difference is betweene vs and the Ass, who wags his eares? God will be heard with the heart, Prou. 23. 26. As for a fained audience, he vtterly reiects it. Now he shewes the cause why they would not come at his call; surely they stopped their eares against wholsome doctrine. For the beginning of obedience, is to bring with vs a desire to learne.

Before mine eies, is as much to say, as before my face: which phrase of speech, he vsed a little before. Euery man sinnes before the eies of the Lord, neither can any auoid his presence. But it is properly said that we sinne before his eies, when being called by him, wee stand not in awe of his sacred presence: for he is nearest to those whom he calles by his Prophets: yea, to such it may be said, that he shewes himselfe visibly. Therefore so much the more detestable is their impietic, and worthy

Iupiter and Mercurie.

Mercurie, god of the Merchants.

No man can pretend ignorance.

who is said to sinne in Gods eies.

1
2
3

No seeking of God without the word and faith.

Iupiter star.
Fortune.

thy of the more ſtripes, who as it were with whorith foreheads deſpiſe God, who in ſuch familiar manner ſummons and calles them vnto him.

Now by the latter end of the verſe it appears that the Iewes are not condemned for any enormous ſinnes; but chiefly in reſpect of their new found deuotions, by which they corrupted the ſeruiſe of God. For albeit they were forward enough in hunting after their forged ſacrifices, thinking thereby to obtaine Gods fauour; yet himſelfe pronounceth that he abhorres all ſuch endeouours; becauſe there is nothing but pollution therein. It is not permitted to euery one then to follow that which ſeemes good in his owne eyes; but we muſt haue an eye to that which God approves of, and not turne therfrom, nor an haires breadth. Well, we ſee that this vice hath not rigned in one age onely, namely, that men haue followed their fond appetites; and haue worſhipped their owne inuentions in ſtead of God: when the queſtion hath been touching his pure ſeruiſe. But how great delight ſo euery man take herein, ſure it is the Lord proteſts that hee contemnes and abhorres it.

Verſ. 13. *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord God, Behold, my ſeruants ſhall eate, and yee ſhall bee hungrie: Behold, my ſeruants ſhall drinke, and yee ſhall be thirſtie: Behold, my ſeruants ſhall reioyce, and yee ſhall be aſhamed.*

14. *Behold, my ſeruants ſhall ſing for ioy of heart, and yee ſhall crie for ſorrow of heart, and ſhall howle for vexation of mind.*

THE Prophet here diſtinguiſheth (yet more clearly) hypocrites which hold a place in the Church onely, from his true and lawfull children. For though all will needs take vnto them the title of Gods children, yet he ſhewes that many were to be chaſed our of the houſe; & that thoſe who prouddie inſulted ouer Gods people, ſhould be frustrated of their hope, becauſe it was vaine & falſe. And we are to note well the remarkable oppoſition, which is here put betweene Gods ſeruants, and thoſe that falſely glorie in his name. For he ſhewes that their vaine titles, their boating, and falſe perſwaſions ſhould ſtand them in no ſtead. Theſe words, *they ſhall eate and drinke, ſignifie felicitie, and a prosperous eſtate in this preſent life.* For it is as if he had promiſed to haue ſuch care ouer the faithfull, that they ſhould want nothing.

But it ſeemes the Lord here promiſeth his ſeruants more in words, then he performes in deedes. For are they not often *hungrie, and thirſtie*, whileſt the wicked overflow in all ſorts of good things, and abuſe them to exceſſe and riot? I anſwere, that Chriffs kingdome is here noted out vnto vs vnder theſe figures: for otherwiſe we cannot comprehend it. For which cauſe the Prophets are wont

to borrow ſimilitudes from earthly kingdoms, in which when the ſubiects flow in wealth and in the inioying of all bleſſings, there Gods liberalitie is to be eſpied; by which alſo wee ordinarily iudge of his fatherly loue towards vs. But becauſe it is not expedient that the faithfull ſhould fixe their hopes vpon earthly commodities, it is enough for them that they take onely ſome little taſte of them, the better to vphold their faith. And if it ſo fall out, that they bee now and then preſſed with wants, yet by feeling the benefit of contentation with a little, they ceaſe not, for all that ſtill to acknowledge God for their father, and to taſte of his liberalitie. Nay, ſhall I ſay more; euen in their very poueritie they are oftentimes richer indeede then Kings, and great Lords of the earth.

But although the wicked enioy neuer ſo much, yet are they the only miſerable people in the world; becauſe they cannot enioy their wealth with a good conſcience. The Prophet therfore hath reſpect to the right vſe of Gods giſts. For ſuch as ſeue him purely, receiue from him as children from the hand of their father, all things needfull for this life preſent. But the reſt as vsurpers and theeces take whatſo euer they poſſeſſe by ſtealth and robbetie. No riches nor abundance can ſatiſfie the wicked: they are alwaies in diſtruſt, and trembling: their conſciences will neuer giue them reſt. The Lord you ſee then promiſeth no more here then hee truly performs; neither muſt we iudge of this felicitie by outward appearances.

This will be better perceiued by the words following, where hee ſpeakes of *reioying and giuing thanks*. For no doubt the Prophets meaning is to ſay, that contentment conſiſts not in the inioying of abundance, but in tranquillitie, peace and gladneſſe of mind, becauſe all things are vnsauourie to the vnfaithfull. But the godly take more pleaſure in the feeling of Gods fatherly loue, then in all the pleaſures of the world. In the meane while wee are to note, that wee muſt wait for all felicitie from God onely, who will not permit any of his to want any thing that appertaines to the bleſſed life.

Verſ. 15. *And yee ſhall leaue your names as a curſe vnto my choſen: for the Lord God ſhall ſlay you, and call his ſeruants by another name.*

HE proſecuteth the ſame doctrine, and ſhewes that God in the end, will ſeparate the hypocrites from his true ſeruants. Truly, we are not to maruell that the Prophet inſiſts thus long vpon this point; for there is nothing more difficult to be beaten into the heads of hypocrites, who being puffd vp with pride, deceiue and beguile themſelues.

Now he ſaith, they ſhall leaue their name as a curſe, in regard that they held themſelues to be the holy poſteritie: and that there was none vnder heauen but they, worthis of that title. To that alſo appertaines the verb, *To leaue*: as if he ſhould ſay, that their vaine

Note

The faithfull richer in their poueritie, then the greateſt Kings in their ſuperfluities.

No riches can ſatiſfie a wicked man.

Contentment conſiſts not in abundance.

Our chief felicitie.

Hee proſecutes the ſame matter ſtill.

We muſt not follow that in Gods ſeue which ſeemes good in our eyes.

Hypocrites diſtinguiſhed from the faithfull.

Obiect

Anſ.

atrogancie

arrogancie, to which they were so much addicted, should bee violently plucked away from them. And therefore to the end they should beware how they pleased themselves in a temporall and transitory reioicing, the Lord blunts the edge of this their ouerweening, and saith, they shall leaue their names as a curse to other seruants that he shall haue. So as this example should be solemnly taken vp as a common prouerb; *God so curse thee, as he hath done the Iewes.*

A fearefull prouerbe.

Shall call by another name.] He refels the ouerweening of this nation, who thought God should haue no more people remaining, if the children of *Abraham* were gone. For he protests that hee will adopt vnto himselfe a new people, and that hee is not so tied to the Iewes, but hee will easilie finde out others, whom hee will adorne with the name of his people.

Whereas some by the word *other*, vnderstand the name of Christian, it is too much constrained: and it appears by the circumstance of the place, that the Prophet had another drift. For, in as much as the Iewes proudly bragged of the *antiquitie* of their name, and thereupon grew insolent, because God had of old elected them; as if forsooth he could not bee without them; therefore hee promiseth that the Lord will chuse and adopt another people. And yet should they haue no cause giuen them thereby to accuse him either of inconstancie, or variableness; as if he had changed counsell. Nay, he will rather execute his decrees and iust iudgements against all those, who vnder a false pretence of his name, doe darken his glorie, and corrupt all pietie.

Verf. 16. Hee that shall blesse himselfe in the earth, shall blesse himselfe in the true God; and he that sweareth in the earth, shall sweare by the true God: for the former troubles are forgotten, and shall surely hide themselves.

The whole world opposed to Iudeah.

The whole world is heere opposed to this little corner of Iudeah, where Gods seruice was in a manner included and shut vp. But since God hath manifested himselfe vnto all: he is not now serued in any particular region, but in euery place alike. Which Christ also himselfe teacheth, in Iohn 4.21. saying; The houre is come, and now is, when ye shall neither in this mountaine, nor in Ierusalem, worship the Father. And Saint *Paul* wils that men in euery place doe lift vp pure hands vnto heauen, without wrath or doubting: 1. Tim. 2. 8. He opposeth the word, Earth, heere then, which signifies all the world, vnto the land of Iudeah.

To *blesse* and *sweare*, is taken for the whole seruice of God. Swearing is one branch of this seruice, as we haue seene in Chap. 19. 18. and 48. 1. For thereby we leaue all iudgement vnto God, and acknowledge him the true witnesse of whatsoeuer is done or spoken. We are said to *blesse*, when we looke for all prosperitie frō his hand, & *giue him thanks*: after we

haue receiued the same. In a word, when we acknowledge that all benefits flow in vnto vs from his meere liberality.

By the true God.] That is to say, by him who is faithfull in his promises, and stedfast in his counsell. Though I denie not but there may bee a close opposition vnderstood betwene the true God, and the false gods of the Gentiles.

The troubles are forgotten and pass.] This promise appertaines onely to the faithfull. Gods meaning is, that he will put an end to the anguishes & afflictions, that the Church might know her calamities should not indure for euer. Now this promise began to take effect, when the people returned from Babylon: for howsoeuer they were troubled as well in the way, as in their Country, yet their afflictions were neuer so sharp, but God kept a measure in them, because at their returne home, the reedifying of the Temple, and the restoring of the politike estate, asswaged the sorrow, and cheered vp their hearts in good hope, vntill the coming of Christ.

Verf. 17. For loe, I will create new heauens, and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into minde.

By these similitudes hee promiseth a notable change. As if God should haue said; I haue both will and power to restore my Church; yea, & that in such wise, that she shall seeme to haue recouered new forces, and haue an habitation in a new world. These are excellent maners of speeches. But the excellencie of this benefit, which should be offered at the coming of Christ, could not otherwise bee expressed. Neither doth the Prophet meane this alone of Christs first coming, but of the vvhole course of his kingdom, vntill his last appearing: as we haue often said in other places. The world therefore you see, is created anew (as you would say) by Christ: for which cause also the Apostle calles it the new world: Heb. 2. 5. Neither is it to bee doubted but hee alludes to this text. Notwithstanding the Prophet speaks heere of the restauration of the Church, after their returne out of Babylon. This I grant to bee true: but yet this restauration is imperfect, vnlesse it bee extended vnto Christ: wee are but in our course thitherward as yet; neither shall these things be fully accomplished, vntill the last resurrection, which is as it were the vtmost bounds and limits of this course.

A notable change promised.

The world created anew by the coming of Christ.

Where he saith, that the former things shall be no more called to mind: some referre it to heauen and earth. As if he should say; Heereafter there shall be no more newes of these creatures. But I had rather referre it to the former time: for his meaning is, that the ioy of being restored, shall bee so great, that they shall vtterly forget their miseries. Vnlesse any had rather referre it to those benefits which were worthy of memorie, and yet were forgotten when Gods grace appeared. And in this sense the Prophet saith, in Chap. 43. 18.

Remember

Remember ye not the former things? Not that God would haue the faithfull to forget their deliuerance; but in regard that the one compared with the other, did daiken it, as the Sunne doth the brightnesse of the ſtars.

Let vs remember then that these things are fulfilled in vs, as oft as we be regenerated: but we are regenerated onely in part, and therefore as yet we cannot attaine the sight of this new heauen and new earth. What meruaine is it then if wee sigh and mourne, seeing wee haue not yet vnterly put off the old man, but many remainders of sinne doe still sticke fast in vs? *This renoument must begin at vs*, who hold the first ranke: for the creatures in regard of our offences, grone, and are subiect to vanitie, as Saint Paul speakes, Rom. 8.20. *But after we shall bee perfectly renued, heauen and earth shall be renued also, and shall recover their first estate.* Hence we may gather that which wee haue often mentioned, namely, that the Prophet hath an eye to the whole kingdome of Christ, euen vnto the end thereof: which for this effects sake, is called the day of restauration and refreshing, Act. 3.19.21.

Verf. 18. *But bee you glad, and reioice for euer in the thing that I shall create: for behold, I will create Ierusalem as a reioicing, and her people as a ioy.*

He exhorts the faithfull to reioice with condigne ioy, for so excellent a benefit of God. And this was added for amplifications sake; because men neuer esteeme of the graces of God, according to their worth, amongst the which, this heere mentioned is the chiefe and most excellent; for they prize them at a very low rate. It is needfull therefore that the faithfull should be ronzed and quickened vp by such exhortations as these, to the end they should thew themselves neither vnthankfull, nor forgetfull: as also that they should not lightly passe ouer this benefit; namely, that being redeemed by the hand of Christ, they might beare the remembrance thereof in their hearts, as the earnest pennie of eternall life. This is the cause why Iſaiah teacheth that the delinerance is not acknowledged with such thankfulness as is meete, vnlesse the faithfull continue on their ioy the whole course of their liues, exercising themselves in singing the praises of God.

Whereas Ierusalem is called gladnesse, and the people thereof reioicing; it may seeme somewhat harsh at the first blush: yet we may thence gather a good exposition, namely, that in the deliuerance of the Church, there shall be such cause of ioy, that it shall abolish all matter of sorrow. And surely when our miseries themselves doe tend to our saluation, wee haue therein no small occasion giuen vs of reioicing.

Verf. 19. *And I will reioice in Ierusalem, and ioy in my people, and the*

voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

The Prophet expresth somewhat more then in the former verse. For in this his meaning is to say, that the Lord will not onely giue matter of reioicing, but also that himselfe shall bee partaker with them in this ioy. For so great is his loue to vs, that he takes no lesse pleasure in our prospering, then if he himselfe inioiced the same with vs. By which, our faith ought to be much confirmed, namely, when wee heare that God beares vs such an ardent loue, are we afflicted or scattered? He saith, that this grieues & troubles him. Contrariwise, doe we flourish and prosper? He professeth that he takes great pleasure therein. According as wee haue seene in Chap. 63.10. that the Spirit of God was vexed, when that order which he requires and approues, is ouerthrowne and confounded. As also in Chap. 62.5. he takes vnto him the person of a bridegroom, who findes no other contentment then in his wife.

Verf. 20. *There shall bee no more there a childe of yeeres, nor an old man, that hath not filled his daies: for hee that shall bee an hundred yeeres old, shall die as a young man: but the sinner being an hundred yeeres olde, shall bee accursed.*

Some thinke the difference betweene the Law and the Gospell, is heere noted out, because the Law is as a schoolmaster, who held his schollers vnder the first rudiments; but the Gospell brings vs to a perfect age. Others vnderstand it, that there should bee no more any difference of age: for where eternall life is, there needes no dispute about youth or age. But thus I expound the Prophets words; *Be they young or old, they shall come to a perfect age; so as they shall enermore be strong, euen as in the flower of youth: yea, they shall bee alwaies lustie and strong: for wee wax old and feeble by reason of our finnes.* *When thou art angry, saith Moses, Psal. 90.9, 10. all our daies are gone as a tale that is told. The time of our life is threescore yeeres and ten: and if they bee of more strength, fourscore yeeres; yet is their strength but labour and sorrow: for it passeth away suddenly, and voce stee away.* But Christ is come to strengthen vs, and to vphold vs in a perfect estate.

Yet we must distinguish betweene the two members. For after he hath said, that the *Children of the Church shall liue long, so as none of them shall be taken out of the world, till they be full of daies, nor till they haue finished their perfect course:* he therewithall addes, *they shall be strong euen in age is selfe.* Now howiouer the greater part of the faithfull are hardly able to indure in respect of their weakenesse, and that others of them grow feeble before the time; yet is this no vaine promise. For if Christ did truly and fully raigine in vs, it is certain that

A lively description of that great loue which God beares vs.

1
2

What blessings belong to them that are in the kingdome of Christ, in this and in the rest of the verses following.

Our life passeth like the shadow, but in Christ we haue stabilitie.

Simile.

Our regeneration onely in part.

An exhortation to reioice, added by way of amplification.

his strength would flourish in vs, and would sanctifie both our bodies and soules. Let vs then thanke our owne corruptions, that wee are subiect to so many sicknesses, sorrowes, to age and other incumbrances. Why so? Because we will not suffer Christ quietly to raigne in vs. As also for that we haue not so fructified in newnesse of life, as vterly to haue put off the old man.

The cause of languishing sicknesse, and vntimely death in our felues.

Corporall and spirituall blessings onely found in Christs Church. Nothing but a curse dresse out of the Church.

From this place also let vs note, that corporall and spirituall blessings are onely to bee found in the kingdome of Christ: that is to say, in the Church. For out of it, there is nothing but *accursednesse*. Whence it followes that all such as are out of this kingdome, are most miserable. And albeit, they seeme lustie and strong: yet are they nothing in Gods account but rotten and lothsome carions.

Verf. 21. *And they shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards, and eate the fruite of them.*

22. *They shall not build, and another eate: for as the daies of the tree are the daies of my people, and mine elect shall in old age enjoy the worke of their hands.*

* Or, shall continue the worke, &c.

IN these two verses hee puts them in mind of the blessings contained in the law; namely, that such as serued God should inhabit the houses they had built, and should eate the fruites of their trees: Leuit. 20. 10. As on the contrary, the rebellious should bee driuen out of their houses to giue place vnto strangers: neither should they gather the fruite which they had planted: Deut. 28. 30. From this curse (saith Ihu) shall the Lord deliuer you; to the end you may enjoy your substance. Now the Prophet sets before them the things appertaining to this life present: and from thence borrowes similitudes, thereby teaching vs how to ascend vp higher: and to apprehend and lay hold of the blessed and endles life. For we must not sticke fast glued to these transitorie things: but rather vse them as steppes and staires to scale the heauens, that being rapt vp thither, wee may possesse the eternall and immortall benefits. It is also good reason: that the enjoying of these blessings, wherof the vnbeleeuers deprived themselves, should bee promised to the regenerated Church; which rested wholly vpon the only free fauour and good pleasure of her God.

Temporall blessings ought to bee as ladders, by which wee may ascend to the enjoying of eternall benefits.

Where it is added, According to the daies of a wee; some thinke eternall life should be here promised: as if men should then enjoy the tree of life. But this device is vterly frivoules and too farre remote from the Prophets meaning. Neither can I sufficientlie maruell at the expositors, who vexe themselves so much about the interpretation of this place; seeing our Prophet speaks not onely of life, but of the quiet estate thereof also. As if hee should say; *You shall plant vines, and tise of the fruite of them; neither*

shall you depart out of this world, till you haue enjoyed them; both you and your childrens children.

He takes a similitude from a tree, in respect that before hee had spoken of planting of vines. Therefore hee now promiseth, they shall peaceably enjoy their houses and vines, without being any more annoyed, either by enemies or theecus. So as this tranquillitie should bee no lesse durable, then the life of a tree.

The worke is continued, or is made perpetuall, when it hath good successe; otherwise, men should trauell a long time for nothing, if God did not blesse their labour; because the enemy would rob or spoile that which men haue begun: so as they should not be able to enjoy the fruits of their hands. The worke is continued therefore, not onely when it hath some good progresse; but when it is come to perfection. Hence let vs note, that we cannot so much as enjoy our goods nor haue any true rest, vnlesse we be in the kingdome of Christ (who is the only heire of the world) and stand ingrafted (by faith) in his bodie. I grant, the wicked may enjoy the benefit of this life present: but therewithall they shall be in continuall anguish, and the worke of an euill conscience shall continually gnaw them: so as euen their very abundance shall bee their bane and destruction. For onely faith causeth vs to apprehend the things which belong to the blessed life: those then that are destitute of faith, can bee no members of Christ.

No true rest to them that are out of Christs kingdome.

Those that are destitute of faith, no members of Christ.

Verf. 23. *They shall not labour in vaine, nor bring forth in feare: for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their ends with them.*

* Or, of spring.

THE Prophet reckons vp here other kindes of blessings which God promiseth to the Kingdome of Christ. For albeit, God had continued to blesse his people alwayes, yet were those blessings after a sort withheld till Christs coming, in whom there was to be seene full and perfect felicitie. The sum is, that both Iewes and Gentiles should bee euery way happie vnder the kingdome of Christ. Now as it is a signe of Gods wrath and curse when we receiue no fruit at all of our labour: so on the contrary, it is a testimonie of his blessing when wee enjoy the fruites of our trauels. For this cause hee shewes how the Iewes being returned home from their captiuitie, to enjoy a true and full deliuerance, shall not labour in vaine; neither shall their worke be fruitlesse. The law thiercates the death of friends, warres, losse of goods, and anguish of minde: Leuit. 26. 22. Deut. 28. 65. But God here on the contrary promiseth tranquillitie, fertilitie, peace, and the fruit of our labours. These blessings are well to be noted: for there are few to be found, who in taking paines, fixe their eies vpon Gods blessing, so as to attribute all things vnto him: or to bee perswaded that they doe but labour in vaine, vnlesse the

Few fixe their eies (whilest they labour) vpon Gods blessing.

Lord giue good ſucceſſe thereunto : Pfalm. 127 1. Euen as then we are to expect all bleſſing from God onely : ſo to him alone ought we to render the whole praiſe after wee haue receiued the ſame.

Some expound that which follows, That the women ſhall not bring forth in feare: and that they were not to feare bearing of children; in regard they ſhould feele no paines therein. We know this puniſhment was inflicted vpon the woman, becauſe of her ſinne: namely, that ſhee ſhould bring forth in ſorrow; and ſhould be in danger of death: Gen. 3.16. Children are alſo begotten with feare and trembling, when there are any rumors of warres: and it is more likely that the Prophet alluded to this, to wit, that there ſhould be ſuch tranquillitie, that men and women ſhould haue no cauſe of feare at all. For theſe words muſt be referred to fathers and mothers; who are feareleſſe, in reſpect of their children in time of peace; which they cannot but feare, when any calamitie threatens vs.

The reaſon that is added, *That they ſhall be theſed which the Lord hath bleſſed*, agrees very well. For whence ariſe feares, terrors, and diſquietnes of min, but from Gods curſe? when this curſe then ſhall bee remo- ued, the Prophet had good cauſe to affirme that the fathers, with their offspring, ſhall bee freed from feares and diſtractions; becauſe being in Gods fauour, they ſhall bee alwaies ſo ſecured from feares and dangers, that they ſhall dwell in ſafetie.

And their offspring with them.] This is contrary to the priuation of children, which is reckoned vp amongſt the curſes of God, in Leuit. 6.22. And it is as much as if hee had ſaid, I will no more bereaue them of the children they haue begotten; but will cauſe them (with the reſt of other benefiſts which I will beſtow vpon them) to enioy their children alſo.

Verſ. 24. *Ye before they call I will anſwer, and whiles they ſpeake I will heare.*

SEe heere a (moſt) precious promiſe. For what thing is more deſirable then to haue God fauourable vnto vs, and that wee may with boldnes haue acceſſe vnto him? Surely, it is not poſſible wee ſhould be any way miſerable, as long as it is free for vs to haue our recourſe vnto the Lord, though we ſhould be inuironed with infinite thouſands of miſeries and calamities. The Lord heere promiſeth vs then, that *ouer ſhall not put vpon ſuites to him in vaine*. But what? The Fathers vnder the Law had the ſame promiſe; for from the beginning of the world they were heard as oft as they called vpon him. And in deede prayer is one of the chiefſt fruites of faith. But yet our Prophet confirms this point more and more: for, in regard the lewes were to endure a tedious and long captiuitie, the Lord proteſts hee will not ſuffer them to languish any longer in exile, neither will hee any longer deferre his help, but will *heare them*: yea,

before they cry. This promiſe principally belongs to Chriſts kingdome, by whom we are heard, & haue acceſſe vnto God the Father, as S. Paul cleerely teacheth in Eph. 3.12. I grant the Prophets had the ſame acceſſe: neither could their prayers haue any entrance, but for Chriſts ſake. But the gate which is now made large, and ſet wide open vnto vs, was then narrow, and in a manner cloſed vp. For vnder the law, the people were wont to ſlay without in the court: Luk. 11.10. Nothing now hinders vs from entering into the Sanctuary; becauſe the waile of the temple is rent in twaine. By Chriſt then wee haue entrance into heauen; and may boldly, and with aſſurance draw neere to the throne of grace to obtaine mercie and helpe in time of need. Heb. 4.16.

But ſome may aſke here, whether there be any faithfull in the world at this day, or any kingdome of Chriſt? for it appears not that God is thus ready to grant his ſuccours, neither doe we perceiue any fruit of our prayers. I anſwere, that howſocuer it then onlie appears that our petitions haue been heard, when the effects manifeſt the ſame; yet notwithstanding it is true that the Lord reiects not our prayers; becauſe he ſuffers vs not to faint, but ſuſtains vs inwardly by the vertue of his holy ſpirit, to wait for the cunct and iſſue with patience. Neither deferres hee, as if hee wanted time or leiſure, as men often doe; but rather thereby to exerciſe our faith, and prooue our patience. In a word, God may be ſaid to heare two waies: Firſt, when hee giues vs helpe manifeſtly: Secondlie, when hee aſſiſts vs inwardly by the ſtedfaſt and vnmoouea- ble, euen in the middeſt of our afflictions. Were this doctrine deeplie ſeſed and grounded in our mindes, then ſhould we with more boldneſſe and alacritie haue our recourſe to our God: neither would wee ſtand diſputing the caſe touching the inuocation of Saints, with ſo great headſtrongneſſe and obſtinacie. For whence is it that men haue forged ſo many patrons vnto themſelues, to whom they had rather go then to Chriſt; but becauſe they haue not receiued this doctrine, and haue reiected theſe noble and excellent promiſes?

Verſ. 25. *The wolfe and the lambe ſhall feede together; and the lyon ſhall eaſt ſtraw like the bullocke: and ſo the ſerpent duſt ſhall be his meate. They ſhall no more burne nor deſtroy in all mine holy moun- taine, ſaith the Lord.*

HIS meaning is, that all things ſhall be ſet in their perfect order, when Chriſt ſhall raigne; and as it ſeemes here is a cloſe oppoſition betwixt Adam and Chriſt. For we know that all the miſeries of this life preſent, haue flowed into vs from the ſinne of the firſt man; for then were wee deſtroyed of the rule and authoritie which God had giuen man ouer all the creatures, which before willingly ſubmitted themſelues vnto man, and obied his

Whence feares and terrors ariſe.

A precious promiſe.

Queſt.

Prayer, the moſt principal fruit of faith.

Anſ.

Mat. 27. 51.

Queſt.

Anſ.

Note.

The reaſon why God deferres to heare our prayers.

commandements: Gen. 1. 28. But now the greater part of them *rise vp* against him; yea, and assault him with open force. When wee see *vulues, beares, lions*, and other wild beasts to liur men; and other beasts which serue him; and that those also which should bring him in profit, harmes him, this wee must impute to our owne sinne, who by our disobedience haue ouerthrowne the order of these things.

It belongs to Christ to restore all things to their right order, which by our sinne are now out of order.

But seeing it is Christs office to bring all things into their right order and perfect estate againe, therefore the Prophet shewes that the confusion or scattering which is now to be perceiued in the things of this world, shall be taken away at his coming; because all corruptions shall then be abolished, and the world shall returne to his *first shape*. The lion shall lue without doing harme, & shall not rore after his pray. The serpent shall content it selfe with the dust; and shall couch close within the earth; without annoying any by his venomous sting. To be short, whatsoeuer is out of course and disordered, shall then be set into a right frame.

And it is not to be doubted, but our Prophet alludes vnto cruell & blood thurstie men, whose wild and furious natures shall be tamed, when they shall bow downe their necks

to beare the yoke of Christ. But first of all we are well to consider what confusion is happened to all creatures, by the sinne of man. For if we haue not an eie to that, we cannot rightly iudge as we ought of the excellencie of this restauration. Wee are also to call to mind that which wee haue said before in the eleuenth Chapter, touching these allegories.

Heere wee see then *what men are before the Lord* hath conuerted and changed their hearts, and receiued them into his fold, euen *wild and furious beasts*; who then, and not before, abstaine from doing euill, when the Lord by the power of his Spirit, hath subdued their cruell and leuisfull natures: He addes, in his holy mountaine; because all things that offend, being purged away, the Lord will gather vnto himselfe a Church, without spot or wrinkle, Eph. 5. For vnder the word *All*, he signifies a generall purgation: yee wee are not to wonder if so many doe still remaine cruell and vntractable; because there are but a very few that are true inhabitants of Gods holy mountaine; very few that be faithfull and sincere, no not amongst those that make profession of Christianitie. For seeing the old man shall rules and raignes in them, it must needs be that *Crises* and *dissensions* should also haue their full sway there.

What men are, being not conuerted.

Few that rightly inhabit Gods holy mountaine.

THE LXVI. CHAPTER.

Verf. 1. *Thou saist the Lord; The heauen is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is that house that yee will build vnto mee? And where is that place of my rest?*



In the first foure verses he direct his speech to the Hypocrites.

His sermon is different from the former. For the Prophet inueighs here vehemently against the Iewes, who being puffed vp with a vaine confidence of their sacrifices, and of the Temple,

were iocund and merrie: and vnder this pretence pleased themselves in their sinnes. But he shewes that this securitie of theirs was not onely vaine and foolish, but execrable and diuellish. Why so? Because such as inuicour to serue God, and to appease him with outward ceremonies, doe grossly flout him to his face. He therefore reprocheth them that they went about to forge vnto themselves an Idoll in stead of God, when they fixed him thus to his Temple. Afterwards he discourseth of the Churches renuing, and of the spreading thereof thorowout the whole world.

Besides, minding to gall such to the quicke, as serued God by halues, and in hypocrisie; hee begins at the description of his nature. For in assigning vnto God the *heauen* for his dwelling place, his meaning is to say, that his

Maiestic fills all things, and is present euery where; neither can he be shut vp, nor circumscribed within any place whatsoever: so far is it off, that they can include him within the Temple. The Scriptures often affirme that *God is in heauen*, not that he should be shut vp there, but to raise vp our mindes farre above the world, lest wee should imagin ought of him that were contemptible or earthly: for the onely aspect of the heauens ought to raise vp our mindes higher, and to raise vs into an admiration. And yet he testifies in infinit places, that hee is *present vith vs*: that his power is manifestt euery where, to the end wee should not thinke it to be inclosed within the heauens. It seemes this was no hard matter to be beleued; and that all then confessed as much. For who among them was ignorant, that Gods Maiestic filled both heauen and earth? Thus they might obiect then, who goes about to plucke God out of heauen? Therefore *Isaiah*, thou art angry, and inueighest against vs without cause. Neither is it to be doubted but the people insolently reiected this doctrine of the Prophet, and were sharply incensed against him, as if hee had offered them great wrong. But the answer was readie; namely, that whilest they inuoued to pacifie God, according to their owne fantasies, they didas much as in them lay, thereby forge an Idoll, quite contrarie to his Maiestic. These superstitious ones trusted in their bare & naked ceremonies, thinking they had quit themselves wondrous well, if they had been once at the Temple, and offered

Obiect.

Ans.

ferred

ferred vp their praies and ſacrifices there. The Prophet ſhewes that we muſt not meature Gods Maieſtie by ſuch an elle; as alſo, that whatſoever wee offer him without the puritie of the heart, is nothing elle but vannie. For ſeeing by Gods dwelling in the heavens, it is euident that he is of a ſpiritual nature; if his ſeruitee bee not answerable therunto, it muſt needs bee corrupt and wicked.

Vnder the word *houſe*, he comprehends all the ceremonies wherein they thought Gods ſeruitee conſiſted. And for as much as they iudged of God and of his ſeruitee, according to the outward face of the Temple, the Prophet ſhewes, that it was vnworthy the Maieſtie of ſo great a Lord, to fix him to a viſible and perihable building. He diſputes not here ſimply about the eſſence of God, but therewithall of his true worſhippe, ſhewing that it is ſpiritually, that ſo it may be answerable to Gods nature, who is a Spirit: Iohn 4.24. For if men did ſeriously conſider what God is, then would they not forge vnto themſelves ſo many haſtard kindes of religion; neither would they meature his infinit greatneſſe according to their ſhallow capacities. This common and known ſentence therefore hath more weight and efficacie in it, then if the Prophet had ſpoken vnto them of ſome new matter. For thus he ſhewes that they were ſo ſottish and ſenſeleſſe, that they were ignorant of that which was familiarly knowne to the ſimpleſt idiot. As alſo, that they rather reſembled beaſts then men, in imagining that God was ſet, or ſhould reſt, himſelfe in the Temple. By way of contempt, then he aſkes, *where is this place?* For it is not fit that God ſhould dwell vpon earth, or be ſhut vp as within a priſon. The Temple alſo was built vpon a little hill, which little ſpace was vnable to comprehend Gods glory: 1. King 8. 27.

That place of my reſt. And yet the Lord had ſaid of the Temple, in Pſ. 132. 8. Behold this is my reſt, heere will I dwell, for I haue a delight therein. And in 2. Chron. 6. 41. Ariſe O Lord, and enter into thy reſt. Moreover, wee haue ſcene before, in Chap. 11. 10. that Gods reſt in the Temple ſhould be glorious. In a word, the very name of the Temple was honourable. Why then doth the Prophet now reiect it? I anſwere, that the Temple is called *Gods reſt*, becauſe hee there ſhewed teſtimonies of his preſence. For he had choſen this place to be called vpon therein, in which alſo he manifeſted euident ſignes of his power & might. But hee cauſed it not to bee built, that men ſhould therefore belecue touching his Maieſtie, whatſoever ſeemed good in their eies: but rather, that being admoniſhed of Gods preſence, by the viſible ceremonies, they might from thence liſt vp their hearts into heauen, acknowledging the Lord to be greater and more excellent then all the world. And yet men being of their owne natures inclined to ſuperſtitious; the meanes which were giuen the Iewes for their helpe, proued lets and hinderances vnto them by their owne fault. So farre were they off then from mouning vp to heauen by them through faith, that

they kept their mindes groueling heere below, and made themſelves belecue that God was bound and tied vnto them: for which cauſe they ſerued him by halves, yea, they toied with him at their pleaſure.

Saint Stephen alleadgeth this place to verie good purpoſe, in Act. 7. 48. And the Apoſtle Paul cloſly applies it to the ſenſe that we haue touched, Act. 17. 24. For both of them ſhew, that ſuch grieſly deceiue themſelves, who bring carnall rites vnto God, as if his ſeruitee and true religion conſiſted therein: as alſo thoſe who wickedly deſace his glory, by ſetting vp Idols and Images. For Saint Stephen directes his ſpeech to the Iewes, who being fixed to the *ſhadowes of the Law*, neglected true godlineſſe. And Saint Paul ſpeaking to the Gentiles, denies that God dwels in Temples made with hands.

Verſ. 2. *For all theſe things hath mine hand made, and all theſe things haue I bene, ſaith the Lord, and to him will I looke, euen to him that is poore, and of a contrite ſpirit, and I remember not my word.*

The Prophet reſutes the falſe opinion which men conceiued of Gods ſeruitee, in regard they thought that ſacrifices and externall ceremonies auailed very much of themſelves. For this is the ſtate of the queſtion, namely, that God contents not himſelfe with bare and naked ceremonies; that he holds them vaine and idle diſguifings, when men thinke to ſatiſfie him with them.

Where he ſaith, that *he hath made all things*; it muſt not onely be referred to the Temple, but to whatſoever was there offered vnto God. Now hee ſpeakes expreſly of his making of them, to teach men that he hath no need of this externall ſeruitee. As in Pſal. 50. 10. he proteſts that *all beaſts are his creatures*, and by right belong to him: and yet (forſooth) the Iewes would needs pacifie him by ſacrificing of them. But ſee heere the diſeaſe which is rooted in the hearts of the ſuperſtitious ſort, namely, that they transforme God into what Image they liſt, though himſelfe hath ordained an outward worſhippe; not for his owne profit, but for ours, that ſo we might be exerciſed therein, according to the reach of our capacities.

The word *beginning*, is as much as if he had ſaid; You ought not to compare mee vnto thoſe things which heerebefore haue *begunne* to be, ſeeing I am *eternall*, and without any beginning. I haue little need then of your ſacrifices, ſaith the Lord, who *was before them*. What good, I pray you, then can they do me? In a word, hee contends, that ceremonies are nothing worth in themſelves, but belong to another end. *Iſaiah* alſo holds it for a thing out of queſtion, that God can receive no increaſe: whence it folloves, that he onely contents himſelfe with himſelfe, ſeeing from all eternitie *hee neuer ſtood in need of the worlds helpe*.

Whatſoever is offered to God, without the puritie of the heart, meere vannie.

Gods worſhip muſt be answerable to Gods nature.

Obiect.

Anſ.

S. Stephen. S. i. Paul.

1

2

Or, had a beginning.

1

2

God ord ins his worſhip not for his owne profit, but for ours.

A true definition of Gods service.

In the next place the definition of the true worship is added. For in saying that God regards the *humble*, I doubt not but the Prophet here priuilege opposeth the *humble*, and *contrite in spirit*, to that pompe, brauerie and glistering shew of ceremonies, which are wont to dazle mens eyes, and to rauish them out of themselves. The Lord testifies then, that hee rather requires *humble and broken hearts, which tremble at his commandment*. Vnder which words, hee notes out the *inward puritie of the heart*, and a true hunger and thirst after righteousness: and therewithall also teacheth vs how wee ought to be prepared to become acceptable vnto God.

Obiect.

As touching the word *trembling*, it might seeme strange at the first, that the Prophet should require this of the faithfull; seeing nothing is more sweete and acceptable, then the word of the Lord: neither any thing more contrarie vnto it then *trembling*. I answer, that there are two sorts of trembling. With one of them those are smitten who see and hate the Lord: with the other they are touched and made obedient, who reuerence and feare him. I am not ignorant that some referre this member to the law, which threatens, terrifies and denounceth the horrible iudgements of God against sinners. But I take it more generally, in regard that the faithfull themselves tremble at the promises, when they receiue them in humility. Hence let vs gather, that true pietie consists in hauing all our senses framed according to the obedience of God, without attributing any thing to our selves through pride or vaine glorie. For it is the nature of faith to yeeld obedience to God: and to heare him speake, attentiuely and patiently. But no sooner doth any vaine opinion of our owne worth puffe vs vp with pride and loftinesse of mind: but wee are forthwith destitute of all godlinesse and feare of God; because if we attribute vnto our selves neuer so little; so much the more doe we contemne and despise him.

Anf. Two sorts of trembling.

A trembling at the promises. Wherein true pietie consists.

The nature of faith.

And it is diligently to be obserued that he faith, that tremble at my word: for many will brag of their honouring and fearing of God; who yet shew themselves contemners of his Maiestie, in that they set light by his word. All our reuerence which wee profess to owe vnto God, must be manifested by trembling at his word: in which hee will be acknowledged, as in his *lively image*. The sum is, that God prefers this sacrifice before all others; namely, when the faithfull are so humbled in the true denial of themselves, that they think themselves nothing, yea and are content to be brought to nothing also in Gods sight. In which sense it is said: Psal. 51. 17. That a *contrite spirit is an acceptable sacrifice vnto God. A broken and a contrite heart O God (saith the Prophet) thou wilt not despise*. Now because this modestie of faith, brings forth teachableness in vs; therefore the studie of godlinesse is also added: that hauing cast down all our pride and rebellion, we may begin to tremble at y word of God.

A singular consolation.

From these words we haue to gather a singular consolation; namely, that albeit wee

seeme to be miserable in this our humilitie and low estate; yea, and that we be thought vnworthie the looking on: yet cease we not for all that to be happie; because it pleaseth the Lord to behold vs with a gracious aspect. When we are solicited then to despair, let vs thinke: surely the Lord is wont euen by this means to raise vp his children vnto heauen, howsoeuer being here for a time brought euen to y gates of hell, they seeme to be overwhelmed vnder the waight of the burthen.

Verf. 3. *Hee that killeth a bullocke, is as if he slew a man: hee that sacrificeth a sheepe, as if he cut off a dogges necke: he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swines blood: he that remembreth incense, as if he blessed an Idoll: yea, they haue chosen their owne waies, and their soule delitteth in their abominations.*

THIS present verse containes two members. In the first, *Isaiah* plainely manifests, that God reiects all the sacrifices of his nation, yea, which more is, that he abhorred them. In the second, he notes out an horrible abuse, wherein they had mingled the ceremonies of the Gentiles, among the sacrifices of the law: and by this meanes had peruerued and corrupted all. Many thinke that by these words, the sacrifices ordained in the law are abolished. But they deceiue themselves; because *Isaiah* handleth that doctrine now, which he touched before in the first, and in the fiftie eight chapters. But *Isaiah* doth not precisely condemne the sacrifices, but rather the vices & corruptions which were mingled with them; namely, in that the Iewes thought that God contented himselfe with vaine appearances: and themselves in the meane while neglected his feare, and the hauing of a good conscience. Hee speakes not of the thing it selfe then, but taxeth the persons who abused the sacrifices. For in thus doing, they offered him no better then the empty shels. His meaning bricflie is to say, That God approoues of none other sacrifices, but such as proceede from a pure heart and a sincere affection.

God condemnes not the sacrifices, but the corruptions mingled therewith.

In the meane while it is very likely the Prophet alludes to those horrible and monstrous sacrifices of the Gentiles. For they sacrificed men aliue: or buried them quicke in the earth. And the Romanes, who thought themselves more deuout then others; yea, and the Iewes also, abstained not from so horrible and execrable a crime. Nay, which more is, these men in their inconsiderate zeale defiled themselves with the murdering of many children: thinking therein forsooth to imitate their father *Abraham*: Gen. 22. 10. And *Isaiah* therefore saith, that in sacrificing an ox, it was all one, as if they had cut a mans throate. And thus he shewes that albeit the Iewes had a religio apart by themselves, and such a one as was ordained by God; yet were they esteemed no better then the prophane heathen, among whom all things were filthie and vn-cleane. Also, that God approoued no more of

the

Gods name
no leſſe pro-
phaned by
hypocriſie,
then by ſu-
perſtition.

the one, then of the other, in regard his name was no leſſe profaned by their *hypocriſie*, then by the *ſuperſtitions* of the Gentiles. But in another place we haue ſhewed how needfull this admonition was. For though the Iewes were ſufficiently conuicted of all manner of abominations, yet they iudged themſelues in good caſe as long as they might lie lurking vnder this couerture. The Prophet therefore meets with them in their turnings, and affirms that they ſhall gaine no more by thinking thus to pacifie God, then if they offered vp vnto him the *ſacrilegious abominations of the heathen*.

When in the end of the verſe he ſaith, *yea, or, in truth;* the place may be translated two waies: becauſe ſy relatiue may agree as well to the Gentiles, as to the Iewes, namely, that the Iewes had mingled & intangled themſelues in the idolatries of the Gentiles: or that they followed their owne inuentions. The firſt expoſition is not much amiffe, were it not conſtrained; for he ſpake not of the Gentiles before. And the height of the Iewes impietic conſiſted in this, that beſides the abuſe of Gods pure worſhip; and contempt of the law, they had profaned the Temple, and all other places with wicked and curſed ſuperſtitions. They ſet vp Altars, they planted groues, they ſet forth plaies, and fights: ſo as they walked after euery thing that was ſet vp to corrupt their minds. Thus there was a *mingle mingle* of all ſuperſtitions betwene *them and the heathen*: ſuch as is at this day to be ſcene in the papacie: Where wee behold many fragments patched together of all ſorts of ſuperſtitions, not only *Jewiſh* and *heatheniſſe*, but alſo newly inuented by the diuell himſelfe: that by meanes thereof they might vnder ſuch goodlie ſhewes, the more eaſily coſten and deceiue the world.

Popiſh ſu-
perſtitions,
Jewiſh, Hea-
theniſh, and
diuiliſh.

The Prophet then meant to ſay, that both themſelues and their companions deſerued double condemnation; becauſe whileſt they gloried in the name of God, and made profeſſion of his ſeruiſe, they were not aſhamed to pollute the ſame with the ſacrileges of *idolatrious nations*.

The other expoſition is not obſcure: and it alſo ſutes well; namely, that the Iewes were addited to follow the vanitie of their owne *inventions*; and ſo followed their *abominations*. And thus he affirms, that ſuch ſerue not God with a pure affection, who at their pleaſure deſpiſe him. Nor onely in reſpect that they are ſtuffed full of avarice, hatred, ambition, guile, crueltie and robberies: but in regard that by their inuentions, they had corrupted Gods ſeruiſe. And albeit the relatiue ought to be vnderſtood of the Iewes: yet the Prophet therewithall condemnes all the ſuperſtitions which they had borrowed from prophane nations. Thus there is no great difference in reſpect of the thing it ſelfe. For he onely teacheth that whatſoever proceeded from them was filthy and abominable, becauſe they had malepertly, and rebellioſly ſhaken off Gods yoke: ſo as impiety raigned among them in euery place. For how can thoſe riuers be pure and cleane, which

Simile.

receiue nothing but mire and dirt from an impure fountaine?

Their *choiſe* and deſire did more manifeſtly diſcouer their obſtinacie; for hauing wittingly caſt Gods commandments behind their backes, they applied their minds vnto things vicerly contrarie thereunto: as if of ſet purpoſe they had determined to reiect whatſoever proceeded from God, that they might yeeld obedience to their owne peruerſe luſts.

Verſ. 4. *Therefore will I chuſe out their deluſions, and I wil bring their feare vpon them, becauſe I called, and none would anſwere: I ſpake, and they would not heare: but they did euill in my ſight, and choſe the things that I would not.*

The Prophet meant to ſay that the Iewes ſhould gaine nothing by ſeeking out goodly pretences, and ſtaring holes; becauſe God cannot bee deluded by the fained and coloured words of men. For what reaſon is it indeede, that wee ſhould meaſure God according to our blind reaſon? neither is it meete he ſhould ſtand to mans arbitrement: but wee muſt iudge of his workes by his word.

Gods workes
muſt be iud-
ged of by his
word.

[*I will chuſe out.*] That is to ſay, I will ſo diſperſe the fogges and miſts which they labour to ſpread abroad, that all ſhall be able to diſcerne of the illuſions. They ſeeme now to ſteale away in their darke, but a time will come, wherein they ſhall bee laid open as at noone day. The ſumme is, that in regard the Iewes were addited to ſuch a licentiousneſſe, that they preferred whatſoever pleaſed them before Gods commandments: it ſhuld alſo come to paſſe, that God would alſo take his turne at his pleaſure, to diſcouer all their iuglings.

The ſumme,
1
2

Vnder the word *feare*, he repeates one and the ſame thing according to ſy cuſtome of the Hebrewes, thus; I will cauſe them to know that they haue erred in ſuch wiſe, that that which they *feared*, ſhall fall vpon their owne heads. Whereby you ſee that their turnings and windings ſhould ſtand them in no ſtead, in conſounding the truth with lies; or to cloake their ſuperſtitions: and alſo becauſe the Lord hath ſkill enough to ſeparate the one from the other.

[*For I haue called.*] The Prophet doth againe condemne the obſtinacie of the Iewes: who could not abide that the Lord ſhould correct them. There is but onely remedy left to tame our vices; that is, to *hearken* vnto God ſpeaking, when hee labours to bring vs into the right way. But if we harden our hearts (againſt this remedie) then are we paſt cure. Are men ſo audacious then as to prize their inuentions about the commandments of God? Surely, then doe they openly ſcorne him, to whoſe will they ought to bee ſubiect. But this yet is more damnable, namely, when there was ſo great hardneſſe of heart, that the gate was ſhut vp againſt al holy admonitions.

But one re-
medie left to
tame our
vices.

In vaine therefore did they boast, that their new found deuotions were of any value, to make their seruice acceptable vnto God; because he reiects and abhorres all that, which men chuse and follow, when they haue cast his word behind their backs.

Isaiah also repeats that which he had said before; namely, that the Lewes had sinned in Gods presence: as if they had wittingly determined to prouoke the eyes of his glory to wrath. But withall hee adds the meanes wherby they effected it; to wit, in respect that of a peruerse desire, they chose to embrace that which God had forbidden them. Neither is it for nothing that hee thus oft taxeth the vnicurable insolencie of men, who defrauding God of his right, care not a button for any thing he approves of.

Verf. 5. *Hear the word of the Lord, all ye that tremble at his word. Your brethren that hated you, and cast you out for my names sake, said; Let the Lord be glorified: but hee shall appeare to your ioy, and they shall be ashamed.*

* Or, draue you behind them.

Heere hee turns him againe to the godly.

Now hee directs his speech to the true seruants of God; and promiseth them a thing which they could hardly expect in these so sharpe afflictions. And he speaks in particular vnto them, in regard many at that time bragged falsely of Gods name. Yea, turning himselfe from the multitude, he preacheth to a small handfull: as hath bin shewed in Chap. 8. *Seale up the Law, and bind up the testimonie among my Disciples.* Now by this marke hee shewes, that Gods true and lawfull children are those that tremble at Gods word: which is a rare vertue indeed. He therefore opposeth it to their fained profession, who after they were circumcised, would needs bee held for Gods people; & outwardly made great shewes of holinesse; that we might vnderstand, that such onely feare and reuerence God, who honour and reuerence his word: that is to say, who being touched to the quicke with Gods voice, doe subiect all their senses vnder his obedience: for this is no small testimonie of pietie and godlinesse.

Such onely feare God, as reuerence his word.

Besides, in as much as hypocrites are wont to cast a wonderful goodly varnish ouer their glorious ceremonies, the Prophets intent is, to arme and fortifie the faithfull, that they might be able to beare such assaults, lest they should faint when they should bee mocked and abused. As if he should say; You haue not onely to fight against *strange nations*, but also against *home enemies*, who hold a place in the Church, and who are your brethren, in respect of that covenant, which is common to you all. If they scorne your *simplicitie*, in the same sort as they haue proudly despised the Lord himselfe, you must constantly and courageously resist this temptation.

He calles them brethren then, who notwithstanding were enemies, both to the faithfull, and to the word of the Lord. For he attributes this name vnto them by way of yeelding or

granting it vnto them; who yet vsurped this title falsely. Whence wee gather, that it is no new plague wherewith the Church hath bin pestered; namely, that the enemies, who beare the name of brethren, should be notified vp in her lap. Hence ariseth that perpetuall conflict which wee must needs haue with hypocrites, who cannot indure that we should serue God in puritie and sinceritie of conscience.

Who cast you out. Word for word it is; Who draue you behind them. As wee see how the Pope thunders against vs horribly, as if wee were most abominable and wretched people. And thus the hypocrites reiect the little flock of the faithfull. For when they once get a head, and see themselves the stronger in multitude, authority, and power, then doe they exercise such tyrannie, that all things are allowed or disallowed, as they list; and cause the faithfull not onely to bee disgraced and despised, but they ouerwhelme them with their great multitude, as the chaffe doth the good corne, yea, they proudly trample them vnder their feete.

Popes thundrings.

The multitude reiecteth the little flocks,

Let the Lord bee glorified. Some translate; The Lord is seuer: but let vs examine whether of the two expositions sures best. Those who turne it, He is seuer; thinke that the wicked complaine, as if God dealt too seuerely in that he spared not his people, and handled them ouer rigorously. They therefore thinke that by this language the people were solicited to despair: for when the wicked goe about to turne vs from God, they labour to plucke from vs all hope and assurance of our saluation. But I rather rest in the second exposition, which also is most received and approved of; to wit, that the wicked doe heere scorne both the promises and prophecies, because this glory which the Prophets do oft mention, did not appeare. As if they should say; Let the Lord shew some signe of his glory, that wee may boldly rest vpon it. And therefore the Prophet meant to arme the faithfull against such a blasphemie, that they should not suffer their faith to bee shaken by the flouts and mockes of the wicked.

This place also may be taken in this sense, namely, that the wicked promised themselves wonders and mountaines, as if by their good deedes they had merited Gods fauour. Which *Amos*, in Chap. 5. 18. reprocheth the Lewes withall; to wit, that they perfwaded themselves God would bee mercifull vnto them, whilst they obstinately prouoked the Lord. In as much then as vnder pretext of their sacrifices, they despised all threatnings, and yet made their brags, as if God would aide them; the Prophet answers, that they shall see the glory of God, but after another maner then they expected. In a word, it is all one as if he had said; The Lord at his coming will cause the faithfull to know, that their hope was not vaine. For hee would appeare with fauour to the good: but to their shame and destruction, who affirmed that hee would come to maintaine their impietic, whereof hee is the enemy and auenger. The one sort should inioy gladnesse of heart and consolation: but the others, shame and confusion. For they should speedilie

Brethren, enemies both to the word, and to the godly that professe it;

ſpeedilie taſte of Gods vengeance, at which they now ieſt.

Verſ. 6. *A voice ſoundeth from the Citie, euen a voice from the Temple, the voice of the Lord that recompenceth his enemies fully.*

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

HEE confirms the former ſentence, namely, that God hath not threated in vaine, that he wil quickly come to puniſh the hypocrites, that the faithfull may with the more cheerfullneſſe of heart, wait for this promiſed ioy. But all the difficultie is, to know of what enemies he ſpeakes : for wee may vnderſtand this place of the Babylonians, by whoſe ruine God deliuered his Church. It may alſo bee applied to the other enemies, who were entertained in the boſome of the Church. And I rather incline to this latter ſenſe, though I denie not butt it may be vnderſtood of all ſortes of enemies. But hee reſpects the home enemies, of whom he hath hitherunto ſpoken, who reiected the voice of God, ſounding continually by the miniſtry of the Prophets. Well, ſaith hee, It ſhall come to paſſe that you ſhall heare a more horrible voice. And yet hee forthwith mitigates his ſpeech, leſt this terror ſhould diſcourage the ſeruants of God.

The ſumme.

The ſumme is, that the wicked reioice in vaine, when they oppoſe their rebellions againſt Gods iudgements. Why ſo? Becauſe they ſhall not eſcape his hand. Nay, which more is, *his voice ſhall ſound from that Temple*, wherein they put ſuch carnall confidence; and that the faithfull ſhall then receiue the fruit of their patience. Would to God that we at this day did not perceiue the like contempt among the rout of hypocrites, who care neither for admonitiōs nor threatnings at all : neither beare they any reverence to Gods word. In ſtead of that ſweete and *ſtil* voice which they now heare, we are conſtrained to preach *the voice of feare* and tumult, which one day ſhall ring in their eares; but it ſhall be ſtrō y moutheſ of ſuch maſters, as ſhall be of a clean contrary diſpoſition. For ſeeing the world is ſo audacious, as with a ſacrilegious contempt to reiect Gods word, it ſhall bee conſtrained not onely to heare, but alſo to feele an *armed voice* : that is to ſay, fire and blood.

Verſ. 7. *Before ſhee trauailed, ſhee brought forth : and before her paine came, ſhee was deliuered of a man child.*

God provides for the ſafetie of his children, whileſt he chaſtiſheth the wicked.

THE Prophet hauing before comforted the faithfull, to the end the arrogancie and pride of their enemies (with which they ſhould be afflicted) might not aſtoniſh them; and after that hauing commanded them to wait conſtantly till the coming of the Lord; now he addes therewithall, that the wicked ſhall bee ſo puniſhed, that yet God in the meane while will prouide for the ſafetie of

his choſen. Neither ſpeakes he onely of ſome one or two men, but of the *whole Church*, which he compares to a *woman* : which ſimilitude hee hath vſed heretofore. For the Lords ſpeciall meaning is, to gather vs into a body, wherein wee may haue the teſtimonie of our adoption : as alſo to acknowledge him for our *ſaiker*, and that we may be nourished vp in the Church, as in the lap of our *mother*. This ſimilitude therefore of a *mother* is very apt: for it ſignifies that the Church ſhall bee ſo reſtored, that ſhee ſhall haue a large and ample of ſpring, though for a time the was reputed for a widow and barren. And hee repeats the ſentence againe, which hee vſed heretofore : but now hee expreſſeth ſome-what more, namely, that this worke of God ſhall be ſudden and vnexpected. For he withdrawes the faithfull from all carnall conceits, that they ſhould not iudge of the reſtauration of the Church according to humane reaſon.

Women are wont to beare their children the ſpace of nine moneths in their wombes: then at laſt they bring them forth with great paine: but the Lord hath another way in begetting of his children. It ſhall come to paſſe, ſaith hee, that the fruit ſhall come into the world, before it can be either percieued, or felt by any paine. And that is the cauſe alſo why hee attributes the whole praiſe thereof vnto himſelfe, in regard that ſuch a miracle farre ſurpaſſeth all the induſtrie of man.

Now hee ſpeakes eſpecially of a *man child*, to ſet forth the courage and agilitie of theſe children. For his meaning heereby is, that ſuch a race ſhall be of a noble kind, and not delicate or effeminate. As we alſo know that the faithfull are ſo regenerated by the Spirit of Chriſt, that they finiſh their courſe with an inuincible courage. And in this ſenſe Saint Paul ſaith, that they haue not receiued the ſpirit of bondage to feare againe, &c. Rom. 8. 15.

Verſ. 8. *Who hath beard ſuch a thing? Who hath ſene ſuch things? Shall the earth be brought forth in one day? Or ſhall a nation bee borne at once? For as ſoone as Zion trauailed, ſhe brought forth children.*

HE extols the greatnes of this worke, whereof he ſpake in the former verſe. For his meaning is, that the reſtauration of the Church ſhall be admirable, and extraordinarie, in ſuch wiſe that the faithfull ſhall confeſſe the whole worke hath proceeded from Gods meere grace, and not from the order or courſe of nature. For when men thinke of this, they are like to them that dreame, as it is ſaid in Pſalm. 126. 1. Moreouer, his meaning is not that the reſtauration of the Church, ſhall be perfected by and by. For the aduancements thereof are tedious and diuers, yea very ſlow in the iudgement of our ſenſe; but he ſhews that the beginning it ſelfe

surmounts y reach of al mens capacities. And yer he speakes not excessiuey neither. For we often see that the Church brings foorth, when she was not iudged to be with child before. Nay, which more is, whilest thee is thought to be barren, thee is made fruitfull by the preaching of the Gospell; in such wise, that we admire at the thing after it is come to passe, in respect it seemed incredible to vs before.

These things were in part accomplished when the people returned out of Babylon. But we haue a much more euident prooue of it in the Gospell; after the publishing whereof, what an infinite number of children hath shee been borne in the Church? And haue not we in our times seene the accomplishment of this prophesie? For since thirtie yerces past that the Gospell hath been preached, how many children hath the Church borne? Hath not the Lord now troups of them dispersed throughout the world? Nothing was here foretold then, which we see not at this day fulfilled euen with our ciies.

Now he sets foorth the glorie of this miracle by a similitude. For what people or nation came there euer into the world all at an instant? For men are gathered and increased by little and little. But it is farre otherwise with the Church; who *foorthwith* brings foorth and repleniseth many places with great numbers of her children. The summe is, that God will work so powerfully, y by an extraordinary manner, the Church shall haue an infinite number of children *in an instant*. The word *earth*, may be taken for any countrey, or for the inhabitants of it.

The summe.

Verf. 9. *Shall I cause to tranell, and not bring foorth? shall I cause to bring foorth, and shall bee barren, saith thy God.*

Gods power ought not to be called in question.

EVEN as in the former verse the Prophet hath highly magnified the worke of God: so now hee also shewes that it is not to bee thought impossible; neither ought any to call his power into question, seeing it farre surmounts all the whole order of nature. For if we consider *who* it is that speakes, and how easie a matter it is for him to performe that which he hath promised, we shall not bee so incredulous; but that wee shall foorthwith remember that the restauration of the whole world is in his hands, who in a moment can create a hundred worlds, if it please him. A little before by intermingling an admiration, he meant to extoll the greatnesse of the worke: but now to the end the hearts of the faithful should not be hindered nor depressed, he exhorts them to thinke well of his power. And that he might the better perswade them that nothing is so impossible with man, but it is easie with him, and by and by obeyes his commandement; hee propounds and sets before them the things which wee see every day by experience. For who perceiues not evidently his admirable power in womens bearing of children? But will not the Lord

trou yee shew himselfe, much more wonderfull in the increasing and multiplying of his Church, which is the most excellent theater of his glorie? What a peruersefesse of mind is it then to limit and restraime his power, or to thinke that hee is lesse able when it pleaseth him by himselfe alone to worke without meeces, and as it were with an out stretched arme, then when he vseth naturall meanes?

Verf. 10. *Reioyce ye with Ierusalem, and be glad with her, all yee that loue her: reioyce for ioi with her, al yee that mourne for her.*

I Saiah promiseth an happie estate to those who wept and lamented before: for he respects not his owne time, in which hee liued, but the captiuitie, during which the faithful being oppressed and beaten downe with sorrow, had almost fainted. He therefore exhorts and prouokes all those who intirely loue the Church, and hold nothing more deare vnto them then her saluation, to reioyce. Hereby shewing that no man hath any part or portion in this so great a benefit, vnlesse such only as beare an holy loue vnto the Church, and are thorowly affected with a feruent desire of her deliuerance: Yea, euen then when shee is contemptible in the sight of the world, as it is said in Psal. 102. namely, That the Saints *delite* in the scattered stones of the Church, and that they *haue pitie* on the dust thereof.

Who are fit to reioyce for the churches deliuerance.

For this cause he addes, *you that mourne for her*. For in regard there was a lamentable and an horrible scattering in the captiuitie, so as there was no recouerie at all to bee expected; hee rouzeth vp the faithful, and commands them to bee of good courage; or at least to prepare themselues to ioi.

This exhortation contains also a promise & something more then that too: For a bare promise would not haue been of such efficacie: But, these things must not bee restrained to one time alone. We are rather to call to minde our generall rule, whereof wee haue so often spoken in this prophesie: namely, that these promises must be extended from the returne of the people, to the coming of Christ; and so to the full accomplishment of all promises at his last appearing.

Verf. 11. *That you may sucke and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolati-on: that you may milke out, and bee delighted with the brightnesse of her glory.*

THIS verse must be ioyned with the former. Because the Prophet shewes what the occasion of this ioi shall be; namelie, ^{ioy} that the miserable and scattered estate of the Church, shall in time turne to be happie and flourishing. By the word *to sucke*, hee alludes to the actions of little infants. As if he should say, *Enioy your mother, with all her good things, and hang continually at her breasts*. Note here that

The occasion of the former

The oldeſt in the church muſt reſemble a little child.

that he compares all the faithfull of what age fouer vnto *little children*: to put them in mind of their infirmities and weakneſſe, that ſo they might be confirmed by the power of the Lord. This ſimilitude therefore of *milking and ſucking*, is diligently to be obſerued.

Some take the word *conſolations*, in the aſtiue ſignification, and others in the paſſiue. But I incline to them of the latter ſort. For the Prophet meanes ſuch conſolations, as the Church receiues: and which the imparts vnto her children. And indeed what *conſolation* is comparable vnto this? For in what can we find matter of more excellent or full contentment; which better appears in the member following, where the delectation in the *brightneſſe of her glorie* is added.

Verſ. 12. *For thus ſaith the Lord, Behold, I will extend peace ouer her like a flood, and the glorie of the Gentiles like a flowing ſtreame: then ſhall ſhee ſucke. Ye ſhall be borne vpon her ſides, and be ioyfull vpon her knees.*

The former ſimilitude profecuted.

In verſ. 13.

HE profecutes the ſame ſimilitude ſtill, and compares Gods children vnto *little babes* which are carried in *armes*, whom the mothers cheriſh in their *boſomes*: with whom alſo they vie to ſport and play. Now that the Lord might the better expreſſe to the full the great loue he beares vs, hee compares himſelfe to mothers, who are wont to ſurpaſſe all others in kindneſſe to their children, as wee noted in Chap. 49. 15. The Lord then will needes be *our mother*, as it were, that he may ſhew himſelfe to be tender ouer vs, (as if hee dandled vs in his lap: in ſtead of thoſe troubles, outrages, miſeries, and anguiſhes which we haue ſuſtained.

By *peace*, he meanes felicity: and in the word *glorie*, there is a repetition, vnder which is comprehended all ſorts of riches: ſo as they ſhould want nothing appertaining to a full and perfect *peace*. For in as much as the Gentiles liued ſumptuouſlie before, and had all things at will; he affirms that the faithfull alſo ſhall enjoy whatſoever belongs to an happy life; euen in as great abundance, as the *floods* which flow into the ſea.

By the continuall courſe, is meant a perpetuitie. For God being in himſelfe a *fontaine* that can neuer be drawne drie; his *peace* muſt needs diſſer very much from that of the world; which is in a moment dried vp, and vaniſheth away. As oft then as wee behold the wofull and lamentable eſtate of the Church, let vs call to mind theſe ſweete promiſes; and remember that they belong no leſſe vnto vs then they did vnto that people. And ſeeing God hath *floods of peace* in ſtore, which he wil powre forth vpon his Church: let vs not bee diſcomforted, no, nor in the miſdeſt of the greateſt and ſharpeſt aſſaults. But rather let vs ſing, and be glad; when miſeries and anguiſhes doe moſt preſſe vs.

And whereas he delightes in vs as in *child*

ren; and not as in men of a ripe age, let vs willingly acknowledge our condition to bee ſuch; that ſo we may gladly accept of theſe conſolations. For doubtleſſe it is a ſigne of Gods infinite goodneſſe towards vs, when he is thus pleaſed to ſupport our infirmities.

Verſ. 13. *As one whom his mother comforts, ſo will I comfort you, and yee ſhall bee comforted in Ieruſalem:*

14. *And when ye ſee this, your hearts ſhall reioyce, and your bones ſhall flouriſh like an Hearbe: and the hand of the Lord ſhall be knowne among his ſeruants, and his indignation againſt his enemies.*

IT is wonderfull to ſee how long the Prophet inſiſts vpon this renouation: for it might ſeeme that he had ſpoken fully of it before. But for as much as hee could not ſufficiently expreſſe the great loue and affection which God beares vs, nor content himſelfe to haue ſpoken of it, therefore it is that hee redoubles and repeats one and the ſame thing ſo often.

When he ſaith, they ſhall be *comforted in Ieruſalem*: it may be expounded two waies. For the meaning may bee, that the faithfull ſhall be glad, when they ſhall ſee the Church reſtored: or, the Church being reſtored, that ſhee will endeavour to comfort her children. The firſt expoſition ſeemes more copious: but we ought to haue an eie to the Prophets meaning, and not to that which carries a faire ſhew only. In the firſt place he makes *God* the author of this conſolation. And hath he not good cauſe? yet notwithstanding ads in the ſecond place, that it ſhall be in *Ieruſalem*, by whom it was to be adminiſtred. You ſee then that this *comfort* is not offered nor giuen to the prophane contemners, who care not what becomes of the Church, but to thoſe who out of a true affection of godlines doe manifeſt themſelues to be her children.

The verbe *to ſet*, expreſſeth a ſure experience; that the faithfull ſhould not doubt of the euent: but fully imbracing this prophetic, they might patiently endure for a time their mothers barrenneſſe.

He illuſtrates this by a ſimilitude, when he ſaith, that their *bones* ſhould receiue new force and vigor, euen as dead hearbs waxe greene, after winter. Now hee ſpeakes of the *bones*, which become withered with *ſorrow*, as *Salomon* ſaith: Prou. 17. 22. as on the contrary, *ioy* is wont to *repleniſh and reuiue* them. Thus he notes out a vehemence, and an incomparable ioy: and it ſeemes he alludes to that ſorrow which had almoſt dried vp the bones of the faithfull in captiuitie; in ſo much that they were become withered, and like dead men. The Lord therefore comforts them, and promiſeth that his Church ſhall *flouriſh*, and abound in all bleſſings. Afterwards, that he might giue them better aſſurance, hee commands them to liſt vp their minds vnto *God*, who will then manifeſt his ſuccour.

It is added afterward, that the *hand* of the Lord

The firſt member of this verſe is expounded before in verſ. 11.

1
2

Lord was not alwaies reuealed, bur remained couered for a time, as if he had been vtterly carelesse of his chosen. For in appearance, it seemed hee had reiected them, seeing *Daniel* and other good men were carried away captiues, no lesse then *Zedechias*. When the Sunne should shine againe vpon them then, there should bee manifested such a difference betweene the godly and the wicked, that his hand which before was as it were *hidden*, should now evidently appeare, because hee will no more dissemble the matter, nor suffer the wicked any longer to take their full swinge, but will openly shew what great care he hath ouer his Church. Haue our enemies gotten the start of vs then, & haue they made their part the stronger, so as wee seeme for a time to be forsaken, and left destitute of all helpe? Yet let vs not faint nor be discouraged, for a day *will come*, wherein the Lord will reueale himselfe, and will set vs free from vnder the tyrannie and violence of the enemies.

vñ.

Verf. 15. For behold the Lord will come with fire, and his charrets like a whirlwind, that he may recompence anger with wrath, and his indignation with a flame of fire.

The end of this description is, that when the faithfull should see their miseries to setue in stead of a may game to the wicked, wherat they would laugh their fill: yet they should not therefore turne from the right way, nor be discouraged. For the Prophet meant not onely to galle the wicked, who are wont to be daunted with no threatnings whatsoeuer, but scorne all that is told them: but he therewithall comforts the faithfull, to assure them that they should be in good case, being vnder Gods protection: as also that they should not ioinc in league with the wicked, though all things fell out according to their desires. Thus then it is to the faithfull especially, to whom the Prophet hath respect, to the end they should content themselves with Gods grace and protection. But it cannot well be affirmed, whether he heere comprehends the last iudgement, with those temporall iudgements wherewith the wicked begin heere to be punished withall. For mine owne part, I nothing doubt, but this iudgement is comprehended with those punishments which are onely forerunners of eternall death.

The Lord will come.] This beganne to take effect at that time, in which the people being carried into Babylon, God shewed his vengeance vpon the domestike enemies of his Church. Afterward, when the time of their deliuerance was accomplished, then hee encountered with an outstretched arme, with the prophane nations, and neuer ceased to giue them diuers signes of his *coming*; by which he shewed himselfe present to his people, and came in *fire* to iudge his enemies. Lastly, wee know that he *will come in flaming fire at the last day*, to reuenge himselfe vpon all

the wicked: 2. Thef. 1. 8. 2. Pet 3. 7. But this place must not bee restrained to the last iudgement, vnlesse we also comprehend the rest therewithall. Not withstanding hee opposeth these threatnings, especially against the hypocrites, (as wee shall see hereafter) which were among the Iewes.

Now these metaphors are much vsed in the Scriptures: for we cannot otherwise comprehend this horrible iudgement of God, vnlesse the Prophet should vsd these similitudes, taken from things in common vse amongst vs. The Prophets labour thereby to touch our senses to the quicke, that so being moued with the true feare of God, wee should not eniue the estate of the wicked, for whom so horrible and fearefull a vengeance is prepared.

By this we may see how fond and vnfruitfull the speculations of the Sophisters are, who stand to dispute about the qualitie and sharpnesse of this fire: seeing the drift of the holy Ghost is vnder these borrowed speeches, to set forth the horrible iudgement of God: because otherwise wee are not able to imagin, nor comprehend the same. And this appears yet better by the word *sword*, (which he vseth in the next verie) for there is the same reason to be giuen of it.

Fond speculations of Sophisters.

Verf. 16. For the Lord will iudge with fire and with his sword, all flesh: and the slaine of the Lord shall be many.

Hee adds nothing different from the former, but onely confirms the former sentence; and shewes, that this iudgement shall be *terrible*, lest any should thinke the inatter hee speaks of were of small consequence. Thus then he amplifies this horror, the more to terrifie the wicked, as also to cause the godly to keepe themselves in all puritie and integritie, by withdrawing themselves from the societie of the godlesse. And that therewithall they should also patiently beare the iniuries and cruell assaults of the enemies, vntill God shewed himselfe with his reuenging hand from heauē, to execute his vengeance. Now he thateens the destruction of all men, in such wise, that there should be *great heapes of dead bodies*. And this hee added expressly, in regard that impietic raigned in euery place; and the faithfull were sharplie assailed, in respect of the wickedes prosperitie. For, as our mindes are variable, so wee suffer our selues to bee carried away with bad examples, and the multitude puts many toies in our heads, as if the same were of sufficient force to withstand the hand of God. The Prophet corrects this peruerse feare of ours; for by how much the more impietic, and the great troopes of the wicked beares the sway, so much the more will Gods wrath be inflamed to burne the hotter: so as the numbers and plots of the wicked, shall not hinder the Lord from wrapping them also vp in the same ruine.

A confirmation of the former denunciation.

Verf. 17. They that sanctifie themselves,

ſelves and purifie themſelves in gardens, behind one tree, in the middleſt, eating ſwines fleſh, and ſuch abominations: even the mouſe ſhall bee conſumed together, ſaith the Lord.

*Or, in a fountaine which is in the miſt.
*Or, and.

The perſons noted, to whom this vengeance belonged.

NOW he notes out theſe enemies (as with his finger) againſt whom he ſaid, Gods ire ſhould be inflamed. For it was hard to diſcerne whether hee ſpoke of forraine and open enemies; or whether hee directed his ſpeech to the countenners of God; who notwithstanding were mingled among the godly. And therefore hee taxeth the falſe hearted Lewes, which had revolted. And I doubt not but in the firſt place hee gauls the hypocrites: and next of all, the wicked: that is to ſay, thoſe who outflowed in their inordinate luſts: which is meant by *eating of ſwines fleſh*.

The hypocrites *ſanctified themſelves*: that is, they ſmoothed over things vnder the pretext of holineſſe: by which means they were beguiled many.

They *purified themſelves in gardens*.] That is, they polluted themſelves with diuers ſuperſtitions. And yet by ſuch inuentions, they thought to make themſelves the purer in Gods ſight. Others, without any diſſimulatio, deſpiſed God and all godlineſſe. It is a general ſentence then, vnder which he comprehends all idolatries, as well ſuch as manifeſted their wickednes in all mens ſight, as the others, who covered and cloaked the ſame vnder diuers ſhades.

When hee addes, *by a garden vvhich is in the miſt*: ſome expoſitors ſupp'y a pond or fiſh poole, as if in the miſt of the garden, there had bene ſome holy water put to waſh in. But the other ſenſe agrees alſo well, in regard y as euery one had his god apart; ſo did hee alſo chuſe out ſome one tree among others.

Verſ. 18. *For I will viſite their workes and their imaginations: for it ſhall come to paſſe, that I will gather all nations and tongues, and they ſhall come and ſee my glory.*

HEE confirms that which hee ſaid in the former verſe; namely, that all the wicked ſhould be puniſhed, to the end that howſoeuer the Lord was content to let them alone for a while to worke their wils; yet ſhould the faithfull be well aſſured to behold the day of their vengeance, and that this ſhould be as it were a preferuatiue to let them from being carried away with the ſtream of the multitude. The Lord teſtifies heere, that he ſo ſees and notes their *workes*, that it ſhall bee manifeſted by the effects one day, that none could flee from the regard of his eyes.

Some take it as if the wicked were able to doe nothing without Gods permiſſion: which ſentence is true in it ſelfe; but yet it ſutes not with this place. And euery one may fee it to be ſarie ſerched, and wide from the Prophets meaning: for he onely confirms that which

he ſaid before; to wit, that the hypocrites and notorious offenders, ſhould bee puniſhed at the laſt; becauſe God kept a regiſter of all their imaginations, deliberations, and wicked actions. So as they ſhould gaine nothing in the end by their luſts; as if it were vnpoſſible to bring them to iudgement.

Becauſe *the time is come*.] We haue heere the confirmation of that which hath bene ſaid: for hee ſhewes that *the time* drawes neere, in which hee will call all nations together, and adopt them as one people vnto himſelfe, after he hath reſcued the hypocrites, and the open wicked ones. The Lewes were proudly conceited of themſelves, and contemned all nations beſides, as vile and prophane. But the Lord proteſts heere that hee will adopt them, that they may partake of his glory, whereof the Lewes had made themſelves vnworthy.

Truly this is an excellent place, in which we are taught that God is bound to no people in the world, but that it reſts in his will, freely to chuſe whom it pleaſeth him; and to reſciſt the vnbeleeuers, whom in times paſt hee had called to himſelfe. Which doctrine, Saint Paul diſcourſeth of at large, in Rom. 10. 19. and 11. 25. where hee ſhewes how wee are grafted as into an emptie ſtocke, after the Lewes by their infidelity had bene reſciſted. Iſaiab threatens them now with it: (as if he ſhould ſay;) I would not haue you ſo ſimple as to thinke that God can want a people, ſeeing you forſake him, and thereby make your ſelves vnworthy of his grace. For there are others in the world beſides you; and in the meane while he will themſelfe to be your Iudge, and will make you feele at length that he cannot alwaies ſuffer his patience to be abuſed.

And they ſhall come.] For being grafted in by faith, they ſhall come together into the Church, with the true Lewes, who had not forſaken the true adoption. For the Lewes being neere vnto God, it was needfull that the Gentiles ſhould be made one with them, that ſo the diſcord being remoued, they might be ioined into one body.

To ſee the glory of the Lord, is nothing elſe but to inioy the grace which hee had ſhewed vnto the Lewes. For this was one ſpeciall priuiledge the Lewes had, namely, that they beheld Gods glory, and had with them the ſignes of his preſence. Now he ſaith, that the nations which were deprived of ſuch beſeigns, ſhould ſee and behold this glory, in regard the Lord was minded to inaniſt himſelfe vnto all without exception.

Verſ. 19. *And I will ſet up a ſigne among them, and will ſend thoſe that eſcape of them, vnto the riuers of Tarſiſh, Pul, and Lud; and to them that draw the bow, to Tubal and Iauan, Iles a farre off that haue not heard my fame, neither haue ſene my glory: and they ſhall declare my glory among the Gentiles.*

THIS may be taken two waies; namely, either that God giues a ſigne; or, that hee

Doctrins.

A confirmation of the former ſentence.

An amplification of the former ſentence.

marks

The signe of
the Croſſe.

markes his with ſome priuy token, to the end they might eſcape ſafe and ſound. The firſt expoſition is moſt receiued. But ſome childiſhly deſcalt heere vpon the ſigne of the Croſſe : others referre it to the preaching of the Goſpell : and both of them, as I take it, are wide from the marke. For heere rather ſeemes to allude to that which was done at the going forth and deliuerance of the people : as *Moſes* deſcribes it in Exod. 12. 12. And to that which is ſaid in Reuel. 7. 4. namely, that the Lord marked all ſuch as ſhould be ſaued, when his wrath ſhould be powred out vpon the whole world : as thoſe in Egypt eſcaped, whoſe doore poſts were marked with the blood of the Paſſouer. Thus he ſhewes that none but the elect can eſcape the wrath of God, vpon whom this marke is ſtamped. In a word, the Prophet amplifies that which hath been already ſaid, touching the fearefull and horrible iudgement of God, which ſhould light vpon the wicked : for it ſhould conſume all, if he marked not ſome. He promiſeth then to reſerue a ſmall number out of this generall ruine of the whole people. This I take to be the true meaning of our Prophet : according to which hee ſaid in Chap. 1. 9. and 10. 22. that the Lord would reſerue out of this generall deuouring flame, a little remnant.

He addes, that ſome of theſe ſhall bee his *heralds*, to magnifie his name among the Gentiles. And we know that the doctrine of ſaluation was publiſhed farre and wide, by the Miniſterie of a few ſillie men.

By *Tarſiſh*, hee meanes Cilicia; and vnder that, comprehends all the coaſt of the Mediterranean ſea, which lay oppoſite to the lãd of Iewrie. Others thinke that this word ſignifies Africa, and Cappadocia : but I rather reſt in the former expoſition. Some by *Lud*, vnderſtand Lybia; and others, Aſia. And by thoſe that draw the bow, the Parthians; becauſe they were good archers.

Vnder *Tubal* and *Javan*, ſome vnderſtand Italy and Grecia; and by the *ilez*, hee ſignifies vnknowne regions. For vnder this word, the Iewes comprehend all the nations that lay beyond the ſea: as we haue noted before.

Which haue not heard.] Hee meanes that the knowledge of God ſhall be ſpread through the whole world : for the Greekes, Italians, Parthians, they of Cilicia, and other nations knew nothing of the pure religion, nor of Gods true worſhip. To be ſhort, the whole world was wrapped in deepe dungeons of darkneſſe : and therefore the Lord promiſeth that his glory ſhall be knowne euery where. But there is great weight in the word *Gentiles*: for at that time the Lord was onely knowne of the Iewes; but now hee hath maniſteſted himſelfe vnto all.

Verſ. 20. *And they ſhall bring all your brethren for an offering vnto the Lord, out of all nations vpon horſes, and in chariots, and in horſelitters, and vpon mules, and ſwiſt beaſts, to Ieruſalem mine*

holy mountaine, ſaith the Lord, as the children of Iſrael offer in a cleane veſſell in the houſe of the Lord.

Heere hee cleerely expounds that which was ſaid before; namely, that all thoſe which ſhall eſcape and ſeruiue the reſt, ſhall bee (notwithſtanding their ſmall number) *Prieſts vnto God*, and ſhall bring ſacrifices vnto him from all parts. Now he alludes to the ancient ceremony of the Law, though he therewithall ſhewes the difference which ſhould be betweene theſe oblations, and the ſacrifices ordained by the Law : for heere hee inſtitutes *new ſacrifices, and a new prieſthood*. And as he affirmed that all nations ſhould be gathered, verſ. 18. ſo now he ſhewes, that the Prieſts by him eſtabliſhed, ſhall not trauaile in vaine, becauſe the Lord will adde a gracious iſſue vnto their labours.

Hee calles them *brethren*, who were ſtrangers before: wherein hee hath reſpect to that new coniunction which is made by faith. Others draw another ſenſe from this place, which I doe not altogether reiect; namely, that when God ſhall gather a new people from among the Gentiles, then the Iewes, who were ſcattered here & there, ſhould be gathered together againe: which alſo came to paſſe. But yet this ſeemes to agree better, if we referre it to the vocation of the Gentiles, in regard that the difference being the taken away, a *brotherly coniunction* beganne to be betweene all thoſe whom the Lord had purpoſed to adopt vnto himſelfe for his children.

Abraham was the father of one nation, and yet all that deſcended from him after the fleſh, were not reputed his children: for the *Iſhmaelites* and the *Iſidmaeans* were receiued. He was then a father of many nations, Gen. 17. 5. *when God adopted and ioined vnto him by conuenant the Gentiles*; to the end they ſhould follow the faith of *Abraham*. Thus we ſee wherefore the Lord calles vs the *brethren of the Iewes*; whereas before we were ſtrangers and farre remote from the Church of God : for before hee did caſt out the falſe brethren and reprobrates from their place.

Gentiles become brethren of the Iewes.

We are to note this fruit which iſſueth from the labours of ſuch as in deuoour to ſerue the Lord faithfully; namely, that they thereby reclaim their brethren from all pernicious errors, to bring them to God, who is the fountaine of life. And this conſolation ought to cheere them vp, and to fortiſie them euen in the miſt of all the calamities and afflictions which are incident vnto them. The Lord will not ſuffer one of his to periſh. Happy is our condition then, when after a ſort hee makes vs *ſaiours* of our brethren.

From all nations.] His meaning is, that there ſhall be no more difference betweene Iew and Gentile: becauſe God will breake downe the partition wall, and will ſet vp his Church in all nations. Thus was that ſaying of *Dauid* in Pſalm. 2. 8. touching Chriſt, accompliſhed: *Aſke of me, and I will giue thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the vtmoſt bounds of the earth for thy poſſeſſion.*

In

In that hee mentions the *holy mountaine*: he applies himſelfe to the cuſtome of thofe times. For God was worſhipped in y^e Temple at *Jeruſalem*. But the Temple hath now ſpread it ſelfe ouer all the world, in reſpect that it is lawfull for all men in all places to liſt vp pure hands vnto God: ſo as all difference of place and perſons is now remoued and taken away. He ſpeakes alſo of *the oblation, add ſacrifices* which were offered in the temple: though the ſacrifices which wee are now to offer bee much different from thofe of that time. But it was requiſit that y^e Prophets ſhould borrow ſimilitudes from things then commonly in vſe; as we haue often ſaid. Vnder the Law, they offered *brute beaſts*: but the Apoſtles and other Priests of Chriſt haue *ſacrificed reaſonable men*: and haue offered them *liuing ſacrifices* by the preaching of the Goſpell: Rom. 15. 16. The Apoſtle teſtifies that hee performed this office by offering vp the Gentiles, through the ſword of the Goſpell: that they might be an acceptable oblation vnto God ſanctified by the holy Ghoſt. It is no *legal Priethood* then: *nor like to that of the Pa-piſts*, which bragge much touching the offspring vp of Chriſt. But it is the Goſpell, by which men are mortified; that being reued by the holy ſpirit, they may be offered vp vnto God. Beſides, euery one offers vp himſelfe in vowing and dedicating themſelues to Gods ſeruiſe: and in yeelding him ſincere obedience, which is that reaſonable ſeruiſe whereof *S. Paul* ſpeakes in Rom. 12. 1. Thus the end of our vocation is here ſet before vs: namely, that all filthineſſes being purged away, and being dead to our ſelues, we may in the next place learne to loue and follow holineſſe.

Some ſeek out allegories vpon theſe words *charrets, and horſes*; and they thinke the Prophet hath vſed the verb *ſhall bring*, in regard the Goſpel neither conſtrains nor terrifies men, but rather allures them ſweetly; ſo as they come willingly vnto God, and haſten vnto him with ioyfull and glad hearts. But I willingly expound this place without ſuch curioſitie: for in regard this ſeruple might come in the minds of many; How is it poſſible for ſtrangers ſo farre remote to come vnto vs? He answers, that *horſes, charrets, and liſters*, ſhould not be wanting vnto them. For the Lord hath many meanes at hand, to bring them to his purpoſed end. Furthermore I denie not, but the Goſpell may be called a *charior*, in regard it brings vs to the hope of eternall life: but yet we thinke the Prophet meant ſimply to ſay, That no impediment ſhould be able to withhold the Lord from gathering in his Church. Alſo that he ſhall haue meanes readie, that not one of the elect which hee was pleaſed to cal, ſhould faint in the mid way,

Verſ. 21. *And I will take of th:m for Priests, and for Leuits, ſaith the Lord.*

The Prophet amplifies that which he hath already ſaid touching this extraordinary

ry grace of God. He hath already ſhewed that the Church of God ſhould be gathered out of all nations; ſo as in deſpite of all impediments and difficulties that might be oppoſed; yet the nations farre off ſhould be brought to the holy mountaine. Now he paſſeth on further, and teacheth that the Gentiles ſhould be aduanced to a ſoueraigne degree of honour, beſides their adoption. It was much that they had attained vnto alreadie; to wit, that prophane people ſhould be receiued in among the holy people: but now behold here a thing more admirable, to ſee them exalted into ſo ſupreme a degree of dignitie. Hence we may perceiue that the Priethood vnder Chriſt, differs much from that which was vnder the Law. For vnder it only *one tribe* was admitted to offer ſacrifices: Exod. 28. 1. The Gentiles were reiectd as vnclene, neither durſt they once enter into the Temple: ſo farre was it off that they might be permitted to be *Priests*. But now all are indifferently receiued.

Some expound this place generally, That the Gentiles ſhall be Priests: that is to ſay, ſhall offer themſelues to God; for ſo the ſcriptures in many places calles all by the name of a *royall Priethood*: Exod. 19. 6. 1. Pet. 2. 9. Rcu. 1. 6. and 5. 10. Yet it ſeemes hee ſhould eſpecially note out the Miniſters and teachers here, whom God ſhould choſe out from among the Gentiles; and ordaine them to execute that noble and excellent office: namely to preach the Goſpell. As for example, *Luke, Timothy*, and the reſt, who offered vnto God by the Goſpell ſpiritual ſacrifices.

Verſ. 22. *For as the new heauens, and the new earth which I will make, ſhall remaine before mee, ſaith the Lord, ſo ſhall your ſeed and your name continne.*

Here hee promiſeth that the Church ſhall be ſo reſtored, that it ſhall endure for euer: for many might feare that ſhe would be laid waſte the ſecond time. Her eſtate then ſhall be *perpetuall*, after God ſhall haue once againe reſtored her: for which cauſe, he mentions two excellent benefits; to wit, *reſtauration, and eternitie*.

When hee ſpeakes of the *new heauens*, and *new earth*, hee hath reſpect vnto Chriſts kingdom, by whom all things are reued: as the Apoſtle ſhewes in Heb. 2. 8. 13. Now this renume^r hath this end; namely, that the church might continue alwaies in her happy and flouriſhing eſtate: for that which is *old*, tends to ruine, but things which are *new* made and renewed, are to laſt long.

God had promiſed that as long as the Sun and Moone ſhould remaine in the heauens, they ſhould be witneſſes of the eternall luſtreſſe of *Dauid*: poſteritic, which ſhould neuer faile: Pſal. 89. 36, 37. But in reſpect that by the diſloyaltie and vnthankfulneſſe of this people which came betwene, there was ſome interruption: the reſtauration wrought by Chriſt hath really confirmed this prophetic.

Great difference betwene the Priethood vnder Chriſt, and that vnder the law.

1. Tim. 2. 8.

Rom. 15. 16.

The end of our vocation.

Obiect.

Anſ.

The promiſe recorded in Pſal. 89. 36, 37. really confirmed by Chriſt.

He. *Iſaiab* therefore rightly affirms that their *ſonnes*, and their *ſonnes ſonnes* ſhould ſucceed. And as God hath eſtabliſhed the world, that it ſhould neuer periſh: ſo ſhall the ſucceſſion of the Church be perpetuall, that it ſhall endure from age to age. In a word, he explaines that which he had ſaid before touching the renewing of the world: leſt any man ſhould thinke he referres this to *irees*, *beaſts*, or to the courſe of the ſtars: for it ought rather to be applied to the renewment of the inward man. The ancient fathers haue miſſed the marke, whileſt they imagined that theſe things appertained preciely to the laſt iudgement, and haue neither weighed the ſcope of the text, nor the Apoſtles authoritie. And yet I denie not but we may extend theſe things to the laſt day; becauſe we cannot expect the perfect reſtoration of all things, vntill *Chriſt*, who is the life of the world, ſhall appeare. But we muſt begin higher, namely, at this deuerance, by which Chriſt regenerates his, that they may be new creatures: as it is in 2. Cor. 7. 1.

Verſ. 23. *And from moneth to moneth, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, ſhall all fleſh come to worſhip before mee, ſaith the Lord.*

The Prophet ſhewes againe what difference there ſhould be betweene Gods *ſpirituall* worſhippe, ſuch as it ſhould be vnder the kingdome of Chriſt; and the *carnall*, which was vnder the Law. *Every moneth* in the new Moone they ſacrificed; then there were *Sabbaths*, and other feaſts, and ſolemne daies appointed, which they carefully kept. But vnder the kingdome of Chriſt, there ſhall be a *perpetuall* and continuall ſolemniitie. For there is no more any certaine daies aſſigned to ſacrifice this or that in Ieruſalem, verſ. 19. But our feaſts, offerings, and daies of reioicing, haue a continuall courſe from day to day. In the meane while, hee alludes to the ancient cuſtome of the ſacrifices: and we haue ſeene in many places heeretofore, that theſe phraſes of ſpeech are very familiar with the Prophets. Thus then God would haue vs to offer him ſacrifices in rightouſneſſe daily: not at ſet times onely, nor ſuch as were offered vnder the Law, or according to theirs among the Papiſts, who now fondly reſt in their ceremonies, as if their ſinnes were aboliſhed by ſuch baggage; where with a deſperate ſhameleſneſſe, they dare brag that they ſacrifice Chriſt himſelfe. But of vs God requires ſpirituall ſacrifices: that is to ſay, that we honor and worſhip him with a pure and ſincere worſhip.

Whereas ſome would prouoe from this place, that the Law and ancient ceremonies are aboliſhed; mee thinks it hath but little

ground. I grant that theſe legall ceremonies are aboliſhed, and it may be ſo collected fro this place; but were I to proue this point, I would chuſe out other teſtimonies of greater weight. For he makes heere an oppoſition onely betweene the *Sabbaths*, and feaſt daies, which they ſolemnized vnder the Law, and *that perpetuall Sabbath* which is now celebrated.

Verſ. 24. *And they ſhall goe forth, and looke vpon the carcaſes of men that haue tranſgreſſed againſt mee: for their worme ſhall not die, neither ſhall their fire be quenched, and they ſhall be an abhorring to all fleſh.*

Wee neede not ſecke out heere any far fetched interpretations. For in plaine termes hee admoniſteth theſe which ſhould be gathered into the Church, that *round about them*, they ſhall behold the fearefull vengeance of God. His meaning is not that theſe calamities ſhall breake in amongſt the troope of the faithfull; for it ſhould much leſſen the felicitie of the Church: vpon which God manifeſts all ſorts of teſtimonies of ioy and gladneſſe. But, as formerly he hath ſpoken of that perpetuall glory wherewith God will beautifie his choſen; ſo now he ſhewes what *puniſhments* the wicked ſhall indure, that the faithfull might be the more carefull to hold themſelues in the feare of God.

Whereas he threatens them to be *tormented with fire*; haue told you heeretofore, that this is a figuratiue kind of ſpeech, which alſo cleerely appeares by the other part of this verſe: for there ſhall come no *wormes* out of the earth, *ſo gnaw* the hearts of the vnbelieuers. The plaine meaning is then, that mens euill conſciences ſhall play the tormentors to vex them continually, and that a more fearefull torment is prepared for them, then all torments (in the world) beſides. In a word, that they ſhall be affrighted, and cruelly diſquieted, after an horrible maner: as if a *worme* ſhould lie gnawing at the heart of a man; or as if a *fire* ſhould euer burne him, and yet they ſhould neuer die. Now in reſpect that the wicked are heere aduanced to great honours, from whence they ſcorne the godly, and *trample* them vnder their feete: therefore the Prophet denounceth againſt them, a *terrible change*, namely, that they ſhall be inwrapped with *extreame ignominie*, with vnſpeakable torments. For it is good reaſon that ſuch as haue contemned and ſcorned Gods glory, ſhould be couered ouer with all reproches, and made obominable both to Angels, and to all the world.

To what this
renoument
ought chief-
ly to be re-
ferred.

What ſacrifices
God requi-
res of vs.

Now vnto God onely wiſe, be honour, and glory, for euer and euer, Amen.

FINIS.



¶ A Table of such places as are alleaged in this
Commentarie, out of the old and new Testament.

The first numbers direct to the places alleaged: the
second, to the Chapter and Verse in the Pro-
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	13 26		5 45	21	10 4
	26 43		51 1		1
			55 3	22	1 6
6	5 22		56 3		2 57
	42 25		13 48		10 37
			14 45		66 3
7	12 24				12 57
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63	4 26	1	86	4 51 9	13 57 16
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	4 45 24				57 16
			89	5 12 27	64 5
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74	1 14 1				112 6 14 20
	9 40 15		93	1 54 10	9 32 8
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	42 1		95	8 30 8	55 12
	45 14				
	48 13		96	1 42 10	115 3 66 1
	54 5			4 36 18	8 41 29
				19	17 38 18
78	28 57 16				
	39 2 22		97	2 6 4	116 10 26 19
	57 16				12 24 15
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30	63	10	5	30	4
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	52	14	7	13	8
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	9	53	8	17	42
	15	44	21	4	9
4	1	49	5	12	11
	4	22	13	13	49
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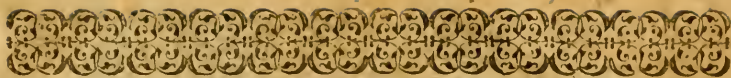
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The First Book



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PLACES CITED OUT OF THIS

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Calum compared and reconciled. The first number notes

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Faults escaped.

The first number notes out the Chapter: the second, the verse: the third, the section: the fourth, the line.

R } signifies { reade.
P } { put out.
A } { adde.

Chapter 1. verse 7. section 3. line 21. adde. the. 1.16.3.16. reade, cease. 1.24.3.31.r. quiet. 3.12.1.17.a. euen.
5.6.2.10.a. ought. 5.7.2.19. put out. 5.9.1.20. adde a. 6.19.1.32.a. it. 9.12.1.14.a. i. 9.12.1.15.a.s. 9.19.2.12.r.
yet he. 14.30.3.5.r. of which the King was. 21.1.2.2.a. that. 21.5.2.10.p. yer. 21.5.2.13.p. and. 22.17.2.6.a. Now.
23.2.1.20.a. lolle. 25.9.3.16.a. somewhat. 26.21.5.12.a. it. 27.4.2.69.p. nor. 27.8.4.11. put before and. 27.8.4.12.
a. that. 30.1.6.14.p. owne. 32.6.2.18.r. the. for sow. 32.18.1.33.p.s. 32.19.1.11.a. wee. 33.15.4.6.r. polleth. 33.22.
1.1.r. fits. 34.7.1.7.r. bounded. 34.11.2.15.a. ought. 35.5.2.13.a. swift. 35.8.4.6.p. place period after the word be-
fore, & make period following, a comma. 35.9.1.39.a. that. 35.10.1.28.r. we. 35.10.3.5.p. And. 36.6.3.25.a. nor.
36.16.1.10. mend thus: he covertly sets vp himselfe, or the Assyrian, &c. 36.19.5.22.p. so. 36.19.5.23.p. much as.
36.22.1.26.a. nor godlinesse. 37.4.2.2.r. vnderstood. 38.10.1.24.p. rather. 38.10.3.42.r. pangs. 39.3.2.2.a. to.
40.2.4.17.a. will. 40.11.2.5.r. meeknes. 40.24.2.3.r. tickle. 40.30.1.26.p. prosperitie. 41.22.3.21.r. reiected.
42.3.4.7.r. furious. 42.16.3.8.a. although. 42.17.2.27.a. their. 42.20.1.7.r. wee. 44.19.1.12.r. but. 44.24.3.20.r.
had. 45.9.3.4.a. to. 45.11.5.15.r. it. 45.18.6.16.p. and nor. 46.6.8.3.p. ping. 47.13.4.a. note in the margine ill
pointed. 48.5.2.6.p. came. 48.5.2.6.a. by. 50.4.5.7.r. him. 51.6.1.9. after tempes, a period. 54.7.3.13.a. nor.
54.16.3.5. after simple, a period. 58.4.2.16.a. take. 58.6.1.3.r. recommended vnto vs. 59.16.4.8.a. the. 61.10.a.
note misplaced in the margine. 63.17.6.15.r. which was; for, with. 65.12.6.3.a. arc. 65.17.2.13.a. period.

