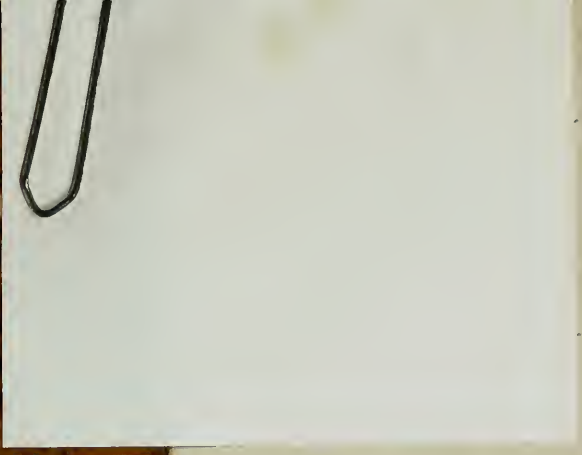
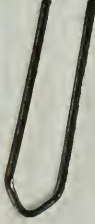
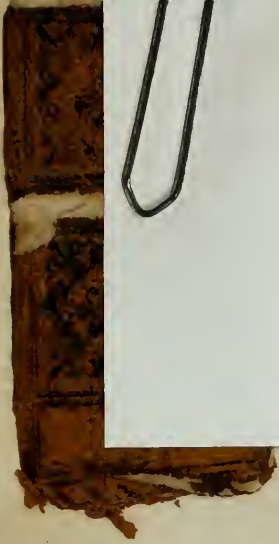


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Upon the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and  
Seventh Chapters of the PROPHECY  
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Being first delivered in several LECTURES at Michaels Cornhil London.

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By *Jeremiah Burroughs.*

---

Being the Fifth B O O K, published by

*Thomas Goodwyn,* } *William Bridge,*  
*William Greenhil,* } *John Yates,*  
*Sydrach Simson* } *William Adderly.*

---

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Printed for *Peter Cole*, at the sign of the Printing-Press  
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# EXPOSITION

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To the READER.

Reader,

**W**E here present thee with a continuation of Expositions and Observations upon other Four Chapters of the Prophet Hosea, delivered by that Worthy Man, now with God. Himself in his life-time published the Three first Chapters; These now made publick, were compiled out of the Manuscripts which Himself under His own Hand left, which being short, have been filled up and enlarged out of the best Copies of Sermon Notes taken from His own mouth. We must not undertake for all imperfections or mistakes that haply may be found, though a diligent and a skilful hand had the collecting of them. We only give Letters of Credence to them, that they are genuinely the Authors, and that they are singularly worthy of all acceptation, especially by such Readers as have their thoughts exercised in observing the waies of Gods proceedings in and towards the Nations of the world where His Name is called. One great piece of His Dispensations under the Old Testament, was that towards the Ten Tribes, who remain in captivity to this day, and who were set up (as their Predecessors in the wilderness) as Types of Gods dealing in like cases with us under the New Testament; as we may see in the instance of the Eastern and Graecian Churches that have groaned under the Mahumetan Tyrannies and Oppressions, of whom the Ten Tribes may seem to be the livelyest pattern, as the condition of the Saints in the Western European Churches under the Pope was exemplified in the captivity of Babel which befel the other two Tribes. Yet so, as both in

2 Cor. 10

Rev. 7.

*sins and punishment the one and the other are general exam-  
 ples unto us upon whom the ends of the world are  
 come, in which God acts over with a quick and swift motion,  
 as being the last act, what was done more slowly under the Old.  
 The worthy Author was one of the most accurate spectators in  
 his time, that with a curious and searching eye beheld what  
 God was a doing in the World. He was as one of those Wise  
 men that knew the times, (as 'tis said of Ahasuerus his  
 seven Counsellors, Esth. 1. 13.) and skilled therein, not as  
 they in an humane or political way, but as the transactions  
 in the world do relate unto God, who governs this world by the  
 rules and presidents in His Word. He was one of those who  
 as the Psalmist speaks, had pleasure to seek out the great  
 works of the Lord, and to paralel those in these times with  
 those of old under the Old Testament; and unto that end, in the  
 entrance to these alterations in our times, he pitcht upon the  
 explication of this Prophecie, which the studious Reader will  
 with much delight reade over when he shall observe how He  
 made application all along to the Dispensations of that time in  
 which He preached them. The Lord bleß them to them of this  
 Nation, for which they were principally intended.*

Thomas Goodwin, }  
 Sydrach Simpson, } William Bridge,  
 William Greenhil, } John Yates,  
 } William Adderly.

*The Titles of those five Books of Mr. Jeremiah Burroughs lately  
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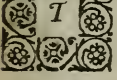
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*Word of the Lord.* Hard truths are hardly born; but when the Authority of the Infinite God appears in them, be they either making for us or against us, our hearts must bow to them; they lay bonds upon the conscience and bind over to eternal death if you reject them. 2 Chron. 26. 12. *Zedekiah*, a King, is charged that he did not humble himself before the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Though the Prophet be never so poor and contemptible in himself, yet if he brings the word of the Lord, *Zedekiah* the king must humble himself before him.

2. *Ye children of Israel.*] In this appellation God puts them in mind of the covenant he had made with them and they with him; you are not Heathens you are the children of Israel, in covenant with me, a people near to me, yet I have a controversy with you.

Obj. The nearness of a people to God exempteth them not from Gods contending with them for sin: Neither should nearness to us exempt any from our contending with them. *Dent. 13. 6.* *If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend which is as thy own soul, invite thee secretly to worship a strange god, Verse 8. thine eye shall not pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him, but thou shalt surely kill him, thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death.*

3. The nearer the relation is between any the more grievous is the controversy, if there be a controversy at all. Hear the Word of the Lord ye children of Israel. It is a sad thing for one Nation to have a controversy with another; much more for a people to be at controversy with it self; Yet more when the controversy comes nearer, into the family, between husband and wife, between father and child, between dearest friends who were before to each other as their own souls, controversies there are very sore and grievous, *Prov. 18. 19.* *A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong Citie, and their contentions are like the bars of a Castle.* Wind within the body is most troublesome and dangerous.

Hear ye.] O Prophet (saies *Oecoloppius* upon the place) what is it thou hast to say that with so much earnestness thou callest

Controversies between those that are neare are very grievous. *Quid dicitur es o Prophetia qui tanta diligentia vocas ut audiatu verbu Domini.* *Oecolop, in locum.*

callest to have the word of the Lord heard; This is the solemn message of the Prophet to this people, The Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.

The word translated *Controversie*, signifies a debate, a contention, it comes of **רוכ** *Contendere vel privatim vel coram iudice*, to contend privately or to come before a Judge; sometimes a cause pleaded in Law. As *Exod. 23. 3. Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.* That's the same word with this here, a Controversie. The Lord hath a cause to plead with this people, it is the controversy of the Lord; the Prophet stands up for God in his Name to plead against them, he pleads for the King, the King of Heaven: So should all faithful Ministers be sure they be on Gods side, pleading his cause; For all Ministers are Gods Sergeants at Law, his Attourneys, his Solicitors. The Kings Lawyers are sworn, they shall never plead against him, or take fee on the other side; And yet how many even in the exercise of their Ministry shew that they have taken fee on other side! How do many plead against God, against his Sabbaths, against his Ordinances, yea, plead sometimes against the power of Godliness, against those things wherein the chief dignitie & glory of God consists! sometimes perhaps pleading for them but pleading more against them at another time. The Devil hath not more cordial Solicitors and pleaders for him than those who would be accounted the Prophets of the Lord.

*The Lord.]* As if the Prophet should say, Know, you have not to do with me, nor with *Amor* (who was contemporary with *Hosea*, & a Prophet to Israel) though you think you can make your parts good with me and with the other Prophets, know God will not now stand pleading with you so much by his Ministers, he will take the cause into his own hand and will plead, by his Judgments he will now take up the controversy himself. The Lord tells the people (*Gen. 6. 3.*) that his Spirit should no longer strive with them: what's that? That is, it should no longer strive in the way of *Noah's* Ministry, but he would come and strive himself after another manner, by bringing the flood upon them.

**רוכ** his  
*expostulatio*  
*judicium*  
 The Sep-  
 uagint  
**רוכ** his  
*judicium*.  
 the same  
 word tra-  
 nslated by  
 them also  
**Δία.** *Iob*  
 29. 16.  
 Ministers  
 must plead  
 for God,  
 take heed  
 they plead  
 not against  
 him.

the more  
immediate  
Gods  
pleading  
is, the  
more  
dreadfull.

It is most dreadful for sinners for God to take the contro-  
verſie into his own hand to contend with them in a way of  
judgment; *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living  
God.* You think Minifters are hard, they preach terrible  
things; but if you have to deal with God immediately, if he  
ſhould not ſpeak to you by man but come himſelf and plead  
with you, you would find it harder to deal with him. When  
*Jobs* friends were pleading with him, he could eaſily make  
his part good with them, but Chap, 38. ver. 1, 2. God him-  
ſelf comes and ſpeaks out of the whirlwind, *Who is he that  
darkeneth counſel by words without knowledge?* and ſo goes on in  
a chapter or two; Chap. 42. ver. 5. *Job* falleth down now  
and ſaith, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now  
mine eye ſeeth thee, wherefore I abhor my ſelf and repent in duſt and  
aſhes.* *Pſal* 130. 3. is a notable ſcripture for this purpoſe, *If  
thou Lord ſhouldeſt mark iniquity, Oh Lord who ſhould ſtand?*  
Mark the words, how *Lord* is twice here repeated, it would  
have been full ſenſe thus, *If thou Lord ſhouldeſt mark iniqui-  
ty who ſhall ſtand?* There would have been a mighty empha-  
ſis in the word *Jehovah*, who ſhall ſtand, for it is thou oh Je-  
hovah: but it comes in again, to Note that herein lies the  
Emphaſis, *if thou Lord ſhouldeſt mark iniquity, Oh Lord who  
ſhall ſtand?* This *Oh Lord* ſeems to be a pleonaſme, one would  
think that it breaks the ſenſe, but the ſcope is to ſhew that the  
ſight of having to deal with God in our ſins, is very terrible,  
if thou Lord markeſt, then Oh Lord who ſhall ſtand?

ſin cauſes  
a dreadful  
contro-  
verſy be-  
tween God  
and man.

But further, that which is the main thing in this, is, *That  
ſin cauſeth a moſt dreadful controverſie between God and the ſoul, be-  
tween God and a Nation:* For this God comes to ſtrive, to con-  
tend for his glory, & the ſin<sup>er</sup> ſtrives & contends againſt God.

I

It is God that is infinitely above the ſinner, who hath the  
controverſie with him, *Iſa.* 45. 9. *Who unto him that ſtriveth with  
his Maker: Let the potſtwards of the earth ſtrive with the potſtwards.*  
Yet thus doth every ſinful impenitent ſoul, and every ſinful  
impenitent Nation, they ſtrive with their Maker. The Lord is  
above them; therefore to intimate the diſtance between God  
and us in this controverſie; ſaith the text, The Lord hath a

contro-



controversie with the inhabitants of the land, poor earth-creeping creatures that have dwellings here below whose houses are houses of clay, and God is the great God of Heaven and Earth.

The controversie that God hath with a sinner is a just controversie, God hath right on his side, and the injury is great that is done unto him. 2.

Thirdly, It is a controversie that we have begun, God did not begin it with us, but we began it with him, we have the worst of it. 3.

Fourthly, It is an old controversie a controversie of our forefathers, a controversie that God hath had with one generation after another, and we as a wretched generation stand forth to hold up the old controversie. As in England in former times there hath been wars for hundreds of yeeres (as in the Barons wars) and when one generation was gone, the generation after stood forth to hold up that controversie; so it hath been between God and man, God hath had a controversie with the children of men ever since the fall of *Adam*, and one generation after another hath stood forth to hold up the controversie, and thou wretched sinner standest up in thy generation, in thy place to hold up the controversie that mankind hath had with God since his casting out of Paradise. 4.

Fifthly, It is such a controversie as stirreth up all the Power all the Wrath of God against a sinner, if God have any power in him, it shall be put forth in making his cause good against a sinner, *Levit. 26.* divers places in that chapter, *If ye walk contrary unto me I will walk contrary unto you, my Power my Wisdom all mine Attributes are against you*. A man that hath a controversie with another employes and improves all the strength he hath against him that he is at controversie with. 5.

This controversie is a deadly controversie, it is such as strikes at our lives, at our souls, at our eternal estates. 6.

A controversie with God who is set upon it to have satisfaction for all the wrong we have done to him, he will have it one way or other. 7.

Such a controversie as only the Lord Christ that great Mediator, 8.

diator, that great Peace-maker is able to make up ; None can reconcile God and a sinner but Christ God-Man , He must stand before God to satisfie for the wrong the sin of man hath done unto him.

9 A controversie with him who hath thee at infinite advantage, who hath thee under his feet and the point of the sword of his Justice is at thy heart.

10 A controversie (that if thou look not to it ) is like to prove an everlasting controversie. *Psal. 57. 16. I will not contend for ever, neither will I alwayes be wroth, for the Spirit should fail before me.* This is spoken to those that are in Covenant with God, in regard of the lesser controversies that after their reconciliation may be between God and them : But with thee if not reconciled to God in Christ who art yet in the great controversie that God hath with sinful man, (I say if thou lookest not to it) it may prove an everlasting controversie to thee : Certainly God will overcome thee, God will have the day of thee, the Lord will overcome when he judgeth. *Julian* strove a great while against the Lord, but at length *Vicisti Galila vicisti*, he was forced to acknowledg with his blood cast up into the air, The Lord hath overcome, the Lord will overcome.

It is a vain thing for thee to stand out striving with this great God. *Job 40.2. Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him?* So it is translated in your books, but according to the words in the Hebrew, and so translated by *Pagnin* and others, *Is there any wisdom, or any learning in contending with God? any knowledge shewed in that?* No certainly there is no knowledge, no wisdom, no learning in contending with the Almighty : Our greatest wisdom is to fall down, to be humbled before the Lord. The Lord hath appointed a certain period for thy coming in to make up thy peace with him, to satisfie him ; if thou neglectest that time thou art lost, undone for ever.

My brethren this is no time to have any controversie with God, to stand out against him in waies of enmity. It is time now when such blackness of darkness is upon us even storms of blood hang over our heads, It is time now (I say) however

however, to be at peace with Heaven, to make our peace with God. *Job. 36. 18. There is wrath, beware therefore that he take thee not away with his ſtroke.* The Lord is come forth from his place, he is pleading his cauſe, and now in the waies of his adminiſtration he declares that he will have glory from his creature, he hath ſworn by Himſelf and the word hath gone out of his mouth in righteouſneſs that every knee muſt bow to him and every tongue confeſſe his Name, he ſeems now to reſolve he will have it ſo indeed, he will have all to bow before him. It is no time therefore now for us to have controverſies with God, to have controverſies with God and man both, with Heaven, and Earth, and Hell, and with our own conſciences and all. What ſhall become us? *Be not thou a terror O Lord unto me (ſaith Jeremiah) for thou art my hope in the day of evil.* If God be a terror, and the daies be evil, what will become of us? It is time to fall down and make peace with God. Ier. 17.

Conſider of this you who are ſo often in controverſies with your Neighbors: Remember in all your controverſies that God hath a great controverſy with you; And ſatiſſie not your ſelves in this that you are able to cleer your ſelves before men, what is that ſo long as this controverſy continues?

It is a dangerous thing to go on long in this controverſy with God; it is wiſdom to make an end of it betime, *Pro. 17. 14. The beginning of ſtriſe is like the letting out of waters, wherefore leave off contention before it be medled with.* The beginning of ſtriſe eſpecially with God is moſt dreadful, if thou goeſt on but a little while, thine heart may be moſt deſperately ſet againſt God and for ever left to ſtrive againſt him, never to come in and be humbled before him. This is the reaſon (I verily beleeve) of the moſt horred wickedneſs of ſome men amongſt us: we wonder at it that ever any man ſhould dare to venture upon ſuch horrid wickedneſſes, one after another; Surely here is the reaſon, at firſt it may be when they were young there was ſome dreadful breach between God and their ſouls, they fell (though the world perhaps knew it not) into ſome foul and abominable ſin, and having made ſuch a dreadful breach  
between.

between God and their souls then, they now go on desperately and fight against the God of Heaven in such a desperate manner as never any age can tell us any examples of such desperate fighting against God as is in this age. God hath a controversy with Nations also for their sin. Those who are to sue for God may well charge us, that the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land at this day. If ever he had a controversy with a people he hath it with us. The Lord hath a fearful controversy with us, he hath most fearful things to charge this land with, I might instance in some things that are more peculiar to this nation than to any other upon the face of the earth.

1 As the hatred, contempt, persecution of the power of godliness; No nation upon the face of the earth hath that guilt in this regard upon it that *England* hath, nor never had since the world began, Persecution of faithful & godly Ministers, of the same Religion holding all fundamental Truths, yea, all the Articles of Religion, every point of the Doctrine of Religion together with them; (I say) never any Nation was guilty of that persecution as we of this Kingdom are; Silencing many for trifles and toys; Persecuting for keeping the Sabbath; It is true, other countries are loose in their practice or the Sabbath, but no country upon the face of the earth hath ever persecuted the keeping of it as *England* hath done; and that by the countenance of those in authority. We are sinners and others are sinners, but the Lord hath a controversy with us for these things in a more special manner than with any people upon the face of the earth this day.

2 This controversy the Lord hath against us, is an old controversy too. I may apply that text *Jer. 32. 31.* that God speaks concerning the City of Jerusalem unto us, *This Citie hath been to me as a provocation of mine anger and of my fury from the day that they built it even unto this day.* So ever since the Reformation hath begun have we bin a provocation to the Lord.

3 Thirdly, A general controversy even with all sorts, a controversy with our Kings and Princes, with our Nobles, our Gentry, our Cities, Countries, Universities, Common people

people, with wicked people, with godly people, with the Saints, with all.

Fourthly, It is the moſt unkind controverſie in regard of our parts that ever was in any Nation; for God had dealt with us in ſuch a loving way as he hath not done with any Nation in the world beſides, he hath made us even as the dearly beloved of his ſoul, and yet for all this we have contended againſt him. This unkindneſs goes even to the very heart of God. 4.

Fiftly, The Lord hath ſent many faithful Ambaſſadours to plead his cauſe with us. He never to any Nation upon the earth ſent more faithful Ambaſſadours that have pleaded his cauſe with more power and evidence of the Spirit than to us in *England*, yet we have ſtood out. 5.

Sixtly, We have had as many offers of mercy as ever people had: Many a time we have been upon the brink of Judgment and the bowels of God have been towards us and he hath ſaid, it ſhall not be. 6.

Seventhly, The Lord hath been as patient, he hath ſtaied as long as ever he did with any people before he came to execution. Where do we reade of any people that have had a hundred yeers peace? (Ours is not much leſs;) Never that I know of in all the Scripture. 7.

Eightly, The Lord hath had us at advantages as much as can be; we have broke as many treaties as ever people broke. When we ſeemed to yeild unto God, we have but flattered him with our lips and dealt diſſemblingly with him. 8.

Ninthly, God hath broken the backs of others with whom he hath had a controverſy. He hath had a controverſy with *Germany*, and how hath he dealt with them? Thus he beginneth to deal with us. It is reported that in *Germany* when the war was but twenty or thirty miles off them, they went on in their trading and followed their buſineſſes, buying and ſelling and hoped that they ſhould be ſafe; ſo it is with us, Is not ſome part of *England* at this day as deſolate as *Germany* it ſelf? 9

Tenthly, Thoſe that knew moſt of Gods mind, have been 10

so afraid of this controversy that they have fled for fear of the wrath of God, and we have slighted, jered them for it, thought it was their foolish timorousness and melancholly conceit; The Lord now seems to justify their fear.

The Lord is now for the present out against us in as dreadful a way of wrath as ever he was against any people of the earth. I never read in Scripture nor in History of a more dreadful wrath of God against a people all things considered, than is against us at this day. *Amos*, 7. 4. The Lord calls to contend by fire: Surely the Lord doth it at this day, he calleth to contend with *England* by fire, in a most dreadful way, and who knows what the end shall be? That he hath a most dreadful controversy against *England* at this day, will appear if we further take these considerations.

1 First, That a people complaining of bondage heretofore, yet when God offered deliverance, should be so far left of God as they shall now rather be willing to make themselves and their posterity bond-slaves. Surely God hath a dreadful controversy against us, it were else impossible that such a thing should be in the hearts of men. Men love liberty, they groan under bondage: We did groan but a few yeers ago, and the Lord was coming to help us, and yet we are now so left of God that we even turn again to our former bondage, and would have our ears to be bored that we might be perpetual slaves,

2 Secondly, It is not only that we wil turn again to bondage, but this is out of a spirit of enmity against the yoke of Jesus Christ. This is the very ground and bottom of it, in a great part of the Kingdom, whatsoever yoke they have upon them they are resolved they will not have the yoke of Christ out of a spirit of enmity against the Godly party, who desire and endeavor Reformation.

At the beginning of this Parliament, when we began to have hopes of some liberty and reformation, Oh what a joy was there generally in the Kindom! all men agreed together; but when those that were wicked and carnal began to see that their godly neighbours rejoiced & that they blessed God for

what

what was done that they had their minds; now they turn out of a ſpirit of malice againſt them, rather than they ſhall rejoyce, rather than they ſhall have their minds, we will turn back again to the bondage we were in before, and we will ſtand and oppoſe that which heretofore we rejoyced in. Certainly here is the very ground of ſo much contradiction as there is at this day; They have therefore turned Malignants againſt that Cauſe which a man would wonder that ever rational men ſhould be againſt; But there is a ſpirit of malice againſt Chriſt and his Ordinances, fearing a reformation; they would have their luſts, and they think if reformation come they ſhould not have them with that liberty they have had; here is the very reaſon that the Gentry and others in the country are oppoſite; Surely God hath a controverſie with us.

Thirdly, That men ſhould ſo vily deſert thoſe whom they have choſen and truſted who have been faithful, thoſe Worthies in Parliament, who have ventured their lives for them, baſely and unworthily now to deſert them; it is one of the greateſt judgments of God upon the hearts of men, and therefore upon a nation that ever was. If they complain of them now, they would much more have complained of them if they had complied; ſuppoſe the Parliament had made up a patched reformation and a crazie peace that upon any occaſion we had bin in danger to have had war broken out again, would not the people of the land have cried out of their unfaithfulneſs? But now they venture themſelves and labour ſo hard for a ſound peace, therefore to be deſerted? An unworthy generation, a generation that we have cauſe to fear is become the generation of Gods wrath and the people of his curſe. People are affected according as ſucceſs is, we complain of thoſe in Parliament becauſe of ſome difficulties that are in the work, yet if they had not done what they did they would have complained much more. So of Miniſters, ſometimes Miniſters ſpeak and ſtir up people becauſe their conſciences tell them they ſhould be unfaithful to their country and to the cauſe of God if they did not; now they cry

out as they did of *Luther*, that they are the trumpets of sedition and rebellion; whereas on the other side if they should say nothing, then people would have cryed out that they had betrayed their Country and that they were not so faithful in their places as they should, therefore people were so bad as they were. Thus hard it is for God or man to please people.

Again. That not only people should desert them, but that so many of Nobles, and some Members of the Parliament themselves should desert their Brethren there, and joyn with Papists, French, and Walloons; When as not long since a company of vile wretches being gathered together to fight against our brethren of *Scotland*, and yet those vile people could not be brought to fight against them by any means; But now not the vile ones, but Nobles, Knights, and Gentry can be brought to fight against the Parliament their own Brethren; Is not here a mighty hand of God against us? Could this ever be if God had not a dreadful controversie against *England*?

4. Fourthly, That men should be so blinded as to think the Protestant Religion should be maintained by an Army of Papists, that the Laws and Liberty of the subject should be maintained by an Army of Delinquents and strangers, yea, that the King with Papists, Delinquents, French, and Walloons should better maintain the Liberty of the Subject and the Protestant Religion, than with the Parliament; That people should come to beleve this, is not the hand of God upon the people of this land? Are they not infinitely besotted? can we think that men indued with reason should do this? Surely were not the judgment of God fearfully upon their souls it could not be beleved that ever this should be done by people that had any rationality in them.

5. Fifthly, God surely calls to contend fearfully with us in that he should suffer such an ill cause to prosper so as it hath done and to get to that height as it is. It is that which is the amazement both of *England* and the Countries about us that such an ill cause should get so high and prosper so much as it hath done; Surely the Lord is against us or else it could not have been.



Sixtly, When there ſhall be ſuch a deſperate deſign ſo long  
 a hatching, drawn forth in ſuch a ſeaſon and ſo driven on  
 and now breaking forth in ſuch violence and yet men cannot  
 ſee it. The tract of the deſign is as cleer as the Sun at noon  
 day and drawn on from one ſtep to another, by comparing of  
 one thing with another we may ſee it as apparantly as the  
 light. Would you not think it a beſotting thing if there  
 ſhould be a train of Gunpouder laied along in the ſtreets from  
 ſuch a place to the Parliament Houſe to blow it up and yet  
 that men ſhould paſs by and ſay they ſee no ſuch thing? Cer-  
 tainly the drawing on of the deſign againſt our Religion and  
 State, to bring us under tyranny and ſlavery, the tract is as e-  
 vident and plain as ever there was train of Gunpruder laid to  
 ſuch a place that men would willingly blow up; and yet  
 men ſee it not. Surely Gods hand is out againſt us. 6

Seventhly, That we ſhould have ſo little fruit of our pra-  
 yers as we have at this day, yea, that God ſhould ſeem to be  
 angry with the prayers of his people, This argueth a fearful  
 controverſy, and in this one particular among others; what  
 prayers in *England* have been ſent up to God for the Palſ-  
 graves children, and that now inſtead of answering our  
 prayers God ſhould ſend two Arrows as it were out of thoſe  
 joins to do us miſchief, that it ſhould come from them for  
 whom *England* hath done ſo much to maintain them and ſent  
 up ſo many prayers to God for them, and in reconpence of  
 all they ſhould come hither to make havoke of the Kingdom.  
 Surely the hand of God is out againſt us. 7

Eightly, That our brethren ſhould be ſo ſpoil'd and our  
 ſelves in ſuch danger of drinking the dregs of the cup, yet  
 where are our hearts? The judgment of God is upon the  
 hearts of men that they ſtir not and act not like men, but  
 they ſee their Brethren ſpoil'd before them and in the mean  
 time all that which keeps them quiet is only that they hope  
 they ſhall be the laſt. Gods hand is upon the hearts of men;  
 this could not be elſe. Could one ever have thought that  
 Engliſh men could have born this? If one had told them be-  
 fore that there ſhould be an Army of Papiſts riſe up with  
 French, 8

French, Walloons, and Irish to spoil the Kingdom, to destroy our Brethren, would one have ever imagined that English men should have born it and stirred no more than they have done? You talk indeed of this and that and of going forth every fourth man, but all such resolutions and such great words of men do usually sink and fall down and come to nothing, as if men were willing and content to lay down their necks upon the block. Surely the guilt of the blood of our Brethren may justly come upon us, and God may have a controversy with us for suffering their blood to be spilt.

9 Ninthly, That God should put so many opportunities into our hands and we neglect all, those opportunities of mercy: this is the hand of God against us and a fruit of his controversy with us.

10. What shall I say more? That God himself should take away our opportunities, that when we are nigh to deliverance that God should drive us back, this is an argument of a heavy controversy indeed. *Numb. 13.* when the people were come very neer to Canaan and were even ready to take possession, God was resolved against them, that none but *Caleb* and *Joshua* should enter, they were beaten back again: now *Chap. 14. 33.* it is said that the people when they heard this, mourned greatly, they saw the hand of God out against them. The truth is we have been even in Canaan, Oh what an opportunity God put into our hands in the West, I say not we lost the opportunity, but there Gods own hand shewed it self against us; *Bristol* then might have been saved, but God would not; And so when we were even at our deliverance God seemed to drive us back, as if he told us, well I like not the business in hand, for this generation, I have somewhat more to say to them, it may be to their young ones I may shew mercy afterward, but against this generation my wrath shall be let out. Surely we may be afraid in regard of the waies of Gods present administration lest this should be in Gods heart. Howsoever let us consider it and mourn greatly before the Lord. *God hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.*

It is no time now to have controversies one with another,

to be wrangling one with another, for this opinion and the other opinion. It is time for us now to lay down all our private controversies and fall to the making up the controversy with our God. It is no time now for Brethren to strive with Brethren, but to strive and wrestle with God in prayer. If we have any strength with us, let it not be spent in contending one with another, but let all our strength be spent in seeking to make peace with our God. It is said of the Romans that they had a Temple of Concord and none were to go to offer any further sacrifice but those that came first to offer in the Temple of Concord. The Lord looks it should be so with us, we should come and agree one with another, lay down all our own controversies and then give up our selves as one man to this great work to make up our controversy with him. If two Chickins be fighting and the Kite come neer, they will leave picking one another and run to the Hen for shelter. We stand picking and snarling one at another, and many men that say they will do thus and thus for the publick cause, but they take exception against this man and the other man, and at this thing and that thing, and now their private grudges come in and that draws them away and takes them off; Oh let us not be picking now, the Kite is coming neer, let us run and shelter our selves under the protection of God, that cannot be but by making our peace with him.

As for the controversy that is this day between the King and us, we can in that appeal to God, that there is no just cause the King should contend with us, no hurt ever intended or done by us unto him. Only we desire to deliver our selves from Tyranny and slavery. Our Priviledges and Liberties are deer to us, they are our Right as truly as his Honor is his. That which he inheriteth it was his forefathers, & that which his forefathers, his predecessors inherited, it was at first from the People; they set up such a family to rule and govern over them; and certainly they never set it up for any other end but only for the publick good, not for their misery & ruin: We can appeal to God that we desired nothing else but to live peaceably and to serve God in our land, enjoying only what God

and

and nature and the Laws of our land had made our own. We know the relation between him and us, and the bond it is mutual; and if there be any thing done now that perhaps cannot be justified by any positive explicate Law of the land, let men know that yet it may be justified by the very light of Nature and by the Law of Armes. It cannot be imagined but if those that ought to be the protectors of the Law should come against Law so hardly upon us, that we must have recourse then to the Law and light of nature, it is impossible this should be otherwise, and this God himself approves.

Whatsoever therefore becomes of this controversy between him and us, whether reconciliation or not reconciliation, yet we have peace in this, that what we have done in the resisting of a deluge of misery that was coming upon us, if we had not done it, our consciences would have upbraided us, the generation to come would have cursed us, the Nations about us and our very enemies would have scorned us and derided us for our base cowardliness, for our sordid spirits, for an unworthy generation that should see it self and posterity sinking into misery and brought under slavery, and out of base fear and sluggish litherness of spirit and effeminate softness, should suffer all to be brought into bondage to the humors and lusts of a few men. We can therefore with comfort and boldness stand at Gods Tribunal and plead the uprightness of our hearts and justness of our cause in this Controversie whatever becomes of it. But in the controversie that God hath against us, there we fall down at his feet and acknowledge our selves guilty before him, yea, we come with sackcloth upon our loins and ashes on our heads, with ropes on our necks, and plead only mercy for our lives. And this is the work that we have to do in all the daies of our humiliation, to seek to make an Atonement between God and our souls and the Land in regard of that dreadful controversie he hath against us. Now blessed God, because thou tellest us in thy word, *Because I WILL do this, therefore prepare to meet thy God O Israel*: Thou threatnest hard, great and sore evils, and thou callest now to us, because *Thou wilt do this, England, O England prepare*

prepare to meet God; We come (Oh that this might be our answer) we come Lord and meet thee with our ſouls bowed towards thee, with our hearts bleeding that we have provoked thee to cauſe ſo much bloodſhed of our brethren amongſt us. O Lord our hearts are open to thee, and with trembling ſpirits we cry to the Lord, what wilt thou have us do? If thou proceededſt againſt us in thy controverſie we are undone, we are undone, Oh Lord forgive, Oh Lord ariſe and be merciful we beſeech thee, *for by whom ſhall Jacob riſe for he is ſmall? by whom ſhall the people ariſe? by whom ſhall the power of godlineſs and thine Ordinances be maintained?*

How happy were we think ſome if the controverſie between the King and us were at an end, that we might have peace. Oh if the people were happy that were in ſuch a caſe, how happy the people that were at peace with the King of Heaven! If the controverſie between God and us were at an end we ſhould be happie indeed. The Lord and the Land is at a controverſie, and this controverſie makes us cry out unto God; but yet wo unto us, here is the miſery, we yet keep our ſins that make the controverſie. *Jer. 35. Will the Lord reſerve his anger for ever? will he keep it unto the end?* Mark what the answer is, *Behold thou haſt ſpoken and done evil things as thou couldſt.* Thus you have ſaid, but what is the fruit of this? *You have done evil as you could.* We in the daies of our Faſts cry, Lord wilt thou reſerve thine anger for ever? wilt thou keep it unto the end? Behold thus we ſpeak, but yet we continue to do evil as we can. *Iſa. 59. 9. We looked for light (ſaith the text) but behold obſcuritie, for brightneſs but we walk in darkneſs, we grope for the wall like the blind:* We indeed grope as if we had no eyes and we ſtumble at noon day as if it were night. Men to this day are ready to cry out and ſay, what ſhal we do? as if the way were not cleer before us what we ſhould do; The way is cleer enough if we had hearts, but we grope as if we had no eyes and we ſtumble at noon day as in the night. In many places of the Kingdom they roar out as bears, and they have cauſe to do ſo, For they are miſerably ſpoiled, their wives raviſhed, their houſes plundered, themſelves imprifoned; and

for the rest of us we mourn like doves night and day, and we look for judgment and there is none, and for salvation but it is far from us; Mark what follows, *For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, (there is the ground of all the controversy between God and us) and as for our sins they testify against us, and our transgressions are with us.* Surely my Brethren God is willing to be at peace with *England* again; the controversy is great and sore; yet we may confidently speak that the Lord is yet willing to be at peace with *England*, and the sufferings of *England* go as near the heart of God as ours. Oh that we knew then what it is that is the great make-bate between God and us that we might get rid of it! Would you know it? 2. *Sam. 20. 21.* saith *Joab* there, *Deliver us Sheba the son Bichri and we will depart from the Citie and go every one unto his tent.* If amongst us Delinquents were punished as they ought, if the hearts of people were prepared to have the remainders of superstition and Idolatry cast out, if they were willing to receive Jesus Christ as King among them, the sound of retreat would soon be heard; the controversy would soon be at an end; and except this be the foundation of our peace, either there will be no peace at all, or it will not hold long. In our raising of forces therefore to help our selves and our brethren (seing we pretend we will do more than before, and it is time we should if we be not a people destinated to destruction and ruine) be sure we begin here, let us do more than ever we did before to make up this controversy with God. It is reported of *Achior* one of *Holophernes*'s his Captains that he counselled *Holophernes* to enquire first whether the Jews had offended their God before he attempted to make war against them, for if they had, he then assured him that that would be their ruine and he might go up and overcome them, but if he could not hear that they had sinned against their God it was in vain for him to strive against them. Truly it concerns us neerly to make up our peace with God that when our adversaries come out against us they may not indeed be made use of to avenge Gods quarrel upon us, for then they will easily improve all their advantages this way, and say indeed that they are not

come out againſt us without the Lord; Every victory they now get they are ready to pleaſe themſelves in this and ſay that God fighteth againſt us, and God approveth them, they tell us the reaſon they prevail is becauſe God is againſt us, and ſo we know *Rabſekab* did though a foul railer, yet ſaith he, Are we come up without the Lord? And the enemies of *David* *Psalm, 71. 12. Mine enemies have ſaid, God hath forſaken him, now perſecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him:* Thus they will be ready to ſay upon any occaſion, now the Lord hath left them, now let us take them: And certainly if the Lord ſhould ſuffer them to prevail many of them would think they do God good ſervice to ſlay and to root out that generation of Gods people that is here in *England*, and they would be confident that it is the mind of God that they ſhould be rooted out. Therefore we had need look to it to make up our peace with God that the controverſie between him and us may not prove to be their victory.

*The Lord hath a controverſy with the inhabitants of the Land.*

There are only two notes to be further obſerved hence. God having to deal with poor earthen creatures, he might preſently have let his wrath out againſt them and deſtroyed them: But Mark, God is willing to have his cauſe pleaded with vile creatures, ſo that all the while he is pleading there is time and ſpace for them to come in. This teacheth us this excellent leſſon: [*That men ſhould be willing that the cauſe that is between them and their inferiours ſhould be pleaded, and not ſtand ſo much upon their ſuperiority, and ſcorn to humour an inferiour ſo much as to have any matter debated between them.*] As husband and wife if a controverſie be between them, though the one be ſuperiour and the other inferiour, think it not much to debate it between themſelves with meekneſs and love, *Job, 31. 13.* profeſt he did not deſpiſe the cauſe of his man-ſervent when he contended with him, but he would have that pleaded and made out. *Jehovah*, the mighty God condeſcendeth to put his cauſe to a ſuit, he will not paſs ſentence upon poor creatures til it come to a tryal. Be not ſurly and ſcornful towards your inferiours.

Obſerv.

Another Note, [*The inhabitants of the Land*] lies a little more couched. The inhabitants of the Land, what Land? The inhabitants of the Land of Canaan, a controversie with them. Mark, God fulfilled his promise in bringing them into the Land of Canaan, and now he pleadeth with them for the forfeiture of their promise. *Psal.* 105. 44, 45. he tells them that he had given them the lands of the Heathen, that they might observe his Statutes and keep his Laws, that was their condition. God fulfilled his part, he bringeth them into the land, but when they were in the land they minded not their part. You know God often gave them charge when they came into the land to do this and this, they promised they would do it, but when they were once brought into the land they forgot it, they forsook God. God now comes and pleads with the inhabitants of this land; As if he should say, I have done my part in bringing you into the land, now I come to plead with you for breaking your promise and covenant. Take this note from hence. [*Whatsoever mercy you have from God you are to*

Observ. *look upon it as a fruit of Gods faithfulness to you (if you be Gods) and as a ground of your obedience to him, ana his pleading with you if you walk not answerable to it.*

*The inhabitants of the Land*] Hierome hath another note upon it, but that is further off, I will only name it. Rightly saith he are they called to answer and to judgment that are the inhabitants of the land, and do not look upon themselves as sojourners and strangers in the land; But he that can truly say with the Prophet, *I am a pilgrim & a stranger here*, such a one can never do that which may cause God to have a controversie against him. This is the reason men do that which causeth God to have a controversie with them, because they look upon themselves as possessors of the land, and not as pilgrims and strangers. But this is too far off.

The second part followeth. [*God declareth.*] A sute first is entred against such a man, when the Court day comes, there is calling for a declaration, the Lawyer declares: God doth so, and the Prophet is Gods Lawyer, and here are three Articles put in thi declaration, *Because there is no Truth, no Mercy, no knowledg of God in the land*



First in general, that there is a declaration, take these two useful notes from thence.

First, *God contendeth not with a people without a cause.* How many are there that strive and contend one with another without any cause at all! they vex and rage, contend and sue and great controversies there are, but if we come to examin the cause we can find nothing at all; great dust is raised but whence is it? if we look to the bottom and examin wherefore it is, we can see just nothing, they themselves know no cause, they can give no rational account of all their pleading, one against another. As *David* said to *Eliab* his eldest brother, *1 Sam. 17. 29.* when *Eliab* came and wrangled with him, saith *David*, *What have I now done? is there not a cause? Eliab's* spirit was up through his envy, chiding and wrangling with *David*; but what have I done saith *David*, have not I cause for what I did! Thus many have their spirits up, chiding and wrangling, but examin the cause, and they can show none at all. How many are there of bitter spirits, who even go about like mad-dogs, snarling at every one, even at those they know not, with whom they had never any thing to do, yet cry out against them, railing upon them every where! Ask them, do you know the man? can you prove any hurt against him? The truth is they know him not, they are not able to make good what they say, only there is a general noise of such and such men that they do thus and thus, and so they bite and snarl, and rage against them, but when all comes to all they know no cause. Such and such men they say disturb the Kingdom and trouble the people, a great deal of cry but little wool, the foundations of the earth are out of order, but what hath the righteous done? You would think when you hear such railing, and cryings out against such and such men, that they were the most monstrous men upon the earth, but examin what it is that they have done, there is nothing. God doth not so with you, God never contendeth with man but for a just cause.

Secondly, *Because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land,* but by swearing, and lying, and stealing &c.  
From

Obl. From whence in the general there is this, God contendeth not againſt a people for little things, when God ſaith he hath a controverſie with the inhabitants of the land it is not for trifles, for ordinary infirmities, for dayly excuſions, but for great notorious things. Not that little things do not deſerve a controverſie, but it is from the vertue and fruit of the Covenant that this comes to paſſe; in others that are not in covenant little things make a controverſie, but between Gods children and himſelf they are not little things; that make a controverſie. But men are of froward ſpirits, every triſle is enough to make a controverſie between them. Yea, uſually the greateſt controverſies between neereſt friends is ſome triſle or other. Is there a man and his wife live lovingly and ſweetly many yeers, do they fall out afterwards? Is there a bitter controverſie? Examin it, it is but about ſome toy. So between one brother and another. I could give you examples in Hiſtories of great and bitter controverſies that have been between neereſt friends upon ſmall and trivial grounds. I remember *Camerarius* tells us a ſtory of two brethren, theſe two walking out in a ſtar-light night, ſaith one of the brethren would I had a paſture as large as this Element, and ſaies the other would I had as many Oxen as there be Stars; ſaies the other again, where would you feed theſe Oxen? in your Paſture, replied he; what whether I will or no? Yea ſaid he whether you will or no; what in ſpight of me? yes ſaid he; and thus it went on from word to word till at length each ſheath'd his ſword in the others bowels. This veriſieth that ſaying of *James*, Chap. 3. 5. *Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!* So it is in many families, ſometimes perhaps a look is the beginning of a great controverſie, one thinks ſuch a one doth not look lovingly upon him, and then he begins to ſuſpect that things boil within him, perhaps afterward ſome words come forth that may ſeem to argue diſcontent, and then that word begetteth another, and that other a third, and ſo a miſerable breach cometh to be in a family. It is an argument that theſe people have Gunpowder ſpirits that a little ſpark of fire can ſo quickly blow them up. Truly the  
contro-

controversie here in *England* the ground of it at the first beginning was little enough on our parts; Only were it not that there had bin a desperate design in our adversaries, it were impossible that such a little beginning should ever come to that height. But God doth not so, they are great things for which he hath a controversie with the inhabitants of the land.

But what is it? what is the declaration? *No truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.* These three especially, the first doth exceeding neerly concern us.

First, *No Truth.* God is a God of Truth, he is true in all his waies. He justly pleads with them that have dealt falsely with him. No truth; No reality in their Religion, that is something, but that is not all. God comes upon them for the breaches first of the second Table; for they are more convincing; we have greater advantage against a natural man to convince his conscience in those than in matters of Religion. If you speak to them concerning sins in matters of Religion; they will say they acknowledg the true God and they worship him. Well, therefore the Prophet begins first here in the matters of the second Table, concerning the want of truth between man and man: As if he should say, Talk what you will concerning your worshiping of the true God, there is no truth between one another, you deal falsely and cruelly, and are merciless to your brethren, never therefore talk of Religion and of acknowledg the true God. Thence the Note is this. [*That it is in vain for any man to talk of his Religion, if he make no conscience of the second Table as well as the first.*] For a man to talk of praying, and hearing Sermons, if he be cruel and hard-heard, and false in his dealings, the Lord rejecteth all let him talk what he will.

Obf.

*No truth in your dealings one with another.* First there is abundance of flattery amongst you. You flatter one another in your sin, you do not deal unfainedly one with another. You flatter your Princes, and your Princes have little truth in their Courts. It was once a speech of one; *All things were plentiful in the Court but only truth.* And this is the unhappiness of great men that those that are about them usually deal

falsly.

fallly with them. You shall seldom know one that deals truly with great men, they tell them that their bloodshedding and ruining of Kingdoms is but the maintaining of their just Honor and Prerogative. I have read of *Dionisius* his flatterers, that when he spit upon the ground they would lick it up and then tell him that that spittle was sweeter than any *Ambrosia* and *Nectar*, the sweetest that ever they tasted, meerly to please him: And so you have many that are neer to great men, though they see them do things never so abominable; things that make never so great breaches between God and them, between them and people, yet they tell them that they do more bravely than ever any of their Ancestors did. *There is no* . . . *it.*

Truth here some take for Justice. Thus it is sometimes taken in Scripture. *Zech. 8. 16. Speak ye every one the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace.* As if he should say, you do not execute justice upon Malignants that are in your power; you speak of raising Arms to fetch in Delinquents, but you execute not judgment upon those that you have in your hands, you will have God in a solemn manner to be blessed because he hath delivered you from them, but judgment is not executed in truth as it should be. *Nor No Mercy:* That is, you shew no mercy to the innocent; you talk of indulgence, your indulgence to Delinquents is cruelty to innocents, Oh how many of our brethren in *Oxford* and other places suffer most dreadful things because these here enjoy so much liberty and have so much favour as they have. So there is neither mercy to the *Innocent* nor justice to the *Nocent*.

But the special thing here intended is, *That you are not true in your dealings nor in the trust committed to your charge; There is no equitie in your dealings. Isa. 59. 14. And judgment is turned backward,* (it is turned upon those that it should not be executed upon) *And justice standeth a far off.* If one be greater than another, the meanest shall come under the stroke of justice and be executed, and the greater not: *And truth is fallen in the streets;* how comes that in? Thus, as if he should say, It is true, they that are in place of Authority will not execute judgment

judgment and juſtice, but are not the common people faithful in their dealings one with another, No, *Truth is falſe in the ſtreets*: this ſeems to refer to the multitude; *And equity cannot enter*; the word that is here tranſlated *Equity*, comes of a word that ſignifies a thing that is juſt before one; As if he ſhould ſay, thoſe very things that one would think were as plain (as we ſay) as the noſe on a mans face, things that are ſo evident, that are juſt before us, that have ſo much equitie and reaſon in them, yet thoſe things cannot enter, thoſe things cannot be entertained, there is ſuch a general confuſion amongſt the people, ſuch a corruption among them, they are ſo ſet upon wickedneſs, that things that are equal and plain according to common ſenſe and reaſon, yet it cannot enter into their hearts, they will not receive it. And is not this in a great meaſure our condition at this time?

There is no Truth, they are falſe in the truſt committed to their charge. Oh here is a controverſie indeed that God may have againſt us. Was there ever a time that either *England* or any other country knew when there was ſo much falſeneſs in men in the truſt committed to them? All things in *Iſrael* at this time were come to that confuſion, that through the falſeneſs of men any thing of the greateſt conſequence that might be was betrayed. It is a ſign of Gods fearful wrath upon our Nation that there is no truth in men, when people are left to the treachery and perfidiouſneſs of others; that ſuch whom one would think one might be confident of their truth, nay venture their lives upon it, yea, ſuch as a long time before were truſtie; yea, truſtie to admiration, yet at laſt when they think they may ſuffer, [their own ends are not ſo clear to attain to as at firſt] they will betray all that truſt that is committed to them and venture even their own undoing rather than endure further hazard in that way of truſt. Such curſed ſelviſhneſs is there in the hearts of men that have not the grace and true fear of God to ballance their hearts; they will even betray God himſelf and a whol Kingdom for their own private ends. But what an unworthy thing is this for men to betray publick truſt when ſo much miſchief may come

upon it meerly for their own ends; It is as if a man should set an house on fire to roast an egg: what are mens own particular ends in comparifon of a Kingdom? not fo much as an egg in comparifon of an house. This was the complaint in *Micah's* time of *Judah* as well as of *Israel* here, *Micah* was contemporary with *Hosea*, *Mic. 7. 5.* *Trust not in a friend, put ye no confidence in a guide, keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom: A mans enemies (ver. 6.) are the men of his own house.* But though there are many of them thus corrupt and there is no truth in them, you cannot tell how to put any trust in them, are there not some of them better? Mark the 4. verse. *The best of them is a bryar, the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedg.* In evil times you shall find those whom you most confide in to be so froward in some of their waies, so perverse, that if you go to them for shelter, they will prick you; even those men that you cry most up, those whom you think to receive most from, yet when evil times come their spirits will be so stirred that if you come to them for shelter you shall find them extream perverse: And this indeed is the day of the perplexity of a Kingdom, what shall we do in this case? Mark the 7. verse *Therefore will I look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, My God will hear me;* As if he should say, If I look unto man I have little help there, little comfort there, the best of them is a bryar, if I trust in men and look for any help from men, I see what they will do, verily every man is altogether vanity; therefore our condition is very sad and miserable, Lord what shall we do? I will look to the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, My God will hear me; Men cannot save me, God will hear me though they will not.

Observ. *Gods controversie with Covenant-breakers, with those that betray their trust, is very dreadful.* I will shew you an example or two out of the Scripture and out of History.

First that notable place in *2 Sam. 21.* when there was a famine in the daies of *David* three yeers together, *David* would know what the matter was, God gave him this answer, *That is because for Saul and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites;*  
Because

Because *Saul* would not keep that trust to the Gibeonites that was promised them, God therefore brings a famine upon the whole Land for three years together: And I beseech you mark the aggravation here of Gods displeasure against any that break trust; first this promise was not made by *Saul*, but by *Sauls* Progenitors, and it was made above three hundred years before his time, And then to whom was it made? unto a Heathenish people, to the Gibionites; And this promise they got deceitfully, they deceived *Josbua* and so got it by craft; further it was a promise made them without asking counsel of God, so the text saith, *Josb. 9. 14.* Again, this promise was against the mind of the congregation, verse 18. *All the congregation murmured against the Princes:* Again, *Saul* when he slew the Gibeonites he did not do it out of a perfidious spirit, but out of a good intent, for so the text saith, *2 Sam. 21. 2.* He slew them in his zeal to the children of Israel, because he thought that the Gibeonites remaining amongst them would perhaps prove some hinderance to the good of Israel. Further, this work of God comes not upon *Saul* then when he broke the trust, but upon his posterity afterward, and that shews it to be greater wrath. Lastly it comes so upon them as it will not be appeased till it hath their lives: you may see then how God is set upon it to revenge promise-breakers.

Another example as notable as that, is in *Ezek. 17 15.* when *Zedekiah* the King of Judah had made a Covenant with the King of Babylon, and broke it, he rebelled against him in sending his Ambassadors into Egypt that they might give him horses and much people; *Shall he prosper saith the Lord? shall he escape that doth such things, or shall he break the covenant and be delivered?* This covenant was made with a wicked man with a Tyrant, and yet God calls it his Oath and his Covenant, ver. 18. And then with what an Emphasis doth God speak this. *He despised the Oath by breaking the Covenant when so he had given his hand: yea ver. 16. God professeth it shall cost him his life, Surely saith the Lord, in the place where the King dwelleth that made him King, whose Oath he despised, and whose Covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon shall he dye: yea further,*

God sweareth against him and that by his own life, ver. 19. *Therefore thus saith the Lord God, as I live surely mine Oath which he hath despised, and my Covenant which he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head:* Then further, God tells him that all the strength that he had got to him and all his policie and all his cunning devices should not help him, ver. 20. *I will spread my net upon him and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him unto Babylon and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me:* And lastly, the wrath of God shall not only be upon him, but upon all those that joyned with him and abet him in the breaking of this covenant, ver. 21. *All his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered towards all winds.* I know not two scriptures more full for Gods being set to contend with men for breach of promise. Oh take heed all you that are intrusted in any publick trust that you break not covenant.

And as you have examples of this in the Scripture, so there is also an example or two in History which are exceeding full for this purpose. I suppose that is known unto you of *Rodolphus*, who having set his hand to a Covenant with *Henry the fourth* which he afterward brake, and his right hand coming to be cut off, his conscience accused him, Oh saith he, *This is that right hand that subscribed the Covenant, and now God revengeth the breach of it upon this right hand.* But above all that is the most remarkable that is in the History of the *Hungarians*, concerning *Udislaw* the King of *Hungary*, and *Amurath* the great Turk; they report that *Udislaw* making war with *Amurath*, having before promised the contrary; in a battle between them the Turk had the worst of it, *AMURATH* being there and having with him the Covenant made between the King of *Hungary* and him, and seeing himself put to the worst, he plucked forth the Covenant out of his bosom and with his eyes fixed toward Heaven he speaks thus, *This Oh Jesus Christ is the Covenant that thy Christians have struck with me, O holy Jesus they have done it in thy Name and sworn by thy Majesty, and yet they have violated it, they have perfidiously denied their God; Now Oh Jesus if thou beest a God as they say and as we guess thou art, revenge this wrong that is done unto me and unto thy*  
self



*ſelf upon theſe that have violated their faith and promiſe, and do thou ſhew unto us that do not know thy Name that thou art an avenger of ſuch as betray their truſt, and then we ſhall know thee to be a God.* Now juſt upon this God ſo ordered it that the Hungarians having the better of the day, they through covetouſneſs of the prey broke off the fight & fel upon the loaden Camels, whereupon the Turks totally routed the Hungarians, *Vdiſlaus* their King was ſlain, and a famous Victory left unto *Amurath*.

Thus you ſee how God will be avenged for the breach of truſt, certainly God will follow thoſe that have been guilty of it; we ſee it apparantly how God follows them already. And indeed if we have to deal with men that are popiſh \* how is it poſſible that we can confide in them in any thing they promiſe, in any thing they agree to? For we know it is their very opinion, that *fides non ſervenda hereticis*, faith is not to be kept with hereticks; This is their opinion they hold, that for the *Catholick* *Cauſe* they may break al their truſt, promiſes and covenants. Certainly that people are befotted that ſhal ſo depend upon thoſe that are Papiſts and carried away by Papiſts, as to lay their lives, their liberties, and their outward comforts at their feet, at their mercy; for certainly there is no truth in them. The Nations of the earth are even befotted in this, that they will ever make any covenant, any league with Papiſts who hold ſuch an opinion that they may break all their Covenants for the *Catholick* cauſe. What a caſe ſhould we be in if we lie down at the mercy of thoſe that have no truth in them, when afterwards we ſhall find they break affunder al their bonds of agreement and all their covenants, & then we our ſelves know that this was their opinion before, and that they would enter into league and make peace with us meerly to ſerve their own turns, and when they have what they would have then to make our eſtates, lives, and liberties to be a prey to them? But we muſt let that paſſe, only this in a word added to it.

\* As *Rodolphus* & *Vdiſlaus* were.

*Nor no Mercy.*] The Merciful God ſets himſelf againſt Unmerciful men, and hath a dreadful controverſie againſt them; And when this controverſie cometh to be pleaded, Unmerciful men will be confounded before the Lord; For God will

lay his plea thus, What you that stood in so much need of mercy every moment to keep you out of Hell; You that lived upon mercy continually as you breathed in the air; You who are begging at my gates every day? You who are undone for ever if you had not mercy supplied every hour, and yet You unmerciful to your brethren? This plea wil stop the mouths of all Unmerciful ones. It was the controversie that God had with *Sodom* it self, because they were Unmerciful: Much more than hath God a controversie with the inhabitants of the land of *Israel* if they be unmerciful. *Ezek. 16. 49.* there God laies his charge, his plea against *Sodom*, That they did *not strengthen the hands of the poor.* Unmercifulness it is a sin against the very light of nature. *Josephus* in his 15. book of *Antiquities*, Chap. 12. reports this of *Herod* that wicked and ungodly king that we reade of in the Gospel, That there being a great famine in *Judea*, he melted all his movables of Gold and Silver that were in his Pallace, he spared nothing of his Plate either for the preciousness of the matter, or for the excellency of the fashion of it, no not so much as those vessels wherein he was daily served at his table, but he melted them all and made money of them, and sent this money into *Egypt* to buy Corn, which Corn he distributed unto the Poor, and he appointed Bakers to provide bread for such as were sick, and he provided raiment for the naked, because the sheep were likewise dead and the poor had no work; yea he sent to his neighbors the *Syrians* Corn that might be Seed-corn for them to sow the ground with. This was that wicked *Herod*, and yet in time of publick calamity thus merciful was he to the poor. Surely God must needs have a controversie with *Israel* then, with *Christians* then that have received so much mercy from the Lord if they shall be unmerciful in times of common calamity. And if ever unmercifulness were a vile sin and provoked God against a people, it must needs do now at such a time as this, when there are so many objects of pity and commiseration daily presented before us: If this should but prove to be our charge that there is no mercy in the land at this day, God must needs have a fearful controversie against us. The

whole

whole land cannot be ſaid to be charged now as at ſome time it might have been. Not long ſince in *England* there hath been crying out of violence and wrong, thoſe which ruled over us have ruled over us with violence, rigour, and cruelty, according to that complaint *Ezek. 34. 4. With cruelty and force have ye ruled my people. They have turned judgment to wormwood, Amos, 5. 7.* Their Courts of Judicature that ſhould have been for right judgment have been turned into bitter wormwood and have been full of cruelty. What have many of them cared for the lives, for the comforts of thouſands, for the extremitie of all miſery they ſhall ſuffer, ſo be it their own humors and their own luſts might be ſatisfied, as if all other men were but as dogs except themſelves? The Lord doth at this day charge this upon ſome of them, and will charge it more. I remember once a ſpeech of a reverend Divine in this Citie, now with God, whom you all honored when he was alive, being put into that Court, the high Commiſſion, when he came home one day from thence he tells this ſtory of what he obſerved there. I heard (ſaith he) crying out much of *Grace*, and *pleaſe your Grace*, and much crying out of peace, if there were any noiſe, then peace peace, but I ſaw no *MERCY* there ſaith he, nothing at all but Cruelty.

*Jer. 50. 17.* you may ſee in what indignation God doth take it, for men though the greateſt upon earth to be cruel to his people, *This Nebuchad-rezzar King of Babylon hath broken his bones; Who was this Nebuchad-rezzar? A mighty great Prince, yet God looks upon him with indignation when he ſees him breaking the bones of his people.* We have amongſt us thoſe who as *Pſal 27. 12.* breath out cruelty, and indeed they act nothing leſs, there is cruel hatred in their hearts and waies, according to that *Pſalm, 25. 19.* No marvel therefore though heretofore our brethren left the Kingdome, becauſe they found ſuch cruelty here. there was no mercy in the land; they did but according to that which the Church calleth the members of it to, *Can. 4. 8. Come with me from Libanon, from the Lyons dens, from the mountains of the Leopards.* When they went from us, they went from the Lyons dens, and from the mountains

of the Leopards; No marvel now the Lord is so severe against our Land, because there hath been so little mercy in the land. That is the second Article against Israel, That there was no Mercy.

The third is, *Nor no Knowledge of God in the land* ] In the Hebrew it is, *And no knowledg*; but now *Van* that is there for *And*, it signifies sometimes *quia*, as well as *et*; And so it may indeed be well rendred here, *Because there is no knowledg of God in the land*; the reason why there is no mercy is because there is no knowledg of God: The knowledg of God will make wicked men to be merciful men. Cruel men know not God. These two are put together and joynd most elegantly in *Psal. 74. 20. The dark places of the earth are ful of the habitations of crueltie* (saies the text.) The knowledg of God will make men civil and humane at least, but when there is no knowledg of God men grow cruel and savage. And do we not find this to be true at this very day? From what places are men that do now rise up to be plunderers, to shed blood, to be cruel in most desperate outrages, from what places are these men beholden for their assistors and abettors this way? Are they not beholden to places where they are in ignorance, where they have no knowledg of God, where there is no preaching? In the Countries round about observe those Parishes, those Towns, where there hath been least or worst preaching, where they have had least knowledg of God, there you have most malignants, that are bloody and cruel. No mervail then that our adversaries are such enemies to the faithful preachers of the word of God; no marvel then they are made the But of their malice; for indeed if they bring the knowledg of God into the land they will bring humanitie, civilitie, they will bring mercy and love, and there wil be few or none that will be fit for their turns. Indeed it is their complaint of the Parliament that they set ignorant men in places, but certainly this complaint is but a pretence, for it were better for their turns that all the congregations in *England* had but ignorant men, had no men to bring the knowledg of God amongst people; but they know well enough what ever they say, that  
those

those that are sent are such as do bring the knowledg. of God among people, and there is nothing does them more hurt than this knowledg. of God.

*No knowledg. of God.*] This is a heavy charge indeed : Powr out thy fury upon the Heathen that know thee not, *Jer.* 10. 25. Though they be Heathens and yet know not God, the wrath of God is to be poured forth upon them, surely then Gods wrath must be upon Israel that know not God. And *Iſa* 27. 11. *They are a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy upon them, he that formed them will shew them no favour.* 2 *Theſ.* 1. 8. *The Lord Christ shall come in flaming fire to render vengeance upon those that know him not.* What no knowledg. of God? what glory then can God have from such a people? God hath done great things in the world, he hath manifested himself an infinite and a glorious God, and his end in all that he hath manifested himself in is, that Angels and men might behold this, might adore, admire, worship, fear, and praise him; but where there is no knowledg. of God, there all Gods glory passeth by and there is no notice taken of it, to what purpose is the world made? such an one can never sanctifie the Name of God in any duty of worship in the use of any creature: where there is no knowledg. of God, there all good is kept out, there the unclean spirit a spirit of darkness dwels: when the Crow hath picked out the eyes of the Lamb then it makes a prey upon it; As in dark vaults there are toads and filthy creatures, so in dark souls there are crawling and filthy lusts; As in blind Alehouses there is abundance of disorder, so in a blind heart, there is abundance of distemper and disorder.

*No knowledg. of God.*] The *Septuagint* turn this word *Knowledg.*\* by a word that signifies acknowledgment, there is no *acknowledgment* of God in the land. People should walk so in all their waies as to hold forth the glory of that great God they do profess. If they know God to be such as he is revealed in all his Attributes and works, they should in their lives (I say) so walk as to hold forth this before the children of men. I appeal to you in this; Perhaps some of you can

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speak

Speak concerning God, and tell us what God is, and concerning his Attributes, yet are your lives in your families; in your conversations, so as that one beholding them may see written the glorious Attributes of God upon them, that you hold forth these glorious Attributes, that in all your waies you carry with you the glory of the great God holding forth your fear of this God, your love of this God, and giving up your selves to this allsufficient God who is worthy of all. There should be this acknowledgment of God as well as knowledg, and God hath a controversie with a land with a familie, with a particular soul when there is not an acknowledgment of God in their waies.

*But no knowledg of God in the Land.] In the land, here is the Emphasis. Oh this is a very sad thing: What not in the land of Israel no knowledg of God? Psal. 76. 1. In Judah is God known, his Name is great in Israel.* It is expected that God should be known in their land, and for God not to be known there; he was not known to any people in all the world but *Judah and Israel*; and here ten Tribes are charged for not having the knowledg of God in their land. Surely they refused to know the Lord, they shut their eyes against the knowledg of God, they say to God, depart from us we desire not the knowledg of thy waies. Men may live where there is the means of knowledg and yet be ignorant all their daies. How many men of excellent parts in respect of all outward affairs, in the country and Citie, come and speak to them about matters of State, they will speak understandingly about them, they have deep reaches for State affairs; speak to them about the affairs of Merchandize, of their trades, they will speak understandingly; but speak to them about God, about Christ, about the things of eternal life, how poorly, how weakly, how childishly, how sottishly shall you have them speak about those things! Men of parts and living under much means yet may be very ignorant of the knowledg of God. Howsoever the want of knowledg may seem to be a little matter, even in places where there is means, yet let men know that it is a fearful brand of reprobation for people to live under the

means and not to have the knowledg of God, 2. Cor. 4. 3. *If our Goſpel be hiddden, it is hiddden to thoſe that are loſt.* And it is pronounced as a great curſe for a man to live without knowledg, *Job, 36. 12. They ſhall periſh by the ſword, and they ſhall die without knowledg.* Oh how many at this day do periſh by the ſword and die without knowledg? It concerns us now to get the knowledg of God becauſe the ſword may be neerer us than we are aware of, and what will become of us if it fall out to be our portion to periſh by the ſword and to die without knowledg?

But though they had ſome means of knowledg, yet their means did grow very ſhort. And there are two ſpecial reaſons why Iſrael at this time was without knowledg, why there was no knowledg of God in the land of Iſrael.

First, Becauſe that *Jeroboam* had in the deſeſtion of theſe ten Tribes of Iſrael, ſet up the loweſt of the people in the place of the Priests Office. Any man that deſired to be a Priest though never ſo baſe and vile, *Jeroboam* would ſet him up. In the 1 of *King. 12. 31.* there you ſhal find it, *He made an houſe of high places, and made Priests of the loweſt of the people which were not of the ſons of Levi;* no mervail then they had not the knowledg of God amongſt them. Thus it hath been in *Ireland*, and therefore no mervail ſo little knowledg of God there, any tradesman that ſcarce underſtood right reaſon, leſs divinity, he was ſet up there to be a Priest, and what horrible cruelty hath been there! So in *England*: howſoever ſome of them complain of ignorant men that are in the Miniſtry, the truth is they have ſet up men of far leſs underſtanding in former times: for a little money to a Bishops Clark might not any tradesman, any caſt butlar from a gentlemans houſe, any caſt ſervingman, might they not come into orders and reade their prayers and ſo become a Priest? This hath been the cauſe of much ignorance. How many caſt ſervingmen have had places in doing what they can do, when as learned and godly Divines muſt be caſt out of the Kingdom and denied to have any libertie to preach the knowledg of God unto his own people! Here is the reaſon of our ignorance

even that which was *Jeroboams* sin, the setting of the lowest of the people in the Ministry; And now that there is an examination of men, we find what abundance of vile men there are in places, and those people in those places are alike to them, such Prophet such People, and the truth is people love to have it so. That which is complained of, in *2 Chron.* 15. 3. that for a long season Israel had been without the true God, and without a teaching Priest. This Israel includeth both Judah and Israel, for sometimes it doth so in Scripture: *Israel had been* (saith he) *without the true God and without a teaching Priest*: this was a sad condition indeed that Israel should be without a teaching Priest, and without the Law; And mark how they are joyned, and without God; A people are without God that are without a teaching Priest, without the Law. If they have not means to instruct them in the knowledg of God they are a people without God. But now mark what follows upon this, ver. 5. *In those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries, and Nation was destroyed of Nation, and City of City, for God did vex them with all adversity.* Truly our condition comes to be almost like to the condition of Israel at that time. And here we may see what the fruit of this controversy was, they were without a teaching Priest and without Law, and in those times there was no peace to him that went out and to him that came in, but great vexation there was, Citie destroying Citie, and Nation destroying Nation, for God did vex them with all adversity. Oh how doth the Lord even vex us at this very day! and this as a fruit of Gods controversy with us, because there is so little knowledg of God in the land.

And the second reason why there was so little knowledg of God in that land at that time, is this, *Because the pure Worship of God and his Ordinances were shut out of doors, and mens inventions were brought in in the room of them.* For so it was, after the ten Tribes defection from Judah, then they left the right worship of God, to worship in the Temple at Jerusalem, and they set up their Calves in *Dan* & *Bethel*, and so brought in their own inventions:



inventions inſtead of the true worſhip of God; And no marvel though there came diſmall darkneſs upon the land when this was. That is certain my brethren, "When ever the "pure Ordinances of God and the right way of his worſhip is "ſhut out from a Kingdom, there will come wofull darkneſs "upon that Kingdom. The right knowledg of God vaniſheth when mens inventions in his Ordinances come to be honored. As painted glaſs in your windows hindereth the light, you may daub your glaſs by paint, but you will have the leſs light by that; ſo the more inventions of men there are in Gods worſhip the leſs light comes into the heart of the people. As ſome not contented with ordinary plain letters they make ſuch flouriſhes about them that you can ſcarce tell what they are; you ſhall have ſome write their names with ſuch flouriſhes that you can not tell what to make of them; ſo many men that will not content themſelves with plain Ordinances, with the Ordinances of Chriſt, but they muſt have flouriſhes of their own inventions, at length you know not what to make of them, they come to darken the right underſtanding of the mind and truths of God. *To the Law and to the Teſtimony,* (ſaith the Prophet) *if they ſpeak not according to theſe it is becauſe there is no light in them.* If they will leave the Law and the Teſtimony and will go according to their own inventions in Divine Worſhip, it is becauſe there is no light in them; they are in darkneſs, and they will bring darkneſs upon the people. *Coloſ. 2. 22.* it is ſaid of the rudiments of the world and the Ordinances of men, that they periſh in the uſe; that is, there is no efficacy at all in them to do any good unto the ſouls of men. Our adverſaries call Images and Pictures laymens books to teach them; but the Scripture tells us they teach a lye; And if they be lay mens books, there are many Errataes in them, they are full of Errataes in every Page and more Errataes than true lines. The beſt that we can ſay of any Ceremonies brought into the Church by men, (becauſe people would ſtrive and ſtudy to excuſe the firſt Reformers) that they thought at that time there was ſome uſe of them in regard of the dulneſs of men, ſo ſo they ſay in the Preface to the

the Common Prayer Book, that it was to stir up the dull minds of men. But mark, if it could possibly be imagined that there could be any use of them at the first, in the first Reformation (which indeed there was not, but rather they did hurt and made mens minds more dull, as I dare appeal to you, those that have lived continually under such inventions of men in Gods worship.) But if possibly (I say) there could be imagined any use of them at the first, the best is that they were but as Horn-books and fisticues for the childhood and infancy of the Church. They say themselves that they needed such things, but to put the best glosse on them, they needed them but as children need Horn-books and fisticues. And is it seemly alwaies to learn upon them? what knowledg shall be got if when you set your children to learn to reade they shall be kept ten, twenty, or thirty years to their Horn-books? Now thus would our Prelates have debased people to keep them continually to learn the knowledge of God by their Horn-books and fisticues.

Now take these two reasons together, Unteaching Priests, and Mans Inventions, they keep out the knowledge of God from a people; And they are brought on purpose to bring blindness, because that is most fit and sutable to the design that men have to bring people under slavery. So it was here, *Jerobam* at that time when *Hosea* prophesied, his design was to bring the people under slavery, to keep them from the house of *David* to be his slaves, and what course doth he take? He first sets up the basest and lowest of the people to be their Priests: and secondly he introduceth false worship, and that brings in blindness and ignorance, and so by this means he knew he should soon bring them under slavery. And nothing is more clear than this, that it hath been the design of many that would have been Rulers of the Church, they have labored with all their might, (as servicable unto others) to bring blindness and ignorance into the Land, that so they might bring the land under slavery; and there is nothing hath vexed them more, than that there is so much knowledge in the land, therefore their spiries were so enraged at peoples flocking

king unto Sermons? it was even matter enough to ſilence any Miniſter to have people flocking to hear him preach; ſo they were enraged at peoples repeating of Sermons in their private families, becauſe it was a way to bring in knowledge. Any thing that was a way to bring in knowledg, their hearts were enraged againſt it, why? Becauſe they knew knowledg would keep men that they would never bear ſlavery; And truly it is a very ſtrange thing, that though in ſome Countries (as in *Wales* and in other places) where men have not knowledge they are contented to come under ſlavery; but that in theſe parts where there is, though not ſo much as ſhould be, yet ſuch a degree of the knowledg of God as there is, one would think it impoſſible that men ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be brought into ſlavery here; and that they fear moſt. We reade of the Philiftims that when they had taken *Sampſon*, they put out his eyes, and then they made him to grind in the Mill. So theſe men would fain make us to grind in the Mill, (as it is ſaid ſome have threatned to make the Dames of *London* to work for a peny a day in *Bridewel*) They would fain make you al ſlaves; but firſt they would put out your eyes, they would take away knowledge and then they know they ſhall ſoon make you ſlaves. Well, the Lord hath promiſed, *Iſa. 25.7 That he will deſtroy the face of the covering caſt over all people, and the vail that is ſpread over all Nations;* And mark: *In that day (ver. 9.) it ſhall be ſaid, Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will ſave us.* O come Lord Jeſus, come quickly and deſtroy the covering, the vail that is upon the eyes and hearts of a great part of the people of this Lrnd. The work would ſoon be done if the Lord would but deſtroy the vail of darkneſs that is upon the eyes and hearts of people, and we ſhould triumph in our God and ſay, *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will ſave us, yea he hath ſaved us.* And thus much for that third Charge of this people here; *That there was no knowledge of God in the land.* Now we come to the ſecond Verſe.

## Verse 2.

By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.

**Y**OU see what a Catalogue of gross sins are here mentioned. And indeed when Idolatry doth prevail in any Country, there will be all manner of wickedness. We found it so here in *England*, that the more superstitious waies prevail'd amongst us, the more abominable wickedness there was generally spread about the country.

First, For *Swearing*. The word here translated *Swearing*, it is of מלע and signifies *Maledicere*, *Execrare*; and likewise *Perjurare*. It signifies these three things, to *Curse*, and to be *Perjured*, and to *Swear*. Any of these three this word importeth. And likewise it signifies sometimes to howl out, *Ejulare*, *Joel* 1.8. *Lament like a Virgin girded with sackcloth &c.* It is the same word, *Lament*, or *howl out*. So that the same word that signifies cursing and swearing and forswearing, signifies to howl and cry, for God hath a time to make cursers and swearers and forswearers to howl and cry out. An Oath is a sacred thing, a part of Gods worship, and therefore the abusing of this is a dreadful sin; Especially if it be abused to swear to that which is false. *Paulus Phagius* in his Comment upon *Genesis*, 42. saith it is reported of the Egyptians, that if any man did but swear by the life of the King and did not perform his Oath, that man was to die, and no gold or any thing in the world could redeem his life, so did Heathens hate that sin of perjurie. Yea we have found others that have not had much Religion in them, yet have extreemly hated the sin of ordinary swearing. I have read of *Lewis* the 9. of France, that he punished that sin by searing the lips of swearers with an hot Iron: which Law being executed upon a Citizen of *Paris*, some said it was too cruel, which he hearing of, gave this answer, I would to God saith he, that with searing mine own lips with an hot Iron, I could banish out of my Realm all abuse of Oaths. He could be willing to sear his

*In Egypto  
si quis iuret  
per Caput  
Regis &  
non praestet,  
morte ple-  
ditur, nec  
permittitur  
ut auro vel  
aliâ re vitâ  
redimat.*

his own lips that he might banish the abuſe of ſwearing. *Chryſoſtom* in ſome 16. Homelies together if not more, whatſoever his text was he alwaies concluded againſt ſwearing, as being ſuch a vile and notorious ſin : And amongſt other things becauſe ſome pleaded cuſtom, he putteth them upon this, ſaith he, if you would but puniſh it thus, that if there were an oath ſworn in your houſe, he that ſwore ſhould but abſtain but from one meals meat ; that that ſervant or that child that ſwore an oath ſhould not dine that day, that would do ſomewhat, yet ſaith he, the command of God will not do ſo much as that. Divers other expreſſions I might name, but I muſt haſten. That place *Jer. 23. 10.* is remarkable for this and ſutable to this text, *For becauſe of ſwearing the land mourneth, the pleaſant places of the wilderneſſ are dried up, and their courſe is evil, and their force is not right.*

ιδε γαρ  
ομειρασιν  
εξεσιαλ-  
λα κατα  
φρονου  
μενον.  
Hom. 11.  
Ad pop.  
Antioch.

It is a ſin that hath more malignancy in it againſt God by how much the leſs the temptation is unto it. I verily beleeve that if God had never made the third Commandement, there would never have been ſo many Oaths in the world, but it ſprings from a meer malignancy of ſpirit that is in men againſt God becauſe he hath forbidden it ; For there is no profit that can come by it.

If men be guilty of this ſin meerly thorough a vain cuſtom, what high indignitie is this againſt God ? what ſlighting and neglect of God is there ? As if ſinning againſt God were an argument of no more weight but that the uſing of a thing without any reaſon, when nothing can be got by it, could down-weigh that argument. Cuſtom indeed is enough to prevail in things that are of no moment, as now, ſome man that hath by cuſtom gotten ſuch a kind of poſture of his body, or taking hold of his beard and the like, ſuch a kind of geſture he hath gotten by cuſtom and he cannot leave it, why ? becauſe the thing in its own nature hath no great conſequence in it, and ſo cuſtom prevaileth ; But that cuſtom ſhould be enough to be ſet againſt the high diſpleaſure of the bleſſed God, or be ſet againſt his ſolemn profeſſion that he will not hold that ſoul guiltleſſ that takes his name in vain, this argu-

eth a most insufferable vilifying his sacred Majestie.

Secondly, To swear that thereby the words of men may be graced, this is more horrid impiety; As if the polluting of the holy Name of the most holy God were the best ornament of thy speech, as if the dishonour put upon God were the best grace to thy language.

Thirdly, To swear out of a conceit that this argueth braveness of spirit, a braver spirit than other men have, a spirit of valor and courage, as if according to the fulness of mouthing of Oaths there were a braveness of spirit, this yet is more hideous wickedness; As if that were the courage and excellency of our spirits to fly in the very face of God. Whence it is that many men if any anger them, what do they do? they fall a cursing and swearing, that is, when others displease them they will fly in Gods face, that is the language of it though you will not dare to say so, but that is the language of your practice, others displease and anger me and I to revenge my self will fly in the very face of God. A hiddeous wickedness there is in this that you do not think of. You that are passionate spirits when you come home and your wives and children or servants anger you, you fall to cursing and swearing, Know you do no other but this, this is the language of your practice, they displease me and to revenge my self I will fly in the very face of God; And whence it is that Gentlemen and Noble-men and those that belong unto them are such great swearers, because they imagine that it is an argument of some braveness of spirit, and that thereby they express a spirit of a higher strain than other men. Oh hiddeous and abominable wickedness! This is all the valour that many men have that they dare sin against the glorious God and never be troubled at it; whereas a godly man is described in Scripture, *Eccles. 9. 2. To be a man that feareth an Oath*; but for these it is not for them to fear, it is for timorous melancholly poor spirits, but they are men of brave spirits, and they would have men know that they can swear and not be troubled at it, they have stronger spirits than other men have. Thus is the blessed God dishonored by this sin more than we are aware of.

There

There is a fourth ſort that are higher than theſe, and thoſe are they that ſwear that they may not be accounted Puritans or of the number of ſuch a faction; Becauſe where they go if they be but ſuſpected to be favorers of ſuch kind of men as were heretofore named by that nick-name and now are by another; (I ſay) if they go into company where they think they may be ſuſpected to be inclined to that partie, what do they? They do, to give evident demonſtration to the contrary, ſwear luſtily, and rap out Oaths one after another. Oh what horrible oppoſition unto God and unto the Spirit of Chriſt is this, Chriſt ſaith, *That our light muſt ſo ſhine before men that they ſeeing our good works may glorifie our heavenly Father;* Now they let their wickedneſs appear before men that they may be known what they are: And hereby they give teſtimony that they can be brought to yeild unto any thing, that is the very ground of it, they do (I ſay) by that give teſtimony to the other party, that they can be brought to yeild unto any thing and that they can ſerve their turns; and this is the reaſon why willingly they would entertain no other than ſuch as theſe, for if they hear a man ſwear luſtily then they think thus, ſuch a man ſurely either hath no conſcience at all and then he is fitteſt for our turn he will not be a ſcrupulous fool, or if he have a conſcience he hath broke his conſcience, and now his conſcience cannot prevail over him, therefore now let us put upon him what we will if it may ſute with his own ends and with his own profit, this man will do it; but as for your Puritans that are ſo conſciencious we cannot have our own ends by them, therefore we will have none of them, that is the reaſon why they do ſo much hate them, and others that they might be entertained by them and give full teſtimony that they are fit for theſe turns, therefore they will ſwear. Oh how black are mens mouths at this day by their curſed Oaths, new execrations newly invented, that the world never before heard of! Wherefore then, though God might make theſe men as ſcorpions for a while to ſcurge us, yet if our ſpirits were up we need not fear them, for certainly they are the people of Gods curſe, thoſe that are ſo full of curſes in their

mouths. Thus much for the first.

It follows, *By swearing,*

— *And Lying.*] These two go together: There is no man that makes not conscience of an Oath, that can make conscience of a Lye; though the world would think to part them and say, Oh you will not swear but you will lye; but God saith otherwise. Swearing and Lying go together, those that will swear, certainly will lye. But for Gods own people, God frees them from this sin, from lying though the world would cast it upon them, for there is no sin more against godliness than lying. *Isa. 63. 8.* saith God of his people, *Surely they are my people, children that will not lye.* God engageth himself for his people, these are the people that will not lye saith God. Are you in profession any of Gods people? God doth engage himself for you in this, that certainly you will not lye. It is said of the Devil, that he is a Lyar and the father of lies. And women that carry false tales up and down and are slanderers, in Scripture they are called Devils, *1 Tim. 3. 11. Women must be grave and sober, not slanderers; Devils;* not Devils; A woman that is a slanderer, that carries false tales up and down to the prejudice of her neighbor, the Scripture calls that woman by the name of a Devil; And the word 257 that signifies *DetraCTOR* in the Hebrew it is *Rachil*, and some think our English word *Rake-hel* comes from that word, one that makes no conscience to speak falsely.

This sin of *Lying* is the breaking of all society, there can be no converse between man and man where this is. *Augustine* writing to his friend that sent to him to have his Judgement concerning an Officious lye (that is, a ly that tends not to the hurt of any but of him that tels it) he writes back his answer, *That a man must not tell a lye to save the whole world, If it were* (saies he) *to save thy father or thy mother out of Hell, if possibly it could be, thou must not tell a lye; if it were to save Kingdoms from destruction, thou must not tell a lye.* That is his opinion: And certainly there is a truth in it, for God will never be beholden to the Devil to do good through his means. Surely then thou must not tell a lye to gain a groat, or to gain a shilling,



or to gain a good bargain, or to prevent the diſpleaſure of thy Maſter or Miſtris, but rather willingly open the truth than to think to cover the fault by a lye. The ground of that is Atheiſme that ſervants and children when they have done amiſs ſeek to cover it by a lye. God is exceedingly diſpleaſed with this ſin, and hath a controverſie againſt a Nation, and againſt a family, and againſt a particular perſon for this ſin of lying, and therefore *Prov. 6. 17.* and ſo on, you ſhall find if you read divers verſes together, that the Lord ſaith, *That ſix things he hateth, yea ſeven is an abomination unto him*; now amongſt thoſe ſeven things you ſhall obſerve that he repeats *Prov. 6. 17* lying twice, though under ſeveral terms; And that place is *Opened,* famous that we have in *Revel. 21. 8.* that lyars ſhall have their portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimſtone; Take that home with you; you ſervants, and children, and tradesmen that will tell lyes for gain; God doth rank and chain up lyars together with notorious ſinners that ſhall all have their portion in the lake of fire and brimſtone which is the ſecond death.

There are none in the world that make ſuch advantage of lying as the Antichriſtian party doth, either to draw a party to themſelves or diſcourage thoſe that are againſt them, inventing all manner of lyes that poſſibly can be. And becauſe they invent ſo many themſelves, whatſoever is ſaid againſt them, you preſently hear in malignant mouths, *That's a lye*; they think all men are lyars becauſe they are conſcious unto themſelves, that they themſelves are continually ſo. And no marvel that the Antichriſtian party are ſo full of lyes, for the very Doctrines of Popery; take the lump of it, it is altogether call'd a lye, *2 Theſ. 2. 7.* God gave men over that did not entertain the truth in the love of it to believe a lye that they might be damned. Do you aſk the queſtion why ſo many Learned men, Schollers, underſtanding men turn to the Popiſh party? Mark the reaſon here; becauſe they entertain'd not the truth in love, God gave them over to believe a lye; A lye, what is that? that is the Doctrine of Popery; So the very quinteſſence of it, it is a lye. That being therefore the great lye in the world;

*2 Theſ. 2.  
7. Ex-  
pounded.*

world it must have a company of little lyes (as I may say) to underprop it, to uphold that great Lye of Popery, a company of lesser lyes, *Esa. 28. 15. they make lyes their refuge.* It is a text as notable for our times as any I know, it shews the practice of our times, when they cannot get any thing by any fair way, then they invent lyes and make lyes their refuge. It is the Maxim of the Jesuites, *Calumniare audacter, aliquid herebit,* Calumniate and ly. stoutly to purpose and somewhat will stick, for every one that shall hear of the report shall not come to hear of the answer that can be given to it. And that is their policie, to spread abroad lyes as much as they can, and especially to invent lyes of those that are most eminent and active in publick affairs; and that is the reason of those strange inventions that are raised of such as are most active in Parliament, and also in the City and in the Ministry, things so hideous, that if they were true would render men altogether unfit to be entertained in a Common-wealth. But you will say, what can they get by it when it proveth to be false? Yes, because their lyes spread a great way further than the answer to them can spread: And those in *Jer. 20. 10.* do fully set out the condition of these men; *I heard the defaming of many* (saith the Prophet) *how? Report say they, and we will report it.* This was their plot against *Jeremiah*; the truth is we must defame *Jeremiah*, we see he hath got a great deal of credit and prevails with the people, and we know not how to help our selves, only if we can but defame him, if we can but raise up something that may take away his esteem with the people, we may then have our end, therefore devise somewhat, report and we will report it, we will spread it abroad, we will put it into a frame and print it: As now, if a company of Malignants get into a Tavern, there they wil talk against this Minister and the other, against this Parliament man and the other, against this Citizen and the other, what shall we do say they? we see they prevail, let us devise somewhat that may defame them, report somewhat and we will spread it. This hath been the way to this day to maintain that Antichristian partie, that great Lye. *Jer. 9. 3. They bend their tongue like their bow*

*Jer 20. 10*  
Opened.

bow for lyes, and ver. 5. *They have taught their tongue to ſpeak lyes*; They are now become artificial in it, and they do it the rather becauſe they know it will pleaſe ſome great ones. It was ſo in former times, *Pro. 29. 12. If a Ruler hearken to lyes all his ſervants are wicked*; If any Officer, or any that are about him ſee that it will humour him to raiſe ill reports againſt Gods ſervants, the ſervants of ſuch a Ruler will be wicked and raiſe lyes enow. And amongſt other places that is famous, *Hof. 7. 3.* the text ſaith there, *They make the King glad with their wickedneſſe, and the Princes with their lyes.* It is ſpoken of Jeroboam and the other Kings that followed him, that ſet up falſe worſhip; How there were a great many in *Iſrael* whoſe conſciences would not give them leave to follow that way of falſe worſhip; upon that there were a company of Promoters and Apparitors and Bayliſs, and ſome Courtiers, they would invent lyes againſt thoſe that would needs go up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip and would not content themſelves with the Calves that the King ſet up; Now when they had invented lyes of ſome of the moſt zealous men amongſt the people, they brought theſe tales to the King, and ſaid thus, Did your Ma-jestie hear ſuch a thing? There are ſuch men in your Ma-jesties dominions that dwell in ſuch Towns, and they are forſooth ſo ſcrupulous, they will not be content with that Religion that the Law hath eſtabliſhed, but they muſt go up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip; yea, and at ſuch a time they get into a corner and there they commit ſuch and ſuch wickedneſſe, and they live in theſe and theſe wicked waies; And thus they came and told the King tales of them, and the text ſaies, *They made the King glad with their tales*, the King was tickled with it and rejoiced at it, and he gave them his hand, gave them encouragement. Certainly amongſt us there hath not been wanting men that have endeavoured this, that would have accounted this their happineſſe to get a tale to tell of a Puritan or of a godly Miniſter, though it were never ſo falſe. Thus we have briefly paſt over this ſecond charge in this ſecond verſe, *Swearing, and Lying.*

The next follows. *The Lord hath a controverſie with the inhabitants*

bitants of the land for Murder, for Killing. Murder, that is a provoking sin, God seldom suffers it to go unrevenge'd in this world. Whence are all those discoveries of Murders; scarce any one but can tell strange stories of the discovery of murder. We have a vain distinction of murder & man-slaughter as 'tis call'd, that forsooth if a man be angry and in a passion kills another, this is man slaughter and no murder: God will not own that distinction, for if you shall by your passion make your self a beast and so kill a man, God will require this at your hand, for Gen. 9. 5. God saith *that he will require the blood of man at the hand of every beast*, much more at the hand of a man that by his passion makes himself a beast. The life of a man is precious to God and God will not suffer any creature to have absolute power over it, he keeps the dominion of mens lives unto himself. Mr. Ainsworth upon Gen. 9. 6. citeth the the Jewish Doctors, affirming that a Murderer though it were possible for him to give all the riches of the world, yet he must be put to death, because the life of the murdered is the possession of the most holy God; this is their argument. Certainly it is not in the power of any man upon earth to save a murderer, be he what he will be. The greatest man upon earth hath no liberty from God, no prerogative to save a Murderer, but he that sheds blood by man must his blood be shed. God avengeth the blood that *Manasseh* shed a long while after his death, 2 King. 24. 4. *And for innocent blood that he shed which God would not pardon.* Though *Manasseh* did repent and so we have cause to hope well in regard of his soul and his eternal estate,\* yet the Lord came upon the Nation after his daies and would not pardon his shedding of innocent blood. What adoe do we find in the Law concerning the killing of a man? When a man was found dead in the field, nigh unto a City the Elders of that City they must come to the dead body, wash their hands over the heifer to be slain and take a solemn Oath that they had no hand in the murder and so clear the City from the guilt of it. This shews how precious the life of man is in Gods esteem, and that God hath a controversie with a land for shedding of blood.

\*Though  
Calvin  
seems to  
be of the  
contrary  
opinion.  
Deut. 28.

And if this be ſo, what a controverſie think you hath God againſt many in this Kingdom at this day? How fearful is Gods controverſie againſt ſome that muſt feel it for that blood that hath been ſhed in *Ireland*? There is upon record one hundred and forty thouſand that have been murdered there ſince the beginning of this rebellion, and every body wil ſay, *it is plain murder*. And they whoſoever they are that have had a hand in this, and abetted it, and ſtrengthened the hands of the Murderers, what will they be able to answer unto God? Shall the blood of one righteous *Abel* cry loud in the ears of God and never leave crying untill it hath had vengeance, and ſhall not the blood of one hundreth and forty thouſand innocents? (I mean innocents in this regard, in regard of the cauſe for which they were murdered :) We now in *England* begin to be ſomewhat ſenſible of the guilt of Murder what it is to have it lie upon a Nation. In the laſt Declaration of the affairs of *Ireland*, the Parliament giveth an intimation of ſome fear they have that poſſibly the guilt of the blood of *King James* may ſome way be upon US. God hath a controverſie for murder whereſoever it lies, if it be not puniſhed accordingly. And for all that blood that hath been ſhed here of late, where ever the cauſe lies, God will find it out one day. Oh the blood that will be upon the head of ſome! *Jer. 51. 35.* *The violence done to me and to my fleſh, be upon Babylon, ſhall the inhabitants of Zion ſay, and my blood upon the inhabitants of Caldea, ſhall Jeruſalem ſay.* So let all Chriſtians (they may do it and they have warrant from God to do it) let all Godly people in this Kingdom that have had their Huſbands kill'd, their Children kill'd, their Apprentices kill'd, their Friends kill'd in theſe unhappie wars, let them ſay, the violence done to my fleſh be upon the *Babylonish party*, the Popiſh partie, and the blood that hath been ſhed of our huſbands, of our children, of our ſervants, of our friends be upon the *inhabitants of Caldea*, the inhabitants of the Popiſh partie that are riſen up and ſhed ſo much blood as they have done. Oh how vile and curſed are mens hearts even in this thing, that are ſo ſet upon their deſigns, that to attain them they will go thorough

streams of blood that lie in their way, and no matter for the lives of thousands of men so their lusts may be satisfied! How are men vilified in this thing, that their lives and bodies must go to be servicable unto the lusts of a few others! Certainly God never made such a difference, he never put such a distance between one man and another.

But now in the waies of execution of justice there we must not account the shedding of blood to be killing. God hath not a controversie with a land for bloodshed in the execution of Justice; nay on the contrary the Lord hath a controversie against a people when there is not shedding of blood that way *Jer. 48. 10. Cursed be the man that withholdeth his hand from blood:* such a case may be. And *1. King. 20. 42.* when *Abab* let *Berbadad* go, the text saith that a Prophet came to him, in the name of the Lord saying, *Because thou hast let go out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people.* So when we have men in our hands whom God hath appointed to destruction, who are guilty of death, who have sought not the blood of some few but the massacring of a Citie, if for private ends of our own we let them go, God may require our lives for theirs. And this is the cause it may be amongst others, that there is so much bloodshed at this day amongst us, because there is no execution of Justice upon offenders, and God requires the blood of many for many. It is true, Papists for their Religion are not to be put to death: that we acknowledg, but the Lord because he intendeth the ruin of that partie, will leave them to those waies that they shall be guilty of death by the Law of the Land, and by the Law of Arms, and then the putting them to death in that kind is the execution of Justice and not the breach of the sixth Commandement.

*Quest.*

But will som say, *Oh killing is a grievous thing, we never were acquainted with killing as we have been of late; were it not better we were all at peace than that still so much blood should be shed?*

*Ans.*

God forbid any of us should be bloody men or desire the shedding of blood. No; let us all labour to have peace that  
there:

there may be no more bloodſhed. Take this ſpeech barely conſidered and it is a good ſpeech, and we are all I hope of the ſame mind, Curſed be that man I ſay that ſhall not yeild to this. But certainly peace though upon hard terms, it were to be deſired, if that peace would ſave blood; though half our eſtates went for it; But what if it prove that that peace we talk of ſhould be a means of more bloodſhed? If you ſhould let in ſuch men into your City as bloody *Papiſts, French, Walloons, and Iriſh Rebels*, and that meerly upon their bare word that they would do you no hurt, do not you think if they were once in, that you would every night be in danger of maſſacring? and would there not be much more bloodſhed than yet hath been? Therefore let not men ſay that thoſe are bloody men that will not yeild up their throats to bloody men, that will ſtand up to defend their brethren from being maſſacred; but they ſtand up and take up Arms, not to ſhed blood but to prevent the ſhedding of blood: For certainly if the Citie and Country had in the beginning of theſe wars roſe up as one man and gone into the field, they might have ſaved abundance of blood that hath been ſhed. Many thouſands that have now loſt their lives might have been preſerved if you had took up Arms to more purpoſe ſooner than you did: But when every County looks to it ſelf, and the enemy goes to ſuch a County and there ſheds blood, and then to another and there ſheds blood, and you ſit ſtill and do nothing, God may require the blood of your brethren at your hands; and you cannot clear your ſelves from being guilty of the ſhedding of the blood of your Brethren when you do not appear to the uttermoſt you are able to ſubdue the power of thoſe that ſhed their blood. We cannot ſee any way to keep the blood that is now in our veins, but by ſubduing the Malignant and Antichriſtian partie that have already taſted ſo much of the blood of the Saints, that they are like the Country-mans dog---

And ſo thoſe Iriſh Rebels that in *Ireland* have taſted ſo much blood, and now are come over hither to joyn with Papiſts, you cannot in any way of ſenſe and reaſon imagin any ſafety but by ſubduing that partie. Is that a way to prevent the ſhed-

ding of your blood to lay your necks upon the block, for that which commeth under such a specious name, may be in truth no other but a laying your necks upon the block, and giving up your wives and children to be a sacrifice to their malice.

*The Lord hath a controversie for Blood.* We know when we have to deal with Papists what they have been of old, and therefore we hope God hath a controversie with that partie, that as they have drunk the blood of the Saints, so they shall at last swell and burst themselves in pieces. In *France* they had as good terms of Agreement as we can expect in the time of that Massacre, and yet Histories tel us of more than ten thousand Protestants that were murdered in one night in *Paris*, and that at that time when they were in as fair a way of peace as possibly could be, and there was a Marriage solemnized and a great deal of rejoycing for the Union of one partie with another, and yet (I say) in that night so many were flaine; and you may expect no other if the Malignant partie get power. You will say, They have not done so to other Cities which they have taken. No, they have not got the day yet, they are but in their design yet, if once they get this Citie, then they have got the day, and having gotten the day, you may expect all manner of cruelty from them. And this Massacre in *France* went on to other Cities, for within a few daies after there were fourty thousand more computed to be murdered. I remember that Historie of *France* tels us of that King *Charls* the 9<sup>th</sup> by whose Commission this was done, that afterward God struck him with such a disease, as that there issued out of his body at several places nothing but blood, so that in that sickness he would sometimes fall down and walke himself in his own blood. Be men great or small, yet being guilty of blood, at one time or other the Lord will manifest that he hath a controversie against them. And so much for that third Charge.

The fourth follows, and that is, [*Stealing.*] God setteth bounds as to mens habitations, so to mens estates, and he will not have one break in upon another; no not so much as to  
COVER



covet that which is anothers. In ſeeking therefore an encrease of our estates, to get in any sinful way, in that we do as it were say Gods care is not over me to provide needful things for me, seeing I cannot have them from God I will see if I can have them from the Devil. This is the language of all kind of gain that we get by any unlawful way; you do not say so in words indeed, but this is the language of your actions. Saith a poor body, well, I see I am in want, I want bread for my family, and cloaths, and many outward comforts, money to pay my Rent &c. I see in Gods providence he doth not provide for me, well, I will go unto the Divil then, I will see whether the Devill will do more for me than God; I cannot have it by Gods allowance, for if I might have it by his allowance I might have it by lawful means, therefore saith he I will have it whether God will or no. This is the language of all kind of stealing; And the curse of God is upon that that is got so unjustly, and all the repentance in the world is not sufficient for such a man as hath gotten his estate unjustly, unless he make restitution of it again to the uttermost of his power.

And this stealing is not only meant of your Pilferers or Robbers by the high way, or such as cut purses, but any wrongful gain that is gotten by way of trade. If I were preaching of this argument at large, much might be said to those that live by a way of trade. But for the present take that one Scripture, Ezek. 28. 18. *Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick;* Let Merchants and Tradefmen that have gotten any thing unlawfully, take this text home with them, Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries, by the iniquitie of thy traffick. It may be by trafficking unjustly you have gotten such an estate, and you come to Gods sanctuaries as if you were very holy, and no body should suspect you for your false books and gettings that way, God saith in this Text that you defile all the Ordinances by the iniquitie of your Traffick. Perhaps you think after you have gotten unjustly, to give somewhat to adorn such a place as this 'tis well enough; but you do defile them.

So for all kind of oppression, that is meant by stealing too. *Latimer* in one of his Sermons before *King Edward*, saith, that the greatest man in the Kingdom cannot hurt an oppressing man, so as a poor widdow may; and with what arms I pray saith he? Can he bring the Judges skin over his ears? The arms are these, the tears of the poor run down from their cheeks and go up to Heaven and there cry for vengeance. So that the text here speaks not of the meanest but of the greatest theeves. Saith *Calvin* upon the place, those that had the most power by their honor and riches and were oppressors of the people, they are the theeves here spoken of. And *Isa.* 1. 23. *Your Princes are rebellious and companions of Theeves.* And *Isa.* 33. 1. *When you shall cease to spoil you shall be spoiled:* This is a text for our spoilers at this day, it may be God will let them go on till they have done their work, and then God cometh upon them, and then, not at the first when they begin to spoil, but when they have done spoiling they shall be spoiled. Oh this controversie seems to be upon *England* that was threatned and was upon the people in that place we reade of, *Isa.* 42. 22. *This is a people robbed and spoiled, they are all of them snared in boles.* If they had come into the field, perhaps it had been better with them, but they crept into holes and they are snared and spoiled: *They are a prey and none delivereth them, they are for a spoil and none say, restore; Who amongst you will give ear to this? Mark what the text saith, Who will hearken and hear for the time to come? Who gave Jacob to the spoil and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom you have sinned? for they would not walk in his waies, neither were they obedient unto his Law; therefore he hath powred upon them the fury of his anger, he hath set them on fire, and who hath laid it to heart? We are a people robbed and spoiled, and it is upon this, because we have not walked in the waies of God, nor been obedient to his law, and the Lord hath powred his fury upon *England* at this day, and his fire burneth, and who hath laid it to heart? No body stirs, because the fire is not kindled in the City you lay it not to heart and you suffer your brethren one Country after another to be spoiled. Take heed, if you stir not more than you have done,*

as many of you may answer for the blood of your brethren, so for the spoiling of their goods, because you do not lay to heart this heavy judgment that is upon the land at this day, The execution of this controversie.

But yet in times of war you must know, that the taking away of all mens goods otherwise than meerly by the positive Law of the Land, is no stealing, nor no breach of the eighth Commandement, for it is against common sense and reason that in times of war we should be wholly tied to those positive Laws of a State that are made for times of peace: But it is according to the Law of Nature, to the Law of God, to the Law of Arms that our enemies should be deprived of what may strengthen them against us. Therefore let none cry out of stealing and robbing in these times; Indeed it is not fit that any should be suffered to be as robbers, but yet it is just that those that will not be on one side should be taken as enemies to the other; and (I say) it is agreeable to the Law of Nature, and to the Law of God, and to the Law of Arms, that in times of war, when the war is just (in which I hope you cannot but be fully satisfied) that what may strengthen the enemy, may be taken away. Indeed they plead for Law who wholly break it themselves, because they would have all the priviledg they can to strengthen themselves by our goods and the goods of others; but certainly God giveth us allowance, being in a lawful war, to strengthen our selves by the estates and goods of those that appear enemies unto us, without breach of peace or the positive Law of the land, or his own Commandement. Thus much for the fourth charge.

The fifth is, [*Committing Adultery.*] The generation of a rational creature who must live unto all eternity, is a work that God challengeth a special hand in, to appoint it to all at his pleasure, therefore the breach of Gods Order in this, and the casting filth upon this to satisfy the brutish lust of a man or woman; it is a most cursed evil, against which God hath a most dreadful controversie. It is a breach of the blessed Covenant of God, and a sin that is most opposite to Gods Nature. And take that text all you that are guilty of this;  
for

for perhaps many seem not to be guilty, that are professors of Religion and live fairly amongst their neighbors, & yet may be secretly guilty of it too; take that text home with you, *Prov. 22.14. But the abhorred of the Lord shall fall into the pit of the whore.* Go thy waies in that condition wherein thou art, thou canst know no otherwise by thy self but that thou art the man or the woman that art abhorred of God. Thou art beloved of thy Whore, but God abhorreth thee. And *Tertullian* speaking upon that place *Eph. 5.6. Let no man deceive you with vain words*; he that expression which I confess I would not dare to have; *These are* (saith he) *vain words, he that preacheth of repentance to adultery, especially adultery in a forcible way, he deceiveth men with vain words.* You may see how he apprehended the sin; we dare not justify what he saith in that, but only shew you how dreadful he apprehended the sinne to be. And in another place, speaking of the sin that is unpardonable, in *Heb. 6.* he hath this expression, *We never read,* (saith he) *or ever knew a second repentance promised to an adulterer or fornicator.* These were his thoughts of Adultery. The *Athenians* made a law, That if any man found his wife in the act of adultery, he might presently kill her. And I have read of a people among the Heathens, that have punished this sin for the filthiness of it, by putting the adulterers head into the panch of a beast where the filth of it lay, and so stifled him. If Heathens hated it so much, surely God must have a controversie with those that profess themselves Christians because of this sin. And the greater controversie because it is so little punished by men. And though many great ones can get beyond punishment by man, yet they cannot get beyond this controversie. I remember *Mr. Cleaver* reports of one that he knew that had committed the act of uncleanness, and in the horror of conscience he hung himself, but before when he was about to hang himself, he writes in a paper and left it in a place, to this effect, *Indeed saith he, I acknowledg it to be utterly unlawful for a man to kill himself, but I am bound to act the Magistrates part, because the punishment of this sin is death.* God would have that sin punished with death, but the Magistrate did not punish it accordingly,

Nunquā  
macto aut  
fornicatori  
secundam  
penitentia  
esse per-  
missā.  
Dui me-  
cham con-  
cienatur  
esse remis-  
sibilem.  
He admit  
red but 1.  
repentance  
after bap-  
tisme.  
See lib.  
de peniten-  
tia, & de  
pudicitia.

accordingly, therefore he in horreur of conſcience laies violent hands upon himſelf. We juſtifie not his act, but it ſhews what a controverſie God hath with men that commit this ſin. Thou committeſt that abominable ſin, and thou haſt ſome pleaſure and delight in it, Go thy way, thou art a dead man in Gods eyes, look to thy ſelf, one way or other God may bring death upon thee, and though mans Law take not hold upon thee, God may thou knowſt not how ſoon. I have read of a King of Navarre that by adultery had weakned his body very much, and in regard of that, his Phyſicians cauſed his body to be wrapt about with a Cerecloth dipt in Aqua-vitæ, and the party that ſowed the Cerecloth, having done, went to burn off the threed with a candle, which preſently took hold of the cloth and conſumed both it and the King.

And as God hath a controverſie for this ſin which is ſo little puniſhed by mans Law, which by Gods Law is death; ſo the rather hath God a controverſie for this ſin if it be committed by men of knowledg, by learned men, by men that are in publick places, by men that carry a ſhew of holineſs, by men that are in the Miniſtry, If they commit it God hath a dreadful controverſie with them in a ſpecial manner. *Jer. 29. 23. The Lord make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the King of Babylon roſted in the fire, becauſe they committed villany in Iſraël, and have committed adultery with their neighbors wives.* It was a proverb, *The Lord make thee like Zedekiah and Ahab whom the King of Babylon roſted in the fire:* This was not King Zedekiah and King Ahab, but two falſe Prophets that were called by that name, and they were unclean wretches, and though it were the King of Babylon, a Heathen, yet he ſo hated that ſin of adultery that he cauſed them to be roſted in the fire, for that was the puniſhment of that Nation for capital offences, to burn or roſt the offenders in the fire. Therefore thoſe who are Miniſters that are learned men, that have any ſhew of holineſs more than others, if they be guilty of this ſin God hath a moſt dreadful controverſie with them.

And ſee how we ſhould have a controverſie too againſt this ſin of uncleannelſs, eſpecially when it is in a forced way. *Judg.*

20. 27. you shall reade there that there was four hundred thousand men, all men of war that were raised up as one man, and they all said (vers. 8.) *we will not any of us go to his tent, neither will we any of us turn into his house*: And upon what did all these men rise? Chap. 19. the cause was only this, that there was a Levite that had a Concubine, which Concubine had plaid the harlot and had gone from the Levite, he going to fetch his Concubine whom the men of *Gibeab* a City of *Benjamin*, came in a violent way and ravished his Concubine until she died, upon this, the Levite took the dead body and divided it into twelve severall pieces, and sent them into all the coasts of Israel, and wisht them to consider what is done. Upon this the hearts of all the men of Israel were raised as one man, and covenanted among themselves that they would none of them turn into their houses untill they had brought those Delinquents that had committed that horrible offence to condigne punishment. Mark now, that the hearts of people should be so set upon it and think it cause enough to gather an Army of four hundred thousand to bring to condigne punishment those that had but ravished a whore (for she was no other) and resolved never to go home til those Delinquents were punished. Have not we heard of worse than this amongst us? Oh what adulteries, what rapes have there been wheresoever the Soldiers come! what horrible villanies are committed that way, taking not mens concubins and whores, but grave matrons and on purpose those whom they think to be most godly, and defile them before the eyes of their husbands, and then when they have done murder them! And yet we stir not for all this to fetch in these Delinquents. Now we have rapes and ravishments of thousands amongst us, and yet our hearts stir not, though no question the same thing is intended against us here that is done to our brethren in other Countries, for you can expect little else from such as these, *Judg. 5. 20.* it is the speech of *Siferas* Mother, *Have they not divided the prey, to every man a damsel or two?* They aim as much to satisfie their lusts upon you as upon your goods, you must not think your lives wil satisfie them, but their lusts must be

firſt ſatisfied; Yet O Lord the deadneſs of mens hearts, that though there hath been ſuch horrible villany committed in *Ireland*, in *England*, which certainly if there were no more but that, God requireth the people of the land ſhould riſe up to avenge ſuch a thing as that is, that there ſhould not be ſuch horrible wickedneſs committed in *Iſrael*, but that the offenders ſhould be brought to condigne puniſhment. If you regard not your lives and eſtates and liberties, yet regard ſuch a horrible villany as this, as is committed in the open heavens. Theſe here reſolved not to go to their tents nor to turn into their houſes till this was done; "Be content to ſhut up your ſhops for a while, and to leave your trades and to lie in the fields untill you have brought theſe Delinquents to their juſt puniſhment. Be not diſcouraged with a little ill ſucceſs; there were forty thouſand of the better ſide ſlayn here before *Iſrael* got the victory, until they had thoroughly humbled themſelves, and then they had the better of it. Though our adverſaries meet with ſucceſs in their waies, let us not be diſcouraged, they that ſtood to defend this horrible wickedneſs of the *Men of Gibeah*, they got the firſt day and the ſecond day; yet they went on in their way till they had brought the offenders to condigne puniſhment; We ſhould reſolve never to follow our buſineſs, nor regard our houſes and private eſtates untill we have got this wickedneſs puniſhed in this land and wiped off the guilt from the Kingdom. So much for that fourth charge. A word of the laſt.

*They break out and blood toucheth blood.*

*They break out.*] *Erumpunt*; That is, like the eruption of waters; As waters break over the banks when it hath been kept in a while, ſo they break out thus, they overflow all bounds. When ſin is not mortified, though it be reſtrained for a while, it will break out: As many young men that have lived in good families and have had good governours, then their ſin was reſtrained; but afterward when they come to live at their own hand, then they break out, *Erumpunt* then; ſin groweth to that ſtrength that nothing can reſtrain it, like that man that had an unclean ſpirit and lived among the

graves (*Mark*, 5.) no man could bind him no nor with chains.

Secondly, *Breaking out is a great aggravation of a mans sin.* It argueth strength in sin, impudency in sin, desperateness in sin. And this breaking out of sin is not breaking out only as water in an overflowing time or tide or so, but like breaking out of the fire indeed rather, or if you will like water breaking out of some fountain; now you know if a water break out of a fountain, there is not the less water in the fountain, but rather an increase of it. And as the fire when it breaks out, the breaking out makes it not less but more, as when an house is on fire, it will keep in a long while, but when it breaks out at the roof or so then it flames the more and increaseth with more violence; So it is no diminution to sin that it breaks out, as many foolish people are ready to say, that will speak horrible wickedly in their passion, I will let it go, as good out as in; they foolishly think there is so much less corruption within, and that is a diminution of sin, but it is an aggravation of sin, and noteth impudence in sin:

*And blood toucheth blood.*] That is, as some will have it, one gross and abominable sin, that is accounted a bloody sin, follows another. But some take it thus, one murder follows another, one oppression follows another; *Blood toucheth blood*, now thy wickedness is broken out there is no end of it, but one murder follows another. *Pareus* thinketh it hath reference to those times in the 2 *King* 15. where you may reade what murders there were and how blood touched blood at that time; as if the Prophet here had said, they being used to murder, there is now nothing but murders, you hear of murders in this place, and in that place; and in the other place. Thus we may soon have it amongst us, if the Lord did not raise up means to keep in and subdue the rage of ungodly men, if it get head and overcome the opposition that it hath, blood will then touch blood, one messenger shall not have done his relation of one horrid and cruel murder, but another messenger will be at his heels to tell you of another more horrid and vile than that. So it is in some countries, there comes one  
and



and ſaith in ſuch a place ſuch a man and all his family were murdered, there comes preſently another and tels you in ſuch a Town ſuch a friend of yours was murdered: Thus the meſſengers come at the heels one of another and tell the relation of blood touching blood. So ſome carry it.

But I rather thus, they deſile themſelves inceſtuouſly (So that this is ſomewhat more than bare adultery) not regarding the nearneſs of blood, but blood toucheth blood, they that were neereſt in blood one to another they mingled themſelves one with another in filthy and abominable luſts. So the Septuagint they tranſlate it *μιςγοσι* they mingle; ſo *Jerome Sanguis ſanguinẽ tetigit*, they mingle and touch blood with blood, thoſe that are neer of kin yet they come neer one another in filthy luſts. Now this was a ſin that God caſt the Heathen out of Canaan, out of that good land for, and therefore well may God have a controverſie with the people of the land now; for God caſt out the Heathen even for this very ſin; As you may find it *Levit. 18. 6. None of you ſhall approach to any that is neer of kin to him to uncover their nakedneſs*: And ſo in many verſes afterward he ſhews what degrees of conſanguinity we muſt not come neer, and then ver. 24. *Deſile not your ſelves in any of theſe things, for ſaith he in all theſe the Nations are deſiled that I caſt out before you, and the land is deſiled, therefore I do viſit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land it ſelf vomiteth out the inhabitants of it.* This the rather ſtil hath God a controverſie with a people for this ſin, becauſe there is ſo little puniſhing of it. I would but know at this day what puniſhment there is for Inceſt, or for any uncleaneſs among us, only the man muſt keep the child; And what ever puniſhment hath been it was that which did as little good as nothing at all, they were to come to the Court and that would enjoin them a white ſheet which they could take off with a very little money. That was the moſt then; and little it is that is now, and in that regard we may fear that Gods controverſie is ſo much the more againſt us, and pray to God that ſpeedily the land may deliver it ſelf from this guilt by having ſevere Laws for the puniſhment of this horrible wickedneſs leſt God come and puniſh it himſelf, and then wo unto us.

Now

Now it follows upon all this charge; Thus God hath declared: and then follows, *the Land mourneth*. Well may a land mourn when God hath such a controversie with it.

## Verse 3.

*Therefore shall the Land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, yea the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.*

4. *Yet let no man strive, nor reprove another; for this people are as they that strive with the Priests.*
5. *Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the Prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother.*
6. *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledg; because thou hast rejected knowledg, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me: seeing thou hast forgot the Law of thy God, I will also forget thy Children.*

**Y**OU have heard that God in this Chapter commenceth a suit against the ten Tribes. He putteth in his Action, and he declareth, and then judgeth. The Articles of his Declaration or Charge against them we had some of them the last day. Hereupon Judgement is past, upon this Declaration, *Therefore shall the land mourn.*

*The Land.*] How can the Land be said to mourn? As when the Land is fruitful it is said to laugh and sing. Meadows that are green and fruitful laugh: And it is the Scripture phrase, *Psal. 65. 13. The valleyes are covered with corn, they shout for joy, they also sing.* So when a land is desolate and God bringeth famine, then it is said to mourn. *Jer. 12. 4. How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? The beasts are consumed and the birds, because they said, he shall not see our last end: I warrant you as long as his eyes are in his head he shall never see that fulfilled that he speaks of, therefore shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither.* And likewise when a place is left desolate of people that were the beauty of it before, then it is said to mourn, *Isa. 3. 26. Her gates shall lament and mourn: Lament. 1. 4. The waies*

waies to Zion mourn, because none come to her ſolemn feaſts. As now in time of Plague, the ſtreets of your City may be ſaid to mourn because they are deſolate, they look in a deſolate way when the graſs grows between the ſtones; *her gates ſhall lament and mourn.* The end of this expreſſion here is, to upbraid the hardneſs of the hearts of the ten Tribes. As if God ſhould ſay, Notwithſtanding al their dreadful ſins that ſhould break their hearts and make them howl and cry out, yet they will not mourn, therefore their Land ſhall mourn. When God will upbraid men for ſtopping their ears and reſuſing to hear, and that they were not obedient, he calls to the Heavens, *Iſa. 1. 2. Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth:* to upbraid the deafneſs of men that will not hear: And *Jer. 2. 12. Be aſtoniſhed O ye Heavens:* because men will not fear, therefore for their upbraiding God calls to the Heavens to be aſtoniſhed; ſo because mens hearts are hard, therefore God calls to the Land to mourn, yea ſaies, *it ſhall mourn:* The ugly gaſtly face of your ſin (that is the meaning) ſhal appear in the miſerable deſolation of your Country. There is an ugly face of ſin, and it were well if you ſaw it as it is in your own hearts, the guilt that you have brought upon your own ſpirits? but ſeeing you will not apprehend that ugly face of ſin in your own hearts, you ſhall ſee the ſad face of it in all things of the land. God will have ſin appear vile and ugly unto us one way or other. The Lord this day is making our Land to mourſn because we have not mourned, because we do not mourn. Many Countries know what this expreſſion meaneth, their Country mourns, their Land mourns. The very ſight of the dreadful effects of ſin upon many parts in *England* is that which would break any mans heart: As it hath been formerly in *Germany*, Travelers that have travelled there and have ſeen Towns and places of great riches and traffick, now to be over-grown with nettles it breaks their hearts, they ſee the Land to mourn: And it be- ginneth to be ſo amongſt us in many places of *England*, in *Yorkſhire*, and ſo in the *West*. “Oh that we all could mourn in the bitterneſs of our ſpirits, that our land might no further mourn, that our Cities might not mourn.” But wee muſt  
not.

not give liberty to our selves in pathetical or affectionate waies, but keep our selves as neer as we can to an Explicatory course.

*And every one shall languish.*] That follows. The word translated *languish* here, signifieth the withering of a flower, or the withering of hearbs and trees; And so it is in *Nabum*, 1. 4. *The flower of Labanon languisheth*; it is the same word with this here, *Every one shall languish.* and the signification of the word doth hint us this useful Note, *That all the glory and the*  
 Obj. *pomp of the men of the world it is but as a flower, and even as soon as a flower withereth so soon doth it pass away.*

Again, Times of affliction they take down the jollity and bravery of mens spirits, and make them fade, wither, and pine away.

The word it is translated by some, *infirmabitur*, they shall be made weak. When wicked men are in prosperity their hearts are stout and strong to sin, they can stand out against God and against all threats, but when the hand of God is upon them then their spirits are poor, they are weak, they are presently down. Oh the difference between the jolly, brave, stout spirits of wicked men in their prosperiey against God, and their poor, weak, withered, dejected spirits in the time of their aduersity, In *Pf. 39. 11.* *When with rebukes thou corrects man for iniquity thou makest his beauty consume away like a moth, surely every man is vanity, Selah.*

And a notable expression we have of the withering, the languishing of the spirits of wicked men in the time of their aduersity, that whereas now in their prosperity their tongues are their own and they must speak and will speak, who is the Lord? &c. they are loud then in their Oaths and blasphemies, but mark now in their aduersity how they are, *Esa. 21. 4.* *Thou shalt be brought down and shalt speak out of the ground, and thy speech shall be low out of the dust, and thy speech shall whisper out of the dust.* This is the fruit of the languishing of their spirits in the time of their trouble. As many a riotous and boisterous gallant that would so mouth it when he was in prosperity, yet let God but lay his hand upon him in sickness and his  
 conscience

Conſcience then accusing of him, he whiſpers and ſpeaks low out of the duſt. It follows,

*With the beaſts of the field, and with the fowls of Heaven, yea the fiſhes of the Sea ſhall be taken away.*

Hierome here allegorizeth it, and would not take it literally, but to be the expreſſions of ſeveral ſorts of men ſutable to this. But we muſt not ſtand to that, but rather take the words as they are literally. Only for the reading of them a word or two firſt.

*With the beaſts of the field.*] In the Hebrew [Be] which is tranſlated *with*, is as much ſometime as, *for*, in that tongue, *for the beaſts of the field*; ſo it is in the 5. chapter and the 5. verſ. *Israel and Ephraim ſhall fall in their iniquity, or, for their iniquity*, there it is *Betoo*. So that if we ſhould tranſlate it ſo, *for the beaſts of the field*, then we might have this Note; “Here we may ſee the poor condition that we are in, that when but “the beaſts of the field and the fowls of the air are deſtroied, “our comforts are gone quickly.” The comforts of natural men depend upon poor things, upon the beaſts of the field, the fiſhes of the Sea, the fowls of the air, if Gods hand be but upon them, they languish for them; Now the cups are taken from their mouths and their full diſhes from their tables, now they languish. It is otherwiſe with a gracious heart, according to that in *Habak. 3. 17.* *Although the figtree ſhall not bloſſome, neither ſhall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the fields ſhall yeild no meat, the flock ſhall be cut off from the fold, and there ſhall be no herd in the ſtalls; yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ſalvation.* A gracious heart doth not languish becauſe the beaſts of the field and the fowls of the air are taken away; let them be taken away yet he can rejoyce in God, his ſpirir will be kept up.

Another word in the reading is to be obſerved, [*they ſhall be taken away.*] The word in the Hebrew is, *they ſhall be gathered*, וְאִמְצוּ for it is obſervable both in fowls and in fiſhes when they perceive any thing noxious unto them or that they are in any danger, they gather themſelves together; And that is the reaſon that fiſhes at ſome time of the yeer are in ſuch ſholes as

Text o-  
pened,

they are; they going from one place to another, finding one place noxious and hurtful and perceiving some danger, they gather together: And so it is observed in countries where there are fowls, that in the winter time they go to some other place. I have heard many in Holland say of the Storks that in one week they all of them go away together, they gather themselves in the space of a week or thereabouts and go away from that countrey, gathering first al together and so fetching their flight: from thence I take the word here, *they shall be gathered together*, that is, there shall be such times of danger, and there shall be such infection in the air, and in the very waters of the Sea, that the fishes and fowls shall perceive it and so shall be gathered together, as they use to be gathered (when they perceive any such thing) to go away; and being so gathered together they shall be destroyed. "It is good for men in times of danger to gather together and to joyn one with another and not be scattered one here and another there, as the creatures many times use to do in the time of their danger. This only for the reading of the words.

The scope of the holy Ghost here in the threatning the taking away the beasts and the fowls and the fishes, it is this, To shew the severity of Gods wrath against the ten Tribes, that as a King dorh not only execute a Traytor but pull down his house and burn all that is in it, so the great wrath of God shall be upon these ten Tribes, that he shall not only destroy them but for their sakes he shall bring even destruction upon the creatures. And this seems to be a threatning of greater wrath than God let out when he destroyed the world: In destroying the old world the wrath of God was not so great as that here threatned against these ten Tribes, for then the fishes of the Sea we do not reade of any hurt unto them, but here the beasts of the field the fowls of the air & the fishes of the Sea shall be taken away. It referreth unto some fearful plague, wherein not only the air but the waters are pestilential and the cattel and the fish die. So it hath been in other Countries, even in *England*, in the time of *Edward the third*, our Chronicles report of such a pestilential quality that was in the:

the air and water that birds and fiſhes were found with botches upon them, And then there were in one Church-yard in one yeers ſpace (I think it was about the Charter houſe) fifty thousand buried of peſtilential diſeaſes. Such advantage hath God us at and can let out his wrath by ſuch waies as theſe, and ſuch plagues are very fearful fruits of Gods wrath upon a Countrey. What cauſe have we to bleſs God that he hath delivered us from the infection of the air! If God ſhould have but brought a plague upon *London* the laſt year, Oh it would have been a plague indeed, we had been in a ſad condition; it would have been the heavielt plague that ever was upon any Kingdom in the world, if we had had but ſuch a plague that ſhould have cauſed men to have fled and the Parliament not have ſet and even by that ſhould have been diſſolved, and ſo all the Kingdom would have been in a lamentable eſtate at this day. Bleſs God for that.

A ſtrange  
plague in  
*London.*

*And the fiſh of the Sea.*] I remember upon this text a Jeſuite that wrote but very lately; *Cornelius a Lapide*, hath a moſt audacious lye, ſaith he, ſince *Scotland* and *Ireland* hath departed from the Catholick faith (that is from Popery) Gods judgments are out againſt them, and whereas they were wont to be ſuch plentiful countries for fiſh, God hath curſ'd their very waters, and now their trade of fiſhing is nothing like to what it was wont to be. Upon this text he obſerveth ſuch a judgment to be upon thoſe Kingdoms, he obſerveth it not of *England* at all, for he was one that wrote lately, and he had it ſeems ſome hope that *England* was coming to them again. But through Gods mercy both *Ireland* and *Scotland* and *England* have found it otherwiſe in this regard.

But for Observations from hence, thus.

Fiſt, *The good or evil of the creature dependeth on man*; becauſe it Obſerv. was made for man, man is puniſhed or bleſſed even by the creature, and the creature comes to feel good or evil according as mans behavior is towards God. Let then mercy & pity toward the creature be an argument to keep us from ſin. If you have not cruel hearts towards the creature keep from ſin, for you do not only undo your ſelves but undo the world, undo the

creature by your sin. And when at any time we see the hand of God out against any creature, let us reflect upon our own hearts, and say, My sin is the cause that this creature feels that evil that it doth, and say as *Juab* said unto *Tamar*, *She is more righteous than I.* So do you say of the creature, Indeed Gods hand is out against it, but the creature is more righteous than I.

Obf. 2. Secondly, *God when he is in a way of wrath can cause his wrath to reach to those things that seem to be most remote from him*; As the fishes in the Sea seem to be most remote, therefore this is named here, *yea and the fish in the Sea also*: As if he had said, my wrath shall burn, burn fiercely, and shall reach not only to your selves and houses and Cities and your Land and Cattel, but to the very fish in the Sea. God can let out his wrath as far as he pleaseth.

Obf. 3. Thirdly, *No creature can help man in the time of Gods wrath*; Why? for every creature suffers as well as man doth. How vain then are the hearts of men who comfort themselves in hope of the enjoyment of comfort from this or that creature in the day of Gods wrath; If you cry unto the mountains and hills and say, help us, they will give an Eccho, help us, for they had need of help as well as you, their Eccho will be, *help us too*, for the wrath of God is upon the creature in the day of his wrath, therefore the creature cannot help in the day of wrath.

Verse 4.

*Yet let no man strive nor reprove another, for this people are as they that strive with the Priest.*

Text  
opened.

[*Text*] The Hebrew word is, *IN*, *Vere*, as if he should say, truly it is in vain for any one to stand striving or reproving his neighbor, or seek to convince or admonish him, it is in vain for one friend to meddle with another, for they are so violent in their wicked waies, they are so far from hearkning to private admonition, that they will contend with the Priest, even with him that is set by God, and designed by special office to teach and reprove. Some carry it thus; They are so vile as no man



is fit to reprove one another, being their wickedneſs is general no man is fit to reprove his brother of his ſin. But I rather take it the other way.

It doth firſt import thus much unto us in the general, *That ſin cannot be got from men without ſtriving.* Such is the perverſneſs of mens hearts, that they take faſt hold of deceit *Jer. 8. 5.* and you cannot get them away without ſtriving; like men in a frenzie, you cannot get them off from that which will miſchieve them without ſtrugling with them. When you admoniſh and reprove men for ſin, you muſt make account aforehand that they will ſtrive with you, ſtruggle with you, yet afterwards perhaps they will bleſſe God for you; If you come indeed at the firſt you ſhall have rugged uſage, What you come to judge us, as they ſaid to Lot? *Who made you a Ruler?* So you have very ill language uſually from men at firſt when they are reprov'd, yet be not be diſcouraged, they will bleſſe God for you afterwards, they wil ſay as *David* unto *Abigail*, *Bleſſed be God, and bleſſed be thy adviſe, and bleſſed be thou for thy counſel.*

Obl.

Secondly (which is imploied in the former,) *Even private men, ſo long as there is any hope, they ſhould ſtrive with their brethren by way of admonition and reprehention to bring them from their ſin.* We muſt not ſay, *Are we our brothers keepers?* that is the language of a *Cain*. There is much ſtriving and contending one with another for our own ends; Oh that there were more ſtriving and contending for God and his glory! It is a ſign that the Glory of God and the Souls of our Brethren are not precious in our eyes when we can ſo ſtrive and contend to have our own wills, and though God loſeth his Glory, and our Brethren Soul is like to periſh, we cannot ſtrive and contend there, not even thoſe that are too too full of ſtriſe otherwiſe.

Obl. 2.

Thirdly, "It is a great aggravatiou of ſin and a forerunner of deſtruction to a people, not to regard the ſtrivings, admonitions, and reprehentions of others." *Let no man ſtrive;* It is in vain to ſtrive now, (thats the meaning) Indeed ſo long as there was hope there might be ſtriving, but now they are paſt ſtriving. This was their height of wickedneſs that they

Obl. 3.

were

were grown unto, and the fore-runner of that wrath of God that was now ready to fall upon them, because they were now past all reprehension and admonition. I will give you for that two or three notable texts of Scripture to fasten this upon your hearts, that it is a most fearful thing for people to stand out against admonition and reprehension. That place in *1. Sam. 2. 25.* is a notable one, the text saith of *Eli's* sons, that they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, why? *Because the Lord intended to destroy them.* Oh you children do you hearken to this Scripture, turn to it, reade it over, you that are stout rebellious children, and your parents they are reproving you for your sins and admonishing you, but you will not hearken to them, and in the pride of your hearts and stoutness of your spirits you refuse admonition; but if you reade that Scripture and beleve that it is the Word of God, Oh tremble at it, *They hearkened not unto the voyce of their father, because the Lord would slay them.* Here is a stubborn child, regards not the voice of his father and mother reproving him, it is a fearful argument that God intends to destroy that child. Another text you have in *2 Chron. 25. 16.* it is a speech of the Prophet to *Amaziah*; when the Prophet came to rebuke him for worshiping the gods of that people, whom he had overcome in battel (Here is the infinite vanity and sottishness of Idolators, *Amaziah* falls to worship those very gods that could not deliver themselves nor their people out of his hands;) when the Prophet (I say) came to reprove him for it, in what a rage was he? One would have thought that there was so much the more reason for his spirit to have yeilded to the Prophet's reproof, but saith the King, *Art thou made of the Kings Counsel? forbear,* it may be he hath other fetches, other intentions, what have you you to do to meddle? The Prophet did forbear indeed, but mark what he saith, *I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not hearkened unto my counsel.* Here was his collection, because the King would not regard admonition and reproof, certainly God had a purpose to destroy this King; here is the forerunner of his destruction. And it is observable of this King, that he should

*2 Chron.*  
*25. 16.*

Opened

now

now ſtand out ſo: for in the Chapter before you ſhall find him ſeem to be of a yeildable ſpirit though he was a naughty man; when he had hired an hundred thouſand out of Iſrael to joyn with him in battel, and had given them all pay, yet when God did but ſend to him by the Prophet to ſend them back and to looſe thoſe hundred talents that he had paid the Soldiers withal, upon the very word of the Prophet he ſends back a hundred thouſand of his Soldiers and looſeth all their pay; and yet this *Amaziab* that was ſo yeildable at that time now ſtubborn was he againſt the Prophet at another time! And therefore at that time when he did ſo yeild to God, God proſpered him in the battel, and he overcame his enemies and had a glorious victory, and after that victory he falls a worſhiping the Idols he had overcome, and was ſtout againſt the Prophet, and ſo ſoon after he was deſtroyed accordingly. The laſt Scripture is that in *Pro. 29. 1.* *He that being often reprov'd hardneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy.* It is a dangerous thing to ſtand out againſt reproof and admonition.

Again, *Let no man ſtrive with his brother.*] You may ſee that this people were grown to a worſe paſs than they were before, for in the ſecond Chapter of this propheſie, *Say to your brethren Ammi, and to your ſiſters Ru hamah.* There thoſe that were godly amongſt them were admoniſhed to ſpeak to their brethren and their ſiſters, though they were naught yet the godly that were diſperſt amongſt them muſt be admoniſhing thoſe they lived withal; but now it is come to ſuch a paſs that there muſt be no more ſtriving, no more admoniſhing. Here we may take this note, *That ſin doth increaſe in places where it is let alone.* Thoſe that were capable of admonition one while, going on in ſin and hardning their hearts, grow quickly paſt all admonition. Obſ. 4.

Fifly, “There is a time when men may, yea men ſhould  
“leave their ſtriving and admoniſhing and reprovng of o-  
“thers, when they ſhould let them alone. Eſpecially in theſe  
two caſes; when thoſe that they ſhould admoniſh ſcorn their  
admonition, when they grow ſcorners; when they trample  
their Obſ. 5.

their admonitions under their feet as swine, or turn again upon them and rend them as dogs. There are two sorts not to be admonished or reprov'd, Swine, and Dogs. When they grow to be swine and dogs then you may leave, yea you ought to leave admonishing them. For admonitions and reprehensions are precious things, they are pearls, they must not be cast to swine, *Mat. 7. 6. Give not holy things to dogs, neither cast pearls before swine;* they are holy things and precious things; For I do not take that place to be meant of the Sacrament only, it may be by an argument *a minori ad majus* applied to it, but that place, *Give not holy things to dogs, and cast not pearls before swine,* is meant of admonition and reprehension. So that admonition is to be looked upon as a holy thing, as a pearl, you are to prize it and therefore not to be angry when we come to admonish you, but you are to look upon the holiness of God in it & so reverence it, and look upon it as a mercy of God and bless God for it. There are many in Heaven now blessing God for the admonitions which they have received from others, as *David* blessed God for *Abigail* and her counsel. Many think it a great happiness unto them that they can reject admonition and counsel, and when they are gone from such as have admonished them and are among their companions they can boast and say, Oh such a one came and reprehended me, but I said thus and thus to him, and so rejoyce how they have rejected admonition. But if they knew all they have cause to mourn, it is a great misery for them when as it comes to that, that God shall bid those that have to deal with them to strive no more with them; when as men have rejected the admonitions of others, that they think they have stopped their mouths, Ple warrant you say they, such a one wil never come to me more; Oh your misery is the greater. For.

First, You have deprived your selves of a special Ordinance of God. Admonition and reprehension, even brotherly admonition and reprehension is an Ordinance of God.

Secondly, Those who strive thus, who admonish and reprove you, they must give an account unto God what becometh

meth of their admonition and reprehension. You must give an account to God one day, and so must they give an account unto God too; yea they should do it for the present, thus, After they have done they must go to God and tel him how it hath sped, for they have done it in his Name when they have done it right; And when they go unto God if their admonition and reproof have prevailed with you, they are to return to God with blessing, to bless God that he hath been pleased to bless their admonition to such a one. And on the other side if you reject their admonition they are to tell that too when they go unto God, they are to fall a lamenting of your contumacious and to intreat God to look upon you, and to tel God, Lord I have been thus and thus admonishing such a one, it hath been in thy Name, but Lord he contemns it, he rejects it: When you are laughing at it that you have rejected such a friends admonition, then he that hath been faithful to you he is telling God of it, and do you not think there will come somewhat of this one day?

Lastly, You are left to Gods striving and rebuking, *and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* It is better when God striveth with you by men than that he should come and strive with you himself. As now, if a father send his servant to go and fetch in a child, to rebuke a chile, and he comes and tells the father, he cares not what I say; No saith the father, I will go my self, and then it is worse with the child, the child then smarts for it; So God sends thy brother to rebuke thee, and to fetch thee in, thou carest not for him, thou lookest upon him as thy fellow-creature, and so thy brother goes to God, Lord he doth not regard what I say, No saies God? I will rebuke him my self, and Gods rebukes in this case will be furious rebukes; *Ezek. 5. 15. When I shall execute judgments in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes,* Mark it, furious rebukes; The rebukes of a brother are loving rebukes, but if thou reject them Gods rebukes may com and they will prove *furious rebukes*, The rebukes of a brother are out of love but *Amos 7. 4. The Lord calls to contend by fire.* When *Jobs* friends did strive with him they could not prevail, but

*Job. 38. 1. God calleth out of the whirlwind to answer to him, and who is this that darkneth words without counsel? The Lord out of the whirlwind calleth to contend with Job and so overcometh him. If thou regardest not friends contending with thee, the Lord himself out of the whirlwind may come and contend with thee. Take heed how thou rejectest the strivings of a brother with thee, for God may not only say he shall strive no longer, but my spirit shall no longer strive with thy soul.*

*This people are as one that striveth with the Priest.] That is the reason why they must not strive one with another. Here are only these two things by way of explication ;*

Quest. 1. 1. Why it is said with the *Priest* rather than with the *Prophet*?

Quest. 2. 2. Why it is said, For this people are [*as*], they that strive with the *Priest*? did not they strive with the *Priest*? why then is it not said this people are a people that strive with the *Priest*?

For the answer to these two briefly.

Ans. 1. First, It is said that they strive with the *Priest* rather than with the *Prophet*, though the *Prophet* did rebuke them and strive with them, upon this reason, Because the *Priest* was a standing office in the Church of God ; the *Prophet* that was an extraordinary office, and they could not be sure of the *Prophet* whether he were a true *Prophet* or no but according to the event of the *Prophecie*; but the *Priest* they acknowledged him to be an officer of God, and that is the reason that the *Priest* is here named rather than the *Prophet*.

Queere

Ans. And then, *As those that strive with the Priest.* It may be the *Priests* were generally so bad that there was scarce any *Priest* that did strive with them at all, those *Priests* being *Jeroboams Priests* they did joyn with them in their wickedness, therefore he could not say they did strive with the *Priests*, but yet thus their hearts were as vile, God saw this in their hearts that if there were *Priests* to strive with them they would strive with them.

Or secondly thus, *As those that strive with the Priest*; because indeed those *Priests* of *Israel* at this time they were not such

as were called of God, for in 1 King. 12. 31. the text ſaith of Jeroboam, that he made Priests of the loweſt of the people which were not of the ſons of Levi, and chap. 13. ver. 33. Whoſoever would, he conſecrated him, and he became one of the Priests of the high places. But the people received them as Priests ſtill, for indeed they thought that the Kings authority was enough for all, becauſe the King would have them to be Priests they would receive them, as if the King had the abſolute power to make all Church Officers, if they were ſent by the Kings Authority they muſt be acknowledged to be Church Officers. So it was then, and that may ſeem to be the reaſon of that expreſſion, as thoſe.

Now from hence the Notes are theſe, for you muſt take it that this is imploied here, that ſuppoſe there were Priests faithful and godly that did ſtrive with them, yet their hearts were ſo hard that they would ſtrive againſt thoſe Priests, and this ſets out the groſſneſs of the hardneſs of their hearts. Take then the ſenſe thus and here we may have theſe Notes

First, *That it is the work of the Priest to contend againſt men for their ſin.* That is the proper work of a Priest, to ſtrive with men againſt their ſin. They are the ſalt of the earth and ſo they ſhould have ſome acrimony in them. In 1 Tim. 3. 3. It is ſaid indeed of the Miniſter of God that he ſhould be *zēlōs* *striver*. A Miniſter of God ſhould be one that is in office to look to the ſouls of people and he ſhould be no ſtriver; How will you ſay then that he ſhould ſtrive? That is, he ſhould never ſtrive with men for his own ends, for his own waies, no brawler, no ſtriver, no adulterer but one of a quiet and gentle ſpirit, that ſhould paſs by wrongs done unto himſelf; but when he comes for God he ſhould be a ſtriver; "All faithful Miniſters ſhould be ſtrivers when they come in Gods cauſe." *Oecolampadius* writing to his fellow Miniſters, I remember he hath a notable expreſſion, *Let not our zeal and anger (ſaith he) burn when we are ſcorned our ſelves and reproached our ſelves, but when the Truth is in danger, and the Name of God is in danger, then let our heat ariſe, then let us ſtrive.* - This indeed is the Character

Obſerv.

1 Tim. 3. 3

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Oecolamp.

of a true godly Minister, that he is in his own cause, gentle, yeildable, but when it comes to the cause of God, the heat riseth in his face, and there he hath zeal and fervencie, there he will strive and contend with men in the waies of their sin.

Obfer,

Secondly, *When Ministers do reprehend and strive with people, they must expect to be striven withal by people.* These are as a people that strive with the Priest, they have such vile hearts that had they never such faithful and godly Officers that were set over them by God, they would strive with them. And indeed all faithful Ministers must expect that if they strive with men for their sins, men will strive with them. If there had at any time any faithful ones been sent amongst them by God, they would have been ready to have cried out of them and have told them, "You are the cause of our misery, for you will not yeild to *Jeroboam*, you are so strict and precise, and 'tis you that make this disturbance, you threaten us that there will judgments come upon us but you are the cause of our misery, were it not for you we should have all the people yeild to what the King hath set up, but you stir up the people against it and so our disturbance comes from you. Thus no question but they would be ready to strive with the Priest at that time. And thus they did with *Amos*, chap. 7. ver. 12. *Go to Judah and prophesie there; they strove with Amos that was contemporary with Hosea*, prophesying at this time unto this people, the land say they cannot bear *Amos* his words, let him go to *Judah*, he were best be gone, he tells us we are a superstitious people, and that we do not worship God in the right manner and in the right place, let him go thither, we wish he were out of the Country; he and such as he is raise a fire in the land. Thus when Ministers discharge their consciences shewing people their sins and the mind of God, this is ordinarily the recompense that they have. Thus it was with *Jeremiah*, chap 15. ver. 10. *Wo is me saith he, that my mother ever bear me, for I am (saith he) a man of strife and of contention to the whol earth, and every one curseth me. Jeremiah a grave and holy Prophet, yet a man of contention to the whol earth, and every man cursed him: A strange thing that he should meet with*  
such



ſuch hard dealing, and yet he appealed to God in the matter of his ſincerity, he deſired not the evil day, and he prayed for the people ſo long til God bid him pray no more; when they were railing upon him he was praying for them. This was the ill condition he was in for that reſpect. And ſo it was with other Prophets beſides him. I might name other texts in *Jeremiah*, as chap. 20. ver. 7. 8. *I am in deriſion daily, every one mocketh me, for ſince I ſpake I cried out, I cried, violence and ſpoil, becauſe the Word of the Lord was made a reproach unto me and a deriſion daily;* - After I threatned that there ſhould come ſome judgment upon the Nation I cried out of the violence and ſpoil that they for the preſent made in the Nation, and then they mocked and ſcorned me. The like we have in *Eſa*, he had the ſame dealings from the people. *Eſa*, 28. 13, 14. *But the Word of the Lord was to them precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, that they might go and fall backward, and be broken, and ſnared and taken.* You will ſay, how do they ſtrive againſt the Prophet in this? I take it this Scripture is often miſtaken, and the ſcope of theſe words are to ſhew how the people did jeer and mock the Prophet in his preaching. But the Word of God was to them *precept upon precept*, that is thus, they ſcorned at Gods Word, What we have nothing but precept and precept, one precept after another, in a ſcornful language, the word of the Lord, and Commandement one after another, and one Propheſie after another, a line upon line, and now you would have a little more; it is ſpoken in a contemning way; And I rather take it to be thus, becauſe in the Hebrew the ſound of the words do carry it in a mocking, in a jeering way, as thus: *kar lekar*, *kar lekar*; precept to precept line to line. As mocking people will jeer in the noſe at men, ſo they did at this time with the Prophet, the very ſound of the words in the Hebrew is ſuch as noteth a mocking and jeering of the Prophet, and they pronounced the ſame words again and again, as mockers and jeerers uſe to do, nothing but precept and precept, and when will the fellow have done? And I take this to be the meaning becauſe the threatning follows after, *that they might fall backward and be broken and ſnared;*

*Iſa. 28.  
13. 14.*

Opened:

כר לך כר  
כר לך כר

*red:*

red and taken, wherefore (saith the text in the very next words) bear the word of the Lord ye scornful men; They manifested a scornful spirit in such kind of expressions, retorting upon the Prophet in such a manner; And Gods anger riseth in his face *Wherefore bear ye the word of the Lord ye scornful men.* It is the usual way of many scornful men that if they can get any thing that Ministers speak and get a sound of it, they will by sounding of it double expresse their jeering and scorning; So did they with the Prophet who was one of the most admirable elegant, and eloquent Prophets that ever was, a man that spake in his time so as never man spake, for he spoke in a most high stile, he was himself of the Kingly race, a great man, a Noble man born and a most admirable eloquent man, yet when he came to prophesie to this people in the name of God, thus they jeered and scorned him. And *Esa. 30. 10. Which say to the seers, see not, but preach smooth things to us, tell not us of such and such things as these are.* Thus they contemned him. Yea and in Christs time we find that when Christ himself preached, one time a soon as ever he had done his Sermon the people got him up to the brow of a hill that was upon the side of the Citie and would have thrown him down and broke his neck; that was the reward he should have had. And *Paul* that was one of the excellentest preachers that ever was (It was one of *Austins* wishes that he could but see *Paul* in the pulpit) yet when he came to preach, *What will this babler say? and, he is a pestilent fellow,* one that is of a furious spirit and an incendiary, and where ever he goes he turns the world upside down. Such kind of entertainment had the Apostles. And *Luther* I remember hath such an expression, *Quid est predicare Evangelium?* What is it to preach, unless it be this, to derive all the fury of people upon ones self? If one would preach conscienciously. And *Mat. 5. 12.* there Christ tells his Disciples what they were like to meet withal, how they were like to be reviled and persecuted, for so saith he persecuted they the Prophets which were before you. *Acts, 7. 53. Which of the Prophets have not your fathers persecuted?* Thus those that are in office those that are sent to speak unto the people, they

they muſt expect if they would be faithful in their adminiſtrations to be ſtriven withal.

But though wicked men do ſtrive, yet as *Samſon* ſaid unto the men of Judah that came to binde him that they might deliver him into the hands of the Philiftins, *Do not ye fall upon me your ſelves.* It were well if faithful Miniſters were not ſtriven withal many times by thoſe that are godly. It is not ſo much for a faithful Miniſter to have wicked and ungodly men to ſtrive with him. Though they bind them, Oh brethren do not do not you bind them: after that in conſcience of their duty and in love to your ſouls they have hazarded all the hatred and malice that may be of the adverſary, even to ſtand in the fore-front as the But to their mallice, yet in requital of all, even many that are godly, if they ſee them grow troubleſom, they are ready to ſtrive with them; becauſe wicked men are exaſperated by the Word of God preached, therefore they could wiſh that even ſuch Miniſters had never come amongſt them, and this even ſuch as make profeſſion of godlineſs do. Is here a requital of the hazard that faithful Miniſters undergo? I appeale unto you, Are there any people in the Kingdom that ſtand as a But againſt the malice of the Adverſary, ſo much as godly and faithful Miniſters do? Do not think that it is out of that precipitancy, that raſhneſs that we do not conſider what danger we ſtand in in doing what we do; yes, we conſider it beforehand, “But out of conſcience of our duty and “in faithfulneſs unto your ſouls we hazard our lives, we hazard all the rage and malice of the Enemy. Now when we have done all this, we expect a far better requittal from many people than we find. When *Moſes* and *Aaron* came unto the people of *Iſrael* when they were in *Egypt*, to deliver them, (for that was their meſſage) but becauſe for the preſent their bondage was increaſed and the wrath of *Pharaoh* more incenſed, therefore they were weary of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and they fall to ſtriving with them as if they were the cauſe of their miſery, Why ’twas better with us before than ſince you came, if you had never come amongſt us it would have been better with us. So it is now, becauſe thoſe that are faithful, out of conſcience

science, labor to declare to you the mind of God, and to draw you to those duties that God calls for, (this indeed enrageth the adversary, they are the more incensed when you follow what your Ministers teach,) and you are ready to think, they have brought us into this way, they have kindled the fire, they have told us it is the Cause of God, they have exhorted us to come in with our Estates, and now the King is exasperated against us, and our adversaries are enraged against us and we are like to be in some misery; And so even all the strivings of the better sort are ready to devolve upon the Ministers, and they strive with them as the only incendiaries and troublers of the places where they come. Well, howsoever Ministers may meet with hard dealing from some, even from professors, yet their way is with the Lord, and their judgment is with the Almighty: As there is a most admirable promise to help those that have been most forward to rebuke sin & in a zealous way for God, though men are enraged against them. *Isa. 49. 2. He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword, in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me.* This text is true of every faithful Minister: Mark it, *He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword*; why if I did speak smooth things I were not like to be in so much danger, but if speak sharp things do not I hazard my selfe much? I shall incur the rage and anger of all kind of people; but mark, *He hath made my mouth as a sharp sword, But in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me.* Ministers whose mouths are as sharp swords they are in a great deal of danger, yea but let such be comforted, here comes a promise presently, *in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me.* So that those Ministers whose mouthes are sharpest in the Name of God, and who speak but the Truth of God, those are under Gods protection more than any other Ministers that have held their peace, they are in more safety, they are hid in Gods hand, in the shadow of his hand more than any other. So God comforted *Jeremiah*, Chap. 10. vers. 15. after he had cryed out, *wo is me, I am a man of strife, wel saith God, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant, I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.* It may be many of you think it is a weaknes

in Miniſters to appear ſo much as they do and diſcover themſelves, for they endanger themſelves, and cannot they be quiet as others are? there are many of more moderate ſpirits and deal wiſelyer for themſelves, they keep in and ſay nothing, and ſo they may ſcape of either ſide, looking which ſide will prevail; May not theſe ſcape? No, they are in more danger than the other, for the other are under a promiſe, theſe are not, they are ſo ſtudious for themſelves and for their owne ſafety that God will take no care of them. Our Savior Chriſt takes care to encourage his Diſciples againſt the ſtrivings of people with them; we have in *Luk. 6.* many bleſſings pronounced, *bleſſed are the poor, bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſ, bleſſed are they that mourn &c.* But they that underſtand the Original ſhall find that the word [*ye*] is not in, only bleſſed are the poor, and bleſſed are they that mourn &c. But when he cometh to his Diſciples verſ. 22. there is an *efſe* put more than in the other, Chriſt ſpeaks more particularly to his Diſciples: when as people ſhall ſpeak evil of them and caſt out their name as filth, then there is a *bleſſed are ye*, with an *efſe*, more than there was in all the other bleſſedneſſes; That ſhews God hath a ſpecial care of his Miniſters when men ſpeak evil of them and ſtrive with them. But on the other ſide, *Wo to you when all men ſpeak well of you*; It is meant moſt of Miniſters, it is true indeed of all Chriſtians, but I take it that the ſcope of Chriſt in that place is concerning Miniſters that were to go and preach, and wo to you when all men ſpeak well of you. The word that is tranſlated *well*, it is *καλῶς*, that ſpeak of you ſo as to commend you for a ſpruce curious neat Teacher; I there are ſuch and ſuch fiery men, but here's a Preacher, a quaint man, an Eloquent man, a dainty man, a man that hath brave language with him, and they will never perſecute ſuch as theſe. The other are pronounced bleſſed when they are reviled and caſt out as evil.

*Theſe are they that will ſtrive with the Prieſt*] The next Note is this, *That though the Miniſters of God muſt expect ſtriving withal, yet to ſtrive with thoſe that come in Gods Name to reprove, it is a great aggravation of ſin and a baſening of judgment.* God expects when

*καλῶς*  
36.

Luke, 6.  
22.  
Opened

Obſer.

he sends his Ministers that you should obey them in the Lord and not strive with them. 2 Chron. 26. 12. God took it ill that King Zedekiah did not humble himself before Jeremiah the Prophet; And in ver. 16. of the same chap. it is said; *They mocked the Prophets, and contemned them until the wrath of God arose against his people and there was no remedy*; No remedy when once they strove with those that God sent amongst them. Those that are sent by God they are the special witnesses of God: Revel. 11. It is said of those two witnesses that if any do them hurt and contend with them, fire shall go out of their mouths and devour their enemies. Those that are sent by God and come in Gods Name they have the power of Jesus Christ with them, Mat. 28. *All power is given to me &c. Go and teach &c.* As if he should say, know as I have all power given to me, it shall go along with you to do good to those that obey your Doctrine and to execute revenge upon all those that strive with you. The Apostles were to shake off the dust of their feet in contempt of those that contemned their Doctrine.

Matt. 28.

Opened

Quest.

Answ.

But you will say, *May we not in any case strive with the Minister?*

*nullus mortalium presumat revocare, quia cum illos ipse judicaturus à nemine est iudicandus Lex Canonica.*

I confess in Popery they would so exalt their Priestly Office as that all people must be brought into a blind obedience unto them, and the people must receive whatsoever Doctrine they preach; The Priests lips only must preserve knowledge, the people must not so much as examine it, they must obey and not contradict whatsoever is said; It is one of the Popes Canons concerning him, that though he should carry down with him by heaps souls to Hell, yet no mortal man must presume so much as to rebuke him or find fault with him, for he being spiritual as they say (for so they abuse that Scripture) he judgeth all men and no man judgeth him; and in a proportion all their Priests would fain have that power. And this certainly hath been the policie of our Priests of late to bring the people into ignorance that so they might not be able to contend with them let them do what they will. They cry out there was never such a time when every Taylor and every Shop keeper hath had so much knowledge that they can con-

tradict

tradit their Miniſter as now, and try the Doctrines of their Miniſter. They vex at this that poor men have ſo much knowledge as to be able to trye their Doctrines they preach, they would faine ſo preach as that you muſt be led like a company of ſheep what way they would lead you and beleve what ever they preach. Certainly ſo many groſs errors and doting conceits of Popery could never have prevailed except they had prevailed with people in their blind obedience. Therefore there may be ſome ſtriving with Miniſters and that according to God, though here their ſtriving is forbidden; As thus, Chriſt requires that his ſheep ſhould know the difference between his voice and the voice of a ſtranger: Yea we know that there is a charge that if any preach any other Doctrine he ſhould be accuſed; even people ſhould look upon thoſe that come to them to preach any other Doctrine as accuſed; Therefore they are required to know; And they are commanded to try every thing and not to beleve every ſpirit, yea not to bid them *good ſpeed* that bring other Doctrines; And they are to ſay to *Archeppus*, *Take heed to thy Miniſtry which thou haſt received that thou fulfil it;* ſo far people have leave. Yet ſtill it muſt be done in waies of reſpect to them. If they look upon them as true Officers (whether they be or no yet if they look upon them as ſuch) the rule will take hold of them, Receive not an accuſation againſt an Elder without two or three witneſſes, You muſt not be ſo ready to ſtrive with thoſe that you look upon as Officers. And rebuke not an Elder, but intreat him as a father; It muſt not be in a malepert way but with reſpect and reverence; And when you have done that, contended by witneſſes, and ſpoken to them with reverence as owning the place wherein he ſtandeth, you have liberty then if he bring ill Doctrine, or if his life be naught, to ſtrive with him and conteſt with him in the Name of the Lord, and not to ſuffer your ſelves to be under ſuch bondage as to beleve what ever they would have you, and they never to be called to any account at all. There was wont to be crying out of people if they went from their pariſh Churches (as they called them) Oh it could not be ſuffered, and yet they

themselves would be away a whol yeer together, as if the relation were not mutual, and they bound as much to continue with their people as the people tyed to keep unto them; If the Minister may have leave to go away, certainly the people may have the same freedom; whereas indeed neither of both ought to go away, so long as the one is looked upon as an Officer and the other as under that Officer. But I speak of that bondage that they would have brought you into whereby in time they would wholly have freed themselves that you should have had nothing to do with them in Church power. And then they would be the Clergie, whereas it is an absurd thing that they should be accounted the Clergie, for the Scripture speaking of the people in distinction from the Ministers, calls the people the Clergie, *Let them not lord it over Gods Clergie*, so the word is there. But they would be accounted the Church and the Clergie, as if the people were no part of the Church at all, all Church power must come into their hands. And then they endeavoured to free themselves from all Civil power too, as the Papists you know do, so they aimed at it and were going many steps in it; therefore they would send forth things in their own names, and in time they would have wrought themselves free from all Civil power and have had all Church power in their hands, and so indeed you could not strive with them. Bless God for the deliverance he hath now given you.

1 Pet. 5. 3.  
 ἡ κλήρωσις.  
 which in  
 the same  
 verse is  
 called the  
 flock.

Obl.

Yet further, If publick means prevail not there is little hope of private. Why should one man strive with another, these are they that strive with the Priest? Though they had never so good publick means, they resist that, surely then they will resist private. Therefore publick means is to be preferred before private; When a man can speak as an Officer to another, that is more to be regarded and will be more efficacious to those God hath a love unto, than private means. If this be so, let parents take heed how they teach their children to deride publick means: When you have been at a Sermon, perhaps you will despise what you have heard; It is just with God they should despise your admonition and reproof, for you have taught them to despise publick means. Again



Again further, To reject thoſe that we look upon in Office, though their calling be not good, yet it is a wickedneſs that God will revenge, (I ſay) though their calling be not right, if you look upon them or think them to be true Officers, ſo long if you deſpiſe what they do that is according to Gods will, ſo long God will avenge it. If they come in Gods Name and you know nothing to the contrary but that they are true Officers, you muſt not oppoſe them, ſo long as you have any apprehenſions that they are true Officers, though perhaps if they were examined they have no true calling, yet if you cannot ſee but they have a true calling, you are to have ſuch reverence and reſpect unto them, that you are to be ſubject to them.

## Verſe 5.

*Therefore ſhalt thou fall in the day, and the Prophet alſo ſhall fall with thee in the night, and I will deſtroy thy mother.*

Mark, Though private men are here bid not to ſtrive one with another, or reprove one another; yet *Hoſea* he goes on in his ſtriving and reprovng. *Therefore ſhall they fall in the day and the Prophet alſo ſhall fall with them in the night.* So that thoſe in office muſt go on though they be ſtriven againſt; ſo long as they remain in office they muſt ſtill go on though people ſtrive againſt them. It is a ſpeech I remember *Latimer* hath in one of his Sermons, Many Miniſters (ſaith he) they will not preach, and if they be asked the reaſon it is this, becauſe they can do no good to people; Oh this (ſaies he) is a naughty answer. Certainly ſo long as you continue in that place whether you do good or whether you do not good, you muſt go on in your work.

*Therefore ſhalt [thou] fall.* He directs the judgment to the particular, Thou, every particular of you, in the ſingular number. Perhaps ſome might think, well though the generality ſuffer I may eſcape; No, look to your ſelves every one of you. When a threatning comes to particulars then it works.

The word tranſlated, *thou ſhalt fall*, it is a word that ſignifies the falling of a man by ſtumbling in the dark, ſutable to their ſin, they

they had no knowledg therfore they shal stumble in the dark.

*Thou shalt fall in the day*, Thou shalt stumble as a man in the dark, but it shall be in the day to thee, and yet thou shalt stumble. [In the day ;] that is, First in thy prosperity, for in the latter times of the second *Jerobozm* (which was a little before the destruction of the ten Tribes) they were in a better case than they had been in before, yet from thence they began to fall. I say, not long before their ruin they were in more prosperity than they had been in many yeers before, therfore it is here said, *thou shalt fall in the day*, even when thou art in a prosperous condition. Or secondly, *thou shalt fall in the day*, that is, you shal see your misery before you yet you shal fall, you shall not be able to prevent it ; it shall be in the day time, at noon day, you shall see plainly where your misery lies, yet you shall be as if you were in the night you shall stumble and fall.

*England* Oh my brethren this is a Scripture that doth neerly concern us here in *England* as much as any I know. If *England* falleth and perisheth now, it falleth and perisheth in the day. We see apparently our evil before us ; we see means to prevent it, God doth not bring night upon us in this sense, that is, he doth not bring misery so upon us as that we do not know how it comes or by what means, or how we should prevent it. No we are not so in the night, but in the day ; we have seen the misery that hath come upon us by a continued design, we know almost the very bottom the very beginning of that design, how it hath gone on by degrees, step by step ; we see now the reason of the breaking of it out, because the stream is stopped it violently breaks out : We know who are the causers of our evil, what their counsels, intentions, what their waies are notwithstanding all their protestations, we see what we are like to be brought into if we do give but a little way and do not appear to quit our selves like men ; And we see apparantly what God would have us to do ; we see waies to help us and power to help us if we will, we have power to help our selves, and direction to help our selves too ; we all of us know or may know cleerly what we should do, and  
what

what in an ordinary courſe of providence would help us. Yet Lord how do we fall, we fall notwithstanding this, we fall even in apparant day-light: ſo that if this Kingdom of England be brought into ſlavery, it will be the heavielt wrath that ever fell upon a Nation. There was never any Nation fell in a cleer Sun-ſhine day as we are like to do if we periſh now having ſuch means for our help.

Again, *You ſhall fall in the day*] *Hodie*, that is, ſoon, preſently, your deſtruction ſhall not be long.

*And the Prophet ſhall fall with you in the night*] There ſeems to be ſome difficulty in this. How cometh this in, you ſhall fall in the day, and the Prophet ſhall fall alſo with you in the night?

Fiſt, *The Prophet ſhall fall with you*] The blind lead the blind and they both fall into the ditch. You gave your ſelves up to falſe Prophets to be guided by them, and here is all the good you ſhall have, both you and they ſhall periſh together, the Prophet ſhall fall as well as ye. This is observable here, “The falls of the Prophets are the falls of the night,” For in the captivity of the ten Tribes they had no Prophets, nor never had ſince. *Judah* was carried into captivity yet they had Prophets among them, as there was *Ezekiel*, and *Zechariah*, and *Haggai*, they had Prophets to direct them though they had a great deal of miſery. But *Iſrael* ſhall be carried into captivity and ſhall have no Prophet to help them. Here is a Note of great uſe from hence, “It is a moſt ſad judgment for a people to be “in affliction and to have no Prophet at all amongſt them; no “Prophet to tel how long, to tel them any part of Gods mind. Look to your ſelves that you regard the Prophets of God now, otherwiſe when you ſhall be brought into miſery under the power of your adverſaries, you ſhall have no Miniſter among you, none to ſhew you Gods mind, none to open his will. It was ſo with *Iſrael*, they never had any Prophet ſince the captivity to tell them the mind of God.

Thus the Prophets ſhall fall, but why in the night? Some therefore becauſe they think hard of the different expreſſion, they reade it thus; *You ſhall fall in the day with the Prophet, in*  
the

Obſer.

Obſ.

*the night your mother shall be destroyed, and so do but point it differently. It may be fairly read so, You shall fall in the day with the Prophet, in the night your mother shall be destroyed. But I had rather reade it as we have it, You shall fall in the day, and the Prophet with you in the night. Upon these two reasons, the Prophet shall fall in the night, false Prophets, so they are meant, they shall fall.*

Oblerv.

“First, Because God would inflict a greater darkness upon them in his just judgment, than upon the people.” Those that abuse most light they come into most gross darkness, and therefore it is a usual expression in Scripture when Prophets are threatned, to threaten, that darkness shall be upon them, *Micah 3.6. To you (saith he, speaking of the Prophets) it shall be dark, night shall be upon you, the Sun shall go down over the Prophets, and the day shall be darkened over them; over the Prophets in a special manner. And Zech. 11. 17. His right eye shall be utterly darkened,* the chief understanding that he hath,

Zech. 11.  
17.

Opened

the pregnancy of parts that he hath he shall be befotted in, even in his very parts. Do we not see it even at this day that the Prophets fall in the night? There is more darkness upon wicked Ministers at this day amongst us than upon ordinary people. Ordinary people they understand more what God would have them to do than ill Ministers. Ill Ministers God doth besot them in their very parts and abilities, and they do nothing but cry out still for that which will bring themselves and us into slavery. Were it not for them, people would see competently well what to do, and the great darkness that is upon people commeth from the Prophets, they bring darkness upon the people, therefore their darkness is more than the darkness of the people. In divers Towns are there not many people that know the mind of God and see need of, and desire a Reformation in Gods worship? and yet notwithstanding wicked Ministers will see no need of any Reformation.

But there is a second reason and that is more evident yet, [*The Prophet also shall fall with you in the night*] That is, the distress that shall be upon the Prophets shall be greater than shall be

be

be upon other people, it ſhall be night to them indeed, not only ſhall there be more darkneſs upon their underſtandings, but more darkneſs in regard of their afflictions, they ſhall be in greater horror of conſcience and diſtreſs than any other people, for they ſhall ſee that they have brought you into all miſery. And the truth is at this day the great miſery that is come upon *England* it is through falſe Prophets, through wicked Miniſters, through that Doctrin that they have taught. We had never been in ſuch a condition as we are had not they flattered at Court and told at Court that all was at the Kings power and pleaſure, and there ought to be no reſiſtance, and that whatſoever he would have, to reſuſe it is rebellion. Had they not taught ſuch things as theſe we never had had ſuch times. Now if this Kingdom be deſtroyed, it may be God may bring horror upon their conſciences, how ever they would put it off unto others, yet thoſe that have any light remaining in them, the Lord wil cauſe horror to be in their conſciences and diſtreſs in their ſpirits as the cauſe of all that evil that ſhall be upon us. They ſhall fall in the night, a black diſmal night ſhall be upon them when judgments cometh. Therefore in times of publick judgment, Gods Miniſters are to look upon Gods hand as eſpecially againſt them, and more horror and diſtreſs of conſcience ſhall be upon them than upon others.

*I will deſtroy their mother*] They boated of their mother as the Papiſts do of their mother the Church, that is, their Church-ſtate and Civil ſtate ſhall be deſtroyed, and ſo there ſhal be no hope of this people, both children & mother ſhal be deſtroyed; it ſeems to have ſome alluſion to that in the Law where we are forbidden to take the dam with the young ones becauſe of the preſervation of ſucceſſion; but here ſaith God my wrath ſhall be ſo hot, that I will not only take the young ones, but the dam, they ſhall be deſtroyed together with their mother.

The word that is here tranſlated *deſtroyed* is a word that ſignifies ſhall be brought to be ſilent, for indeed this word ſignifies ſilence, as noting thus much, in times of Gods judgments

wicked men shall have nothing to say for themselves, but their mouths shall be stopped, and they shall be forced to lay their hands upon their mouths and be silent. It follows.

Verse 6.

*My people are destroyed for want of knowledg, because thou hast rejected knowledg I will reject thee, &c.*

*Quos per-  
dere vult  
Iupiter de-  
mentat  
prius.  
Obs.*

*For want of knowledg]* As if he had said, if they had the knowledg of God they might have prevented all this, but they were ignorant and sottish people and this was the forerunner of their misery and destruction. The Heathens were wont to say, *If their god Jupiter would destroy one, he would first besot him;* so these people were first besotted and then destroyed: "Ignorance is not the mother of devotion but rather the father and mother too of destruction." How diametrically cross is the language of the Scripture and the Doctrin of Papists! Ignorance is the mother of devotion say they, Ignorance is the mother of destruction saith God, *they perish for want of knowledg.* In the beginning of this Chapter we have the sin of ignorance set forth, here we have the danger of ignorance set forth. There we had the charge, that they had no knowledg of God in the land, here we have the judgment, that they are destroyed for want of knowledg.

Ignorance is not only the deformity of the soul as blindness is the deformity of the face, though a man or woman have never such a comely visage otherwise, yet if they be blind it mars their comeliness, if they have but one eye it takes away their beauty: so ignorance takes away the beauty of the soul, and not only so but it is dangerous; it is destructive; And that in these regards.

1

The rational creature is very active of it self and will alwaies be in motion, alwaies working, and it is in the midst of pits and snares, if then it be blind how dangerous will it be for it! As now if you have a metteld horse that is in the midst of deep snares and pits, and blind, and he will be curvetting and dancing and will not stand still, in what danger is he?

he? no creature is ſo full of activity as the rational creature is, he will be active in the world, and then wanting knowledg, in what danger is he?

Further, Mans way is for eternity, and there is but one way that leads unto eternity of happineſs, and that way is in the miſt of a hundred croſs waies and by-paths. If he have not light, if he want knowledg what ſhall become of him? 2

But you will ſay, *Though he be dark himſelf yet he may have ſome others to guid him and ſo he may do well enough.*

Therefore conſider in the third place, That man is not only going unto eternity and in dangerous & by-waies, but he muſt go with his own light. All the light of all the Angels in Heaven nor of all the Miniſters in the world cannot help a ſoul in his journey to eternity, except this light be conveyed into his own eyes. It is true, a man that is corporally blind he may have help though it be but by a dog, but the ſoul that is ignorant no Angel in Heaven can help it, except it be an inſtrument of God to bring light into his eyes, ſo far it may. But (I ſay) he muſt have light otherwiſe or he muſt periſh, for he muſt go in his way to eternity by his own light. 3

Fourthly, The work we are to do about our ſouls and eternal eſtates it is a moſt curious work, the moſt exact piece that ever was done in the world, and we muſt do it by our own light. Surely if a man were to make a moſt curious piece of work, as a curious Watch or the like, he need have light, put ſuch a one in the dark and what can he do? The work of grace, God muſt enable us to do it, but we muſt work together with God; God enableth a man to make a Watch, he gives him ſkill, but he muſt work with God: ſo it is with the work of grace, we muſt have light in our own ſouls, therefore ignorance is dangerous. 4

Further, "Blindneſs in this world makes men objects of pity and compaſſion, but this ignorance and blindneſs makes men to be the objects of hatred and the curſe of God. When you ſee a poor blind man here, what is he loathſom in your eyes becauſe he is blind, do you hate him? No, you pity him. But now the blindneſs of your ſouls makes you abominable in 5.

the sight of God, and it is that which God will be avenged on you for. But you will say, How can we help it? We have put out our own eyes, God gave us light at first and we brought ignorance upon our selves.

Use If ignorance then be so dangerous that people perish for want of knowledg, *How vile is it to deny the means of knowledg unto men meerly to satisfie the humours of others!* How many hundred congregations are there that have been deprived of their Ministers; for a Surplice or a Cross, &c.

Quest. But you will say, *Obedience unto a Church is a great matter?*

Ans. The answer is, Therefore it is the fault of a Church or governours, to require such things as God never required, and after the requiring of them it is a greater fault for them to stand so much upon them as that many thousands must perish rather than their humours must be not satisfied.

Use 2. If this be the ground of perishing for want of knowledg, "then though divers countries have felt the hand of God most "fearfully, yet we hope that *England* shall not perish, for the "knowledg of God is begun to shine among us, and never since "the word began hath the knowledg of God and of Christ "shined more brightly upon a Kingdom than upon us. We "hope therefore though God intendeth to chastise us we shall "not perish.

*Because thou hast rejected knowledg,*] Only let us take heed that we do not reject knowledg and despise it. The word [reject] signifies contemning, despising, thou hast cast it off with despight and contempt, it is, *Ignorantia non mera negativis, sed prave dispositionis*, affected ignorance. *Thou hast rejected knowledg*; these two waies. First when the means of knowledg is rejected then knowledg is rejected. Secondly when the directions of our knowledg are rejected, when we refuse to be guided by our knowledg, upon this our knowledg doth decay and so knowledg is contemned.

Now this is a great sin in any but especially in the Priests. When others think that the knowledg of God and his truth is too slight too mean a thing to take up their thoughts, this is vile



vile. When Merchants and Tradesmen ſhall think they muſt buſie their heads about ſome other matters, but for this knowledge of the Scriptures, it is no great matter, they may be happy without that, let them have their tradings and bargainings and houſes and comings in (and that is that which is ſutable unto them) let them have their tables ſpread and their diſhes full, and for this Scripture and theſe points of Religion theſe are too mean things for them: Theſe men now deſpiſe knowledge, for ſo the word here ſignifies, it is reſecting with a vile with a contemptible eſteem of knowledg. But I ſay when the Priests ſhall reſect knowledg, the Priests that ſhould have laboured to have fill'd their ſouls with knowledg, if they ſhall ſeek to live bravely, to be gallant, to grow rich, to pamper the fleſh, and care not either to have the knowledg of God in their own ſouls or to bring the knowledg of God unto the people, but look upon them as not worth the regarding, this is in a more ſpecial manner a moſt grievous ſin. How many are there amongſt us at this day that ſtudy to get preferment &c. and then ſell away their books and never after any more mind knowledg! And others if they have knowledg and learning and prize it in ſome reſpect, yet in this they contemn it, they prize knowledg meerly as ſervicable unto their luſts. It is not for the beauty and excellency of the knowledg of God that they prize it ſo much, that ſweetneſs that they find in the knowledg of Chriſt that they do ſearch to know, but that they may be accounted Scholers, underſtanding men, learned men. This is to deſpiſe knowledg, when we ſeek for knowledg but in a way of ſervice unto our luſts, and ſuch men may be charged for men that deſpiſe knowledg.

But further, Theſe Priests and ſuch as were eminent in Iſrael reſected knowledg, becauſe they had their houſes and goods and comings in amongſt the ten Tribes. (I beſeech you obſerve it for this concerns us) I ſay the Priests that were amongſt the ten Tribes, they were ſetled there and had their houſes and incomes and their eſtates there; but now there was this taught, that we muſt worſhip God at Jeruſalem, at the Temple, they reſected this knowledge eſpecially, they ſaw that

that if they did embrace that truth of worshiping God in his own way, then farewell our incomes, farewell our livings, farewell our houses, we must leave our brave dwellings and all our maintainance and go from Samaria, and we must go to Judah, and how shall we live there? Upon this they shut their eyes against the knowledg of that very truth that should have brought them to the true worship of God; Rather than they would lose their estates they would reject that knowledg; And that I think to be the meaning of the holy Chou here, *They despised as other knowledg, so that knowledg of the true worship of God; so it is turned by some, Scientiam illam, that kind of knowledg they rejected; For they knew that these truths were suffering truths, "Now suffering truths are truths that "wil hardly go down with men nor with many a Minister, "they had therefore rather be ignorant of them; as the holy Ghost in Ezekiel speaks of men that shut their eyes against the Sabbath, so they shut their eyes against those truths that should have brought them to the true worship of God. And in this case it is not enough for a man to say, God knows I go not against my conscience, if my conscience were convinced that such and such things must be in the worship of God, if my conscience told me than this were the Word of God, I would obey it: But the reason they see this not to be the Word of God, why their consciences tell them not so, is, "Because they have no mind to know it, they reject that "knowledg, it is against their ease and preferment, and it is "suffering truth, and therefore they shut their eyes against it. This is no excuse, Mark the judgment follows upon this.*

*Therefore I will reject you.] You despise knowledg, I will despise you, so the words may be read as well as reject you; God scorneth wicked men as much as they scorn him, with the froward he will deal frowardly, and with the scornful he will deal scornfully, that is, he will laugh them to scorn: What do you look upon Gods waies and worship as a vile thing? Are the truths of God vile in your eyes? You are vile in Gods eyes, God looks upon you and your spirits as base and contemptible as you can look upon his Worship and his Saints*  
and

Text o-  
pened.

Obser.

Psal. 18.

and Ordinances. You deſpiſe knowledg and I will deſpiſe you ſaith God.

*And I will reject you.*] The word here tranſlated *reject*, that is for deſpiſing, it hath a letter in it more than it hath in any other place in all the ſcripture. It is a Note of Tremelius from thence, there is a letter in this word in the Hebrew that is redundant, that is beyond the ordinary forme of it, and this is his note upon it in his Comment upon this Text, It noteth ſaith he, the extraordinary manner of Gods rejecting them, he will caſt them out of the hearts of his people; as he doth apoſtate Miniſters, above all others God caſts out apoſtate Miniſters out of the hearts of people: There is a peculiar way of Gods rejecting wicked Miniſters, an extraordinary way, more than deſpiſing and rejecting any other, and there is that ſhame and contempt caſt upon them more than any in the world; That is his note upon this; he will reject them with contempt: Yea for ever. You heard before in Luk. 6. that Chriſt pronounced his Diſciples, faithfull preachers, bleſſed when their names were caſt out as evil, when they were vilified by men. But now mark, when a Miniſter goes on faithfully in declaring the mind of God unto people, and there be ſhame caſt upon him, bleſſed be that Miniſter; but if the Miniſter be wicked and there be ſhame caſt upon him, that ſhame is a part of the curſe, for then he is caſt out as unfavory ſalt and men tread upon it ſaies Chriſt. Wicked men would caſt out the godly, but God and Gods Saints they embrace them, and they bleſs God for them; but if you be wicked and men caſt you out as unfavory ſalt, then men condemn you, then you are troden upon. Yea ſo rejected as never to be received again. Ezek. 44. 13. the Priests there that did forſake the Lord when Iſrael forſook him, muſt never again come neer unto God, no not ſo much as neer unto the Priests Office. A notable text that concerns you to know for your direction about receiving in wicked perſons that have been wicked in ill times. "Perhaps now they preach good Sermons, but you are to enquire what they were when others were ſuperſtitious and evil, and although we are not utterly to reject them,

"yet

תִּרְצֵם  
pro  
תִּרְצֵם

Tremelius.

Obl

“yet until there be further evidence of their repentance they are not to be received.” God threatneth an utter rejection of those Levites that forsook God when Israel forsook him.

Obfer. Now the observation that I should have noted from hence is this, *That unfaithfulness in service provokes God to cast us out of service.* I cannot stand to set an edge upon it.

Obfer. And then another Note is this, *That it is a great judgment to be rejected from the Priests Office, from the Office of a Minister. I will reject thee that thou shalt be no Priest to me.* To be rejected from any employment it is a great judgment, *Neb. 5. 13. So God shake out every man from his house and from his labor that performeth not this promise.* It is a judgment to be shaken out of our labour, but to be shaken out of such an office whereby we draw so nigh unto God as to be the mouth of God unto the people, and the mouth of the people unto God again, this is a sore evil.

Again, whereas it may be said, Israel had no true Priests therefore it was no judgment for them to be rejected out of that Office. But to be cast out of what we seem to have, that is likewise a judgment of God, *Luk. 8. 18.*

— *Seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of God, I will also forget thy children.*

*You have forgotten the Law.]* You live so as you shew that you never think of the Law, of the holiness, equity and authority of it, and the threats annexed unto it, for if you remembered these you could not go on so quietly in a sinful way, but you have cast off all the remembrance of the Law, it is even worn out of your memory. The book of the Law of God was lost for a long time in Judah, surely in Israel much more.

*I will forget.] Etiam Ego, even I.* It is a sad thing to be forgotten by our friends when we are in misery, Oh that such a dear friend, such a father or such a mother should forget me! but how sad a thing is it for God to forget you!

*Yea, I will forget your children.]* That is, there shall be no succession in the Priestly office. This was threatned against Eli his house *1 Sam. 2. 20.* “It is a blessing for children of godly

“godly Miniſters being godly to ſucceed them in the Office; Obſerv.  
 “and the contrary is a judgment.“ Your children ſhall not  
 ſucceed you in this Office, but they ſhall be forgotten by me.  
 “The families of wicked Miniſters thorough Gods judgment Obſerv.  
 are many times forgotten. You have forgotten me, I wil forget  
 you and your children. I will not here ſpeak how the child  
 may ſuffer for the fathers offence, we often meet with it; On-  
 ly now as it concerns the poſterity of wicked Miniſters, they  
 are thorough Gods judgment often forgotten. But let not  
 the families of Godly Miniſters eſpecially if their children be  
 godly too, Oh let not them be forgotten. It is a judgment  
 threatned upon theſe wicked Priests that God would forget  
 their children, therefore though men forget them it is not ſo  
 evil; but if there be any that have been faithful Miniſters,  
 God forbid their children ſhould be forgotten after they are  
 dead. This City hath been honored for their reſpect to god-  
 ly Miniſters, but have you never forgotten their children,  
 their families that have been left behind? When they were  
 with you and preached among you, you ſeemed to give migh-  
 ty reſpect unto them, but are there not many that belong un-  
 to their families now with you that live in a hard condition,  
 yea their children and families that are godly, their widdows  
 too? how are they forgotten! “If the children of godly Mi-  
 “niſters that are godly too, ſhould go unto God and complain  
 “thus, would it not be a ſad thing? Lord thou threatneſt I-  
 dolatrous Priests that forget thee that thou wouldeſt forget  
 their children, but Lord my father in the City was a faithful  
 Miniſter, he remembred thee, and he was a faithful remem-  
 brancer for thy people, yet we are forgotten, is this according  
 to thy Word? ſhall the judgment that is threatned upon the  
 children of Idolatrous Priests be the judgment upon us that  
 are the children of faithful Miniſters that we are thus forgot-  
 ten though our fathers forgot not thee? Look therefore into  
 the families of godly Miniſters, look after their children; for  
 their fathers did not forget God, do not you forget them; let  
 not the judgment that is threatned upon the children of wic-  
 ked Miniſters be upon them but let there be a diſtinction made  
 Q between

between the children of faithful and godly Ministers and the children of Idolatrous Priests.

Verse 7.

*As they were encreased, so they sinned against me; therefore will I change their glory into shame.*

**T**He Lord is here further charging these ten Tribes, but especially their Priests, he aimeth at them most in this his Charge. They had before rejected the knowledg of the Lord, and the Lord threatned rejection of them. *The knowledge* קִדְּוָה that knowledge, *Scientiam illam*, that knowledge of God in the way of his worship, that he was to be worshiped at Jerusalem alone, that truth was a suffering truth, therefore that truth they did reject, they rejected others but especially that; And in this seventh verse here is some ground of their rejection of the knowledg of God, *As they were encreased, so they sinned against me.* God had encreased them, they were grown first into a great multitude, and as their number encreas'd so their sins encreas'd. But especially that which I take to be the meaning of the holy Ghost here is, "As their prosperous condition encreas'd; they were grown up to an height of prosperity, and that was the thing made them sin against God and reject the knowledg of God.

The first is not to be rejected *viz.* *As they encreased in multitude: κατὰ ἑβδομήκοντα*: so the Seventy turn it, according to their fulness. And it may be turned both waies, fulness of number, or fulness of their prosperous estate. It is a usual thing where there is encrease in number to be encrease in sin. The more meat there is in the pot the more scum ariseth. So in great Cities what a great deal of filth is there, filth of sin, moral filth: Where there is any confluence of people at Fares and Merkets in the Country, or in any Corporation, what abundance of filth is there continually? As there is any encrease in number usually there is encrease in sin. In Churches, though when they are but small, at their first beginning, a few called Saints, they can agree wel together, and go on sweetly in their

Obfer.

simile

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way, but ordinarily as they increaſe in number, when Churches grow to any number, they begin to corrupt and increaſe in ſin. They ſhould increaſe ſo much the more in godlineſs, but this is the corruption of mans heart, every one bringing in ſome corruption, Therefore as there is an increaſe in number, ſo in ſin.

But becauſe that is not the ſcope, but the ſecond, to ſpeak to that a little; As they increaſed in their prosperous eſtate. For we are to know that at this time the ten Tribes were in a very prosperous condition; they were grown rich and great and ſo they were increaſt, and eſpecially the Priests for they had the favour of *Jeroboam* and of the Princes; For their main deſign was to uphold their falſe worſhip, and the Priests ſerved for their turns moſt, therefore they countenanced thoſe Priests of *Dan* and *Bethel*, the Priests of the *Calves*, and they flouriſhed at this time in the Court and in the Countrey, and were much increaſt in their prosperous eſtate; And as they increaſt ſo they ſinned. This is mans vile diſpoſition, Obſer. that increaſe of mercies ſhould be the increaſe of their ſin. Thus was it with the Church, when the Church was in a lower condition, then there was more holineſs and more ſincere love to the truth, when it began to flouriſh in outward proſperity it began to decay in true Piety. And therefore Eccleſiaſtical hiſtories tells us, that when the Church received their donatious from *Constantine* of great preferments, then there was heard a voyce in the air: *Hodie. venenum inſunditur &c.* Today poyſon is powred forth into the Church; when great livings and great eſtates were given to the Miniſters of the Church, then poiſon was powred forth into the Church. It was a good ſpeech of *Boniface* the Martyr, when one asked Boniface. him whether it were lawful to receive the Communion in wooden Chaliceſ, his Anſwer was, *Time was when in the Church there were wooden Chaliceſ and golden Priests, but now there are golden Chaliceſ, but wooden Priests.* And the anſwer of *Aquinas* was fit for this to *Immocent* the third, when he ſhewed Aquinas him a table of gold and ſilver ſaying, we have no need to ſay as *Peter* once did, *Silver and gold have we none*; *Aquinas* answered

red presently, *neither can ye say, Arise and walk*, as you have more money than they had, 'to you have less gifts than they had, you have not so much of the Spirit of God as they had. It was so in the encrease of the prosperity of the Church; And usually it is so in the encrease of their prosperity. As it is with the spleen the greater it grows the less the body is, so the more prosperity the leaner and lanker are the spirits of men. *Deut. 32. 15. Thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness, then he forsook God which made him and lightly esteemed the God of his salvation.* How many when they were low and poor in their estates were more holy and gracious and more spiritual than now they are? It is true in particular persons, in Churches and Countries, but most true in Ministers. It was once a complaint that was made to a Prelate here, that he had a kinsman that was a very zealous preacher in the Countrey, well saies he, I'll silence him, and his silencing was this, he gave him two livings and that stopped his mouth; when he came once to have fatted livings then his zeal quickly abated. And *Hierome* in the life of *Malachus* hath this expression, when the Church saith he came to Christian Princes, and there had countenance, we may well say of it that indeed it was fatted with riches but it was less a great deal in vertue and godliness.

simile  
spleen.

Jerome.  
Quando  
Ecclesia ad  
Principes  
christianos  
venit, fa-  
tam fuisse  
opibus ple-  
niorem, sed  
virtutib.  
minorem  
ait.

God threatneth here that seing they did abuse their prosperity, as they did encrease they sinned more, *that therefore he would turn their glory into shame*, he would cast dirt into their faces. God doth love to stain the pride, the haughtiness of men. He would turn the glory of the people and the glory of the Priests, but especially the glory of the Priests (for so it is meant, but we must take in all) into shame, Either first he would in stead of glory bring shame, or secondly he would make that wherein they did most glory to be their shame.

First, *That he would bring shame in stead of glory.* So God useth to do. If any one glory in beauty, God brings that which makes them contemptible many times in stead of that beauty. That is a notable text for women that glory in their beauty and in their bravery, *Isa. 3. 16. 24. Because the daugh-*



ters of Zion are hauty &c. therefore there ſhall be deſtruction upon them; and ver. 24. There ſhall be burning in ſtead of beauty, and inſtead of well-ſet hair, baldneſs, and in ſtead of their brave dreſſing, ſackcloth. If any will glory in parts, the Lord juſtly brings ſhame upon them, blaſting of their parts, as it is ſaid of *Albertus Magnus* that great Scholer, that for five yeers before his death he did dote and was ſo ignorant that he did not know letters, he could not reade. God can ſoon blaſt the parts of men that glory in them and turn that to ſhame. If any glory in riches, God can ſoon turn that into ſhame too, As hiſtories tells us of an Earl of *Exceter* that married the ſiſter of *King Edward the Fourth*, and yet *Philip de Commines* reports of him, that he was ſeen begging of his bread in the Low Countries barefoot. God can ſoon take away the riches of men and turn that their glory into their ſhame. And then if any boaſt in honor, glory in that, God can ſoon turn that into ſhame, as in that example of *Herod* that gloried in the applauſe of the people when they cried out *the voice of God and not of man*, and preſently he was conſumed by worms.

And much ſhame comes unto men that glory in theſe things, Mark it, according to the glory of men in external things ſo is their ſhame when God takes them away. Here is the difference between the Saints loſing theſe outward things and wicked men. When the Saints loſe theſe outward things there is not much ſhame comes to them, becauſe they did not much glory in them when they had them; but carnal hearts becauſe they know no higher things than theſe things are therefore when they are taken from them there is much ſhame comes upon them, for their glory was in them when they had them.

Secondly, *God makes the very things they glory in to turn to their ſhame.* He doth not only take away their parts and bring ignorance and dotage inſtead of their parts, but he makes their parts to be their undoing, he makes uſe of their parts to bring them to ſhame. He makes their very riches and honors to be their ſhame, and their glorying in their ſucceſs, he makes that thing turn unto their ſhame; As now, when men

ſhall

Albertus  
magnus  
nec literas  
ſciuit, in  
ignoramus  
fuit.

Earl of  
Exceter

shall glory in this that they had such success such a victory upon such and such a time, and upon this they gather an argument, surely God is with us and blesteth us and owneth us; in this they glory; well, God turns this into their shame when he comes to be against them, and blasts them that they shall not have success, that it shall appear unto all that though they have outward means for advantage yet they go by the worst; now where is the argument of Gods owning their cause, where is the argument of glorying with them if that were a good argument that God was with them because of their success? Those that shall make that the only or principal argument that God is with them, how doth God turn their glory into shame when he doth apparently deny them success and that when they have most outward advantages for success? The Saints shame is turned into glory, but the wicked's glory is turned into shame. When the Saints suffer any shame for God, they can glory; the Apostles they account it their honor, they rejoyce that they were worthy to suffer, that they had the honor to suffer dishonor, so the words in the propriety of them signifie, they gloried that they bore about them the marks of the Lord Jesus. Thus what the world accounts their shame is their glory, and that which the world judgeth to be their glory is their shame.

κατὰ τὴν ἰσθμὴν  
σαν αὐτῶν  
μασθῆνας

Act. 5. 41.

But it is especially meant of the Priests, for so the Prophet is speaking of them. *God will turn their glory into shame.* The Priests though they did reject the knowledge of God and their duty, they never regarded to do that wherein the true glory of their office was; That blessed knowledge of God that might have made them glorious indeed, that was despised by them, and the faithful administration of their office, that was neglected by them; Yet they would glory for all this, they would bear it out as if they were **T H E** men; why, they were countenanced at Court, they had good livings and they could lord it over their brethren; and they gloried in that. It is usual with wicked Priests if they can have but countenance from them that are in publick place, and can have but estates and livings, though they be never so negligent of their office and

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and

and never ſo ignorant, yet to glory. How hath it been amongſt us thus of late? How have they carried their heads on high and accounted themſelves the triumphant Church, and all muſt be made to come under them; The land was not able to bear the pride of Prelates and Prelatical men. It is a ſpeech of Cyprian, *Ambition and Pride doth ſweetly ſleep in the boſom of* Ambitio et ſuperbia ſuaviter dormit in ſinu Sacerdotum Cyp. de jejun. &c. *Prieſts; And there are none indeed ſo much puffed up with vain pride as they are, and as ſuch as are moſt ignorant and do neglect that which is the true glory of their office. God threatneth to turn their glory into ſhame, that is, the glory of their Prieſtly office, for that I think eſpecially to be the meaning of the words, to caſt ſhame and contempt upon the Prieſts. And God doth take much delight in this, to caſt ſhame and contempt upon wicked Prieſts and Prophets, therefore in Eſa. 9. 15. God ſaith, *The Prophet that ſpeaks lyes is the tail, he ſpeaks contemptibly of them; And Malac. 2. 9. There fore I will make them* (ſpeaking of the Prieſts that had been partial in the Law and had not kept the waies of God) *baſe and contemptible before all the people; And Rev. 3. 16. I will ſpue them out of my mouth, as loathſom. And Mat. 5. 13. When ſalt hath loſt his ſavour, it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be caſt out and to be troden under foot of men, as a contemptible and vile thing. Thus God caſts ſhame upon wicked Prieſts. So much for that ſeventh verſe. It follows.**

## Verſ. 8.

*They eat up the ſin of my people, and they ſet their heart on their iniquity.*

**T**hey eat up the [ſin of my people] There is ſome difficulty in theſe words. To eat up ſin, to eat up the ſin of people, what is that? There is much in this to be learned.

The word here tranſlated *Sin*, in Scripture hath three ac-<sup>1</sup> 12<sup>2</sup> ceptions.

Fiſt, It is uſed for that which is properly ſin, the tranſgreſſion of Gods Law. That I need not give you any Scripture for.

Secondly,

Secondly, It is used for the punishment of sin; *He shall bear his sin, his punishment of sin. Christ was made sin.* And

Thirdly, It is used for the sacrifice that was offered for sin, *Levit. 10. 17. why did you not eat the sin in the holy place?* so the words are to be read, that is, the sin offering.

The observation from hence (by way of allusion at least) that one hath is not to be neglected: *Let Priests bear this, They did not eat the sin-offering in the holy place:* Let those Priests that spend their time in playing, in pleasures of the flesh, in Taverns, and make their houses to be very sinks of vice, Let them hearken unto this, They should eat the revenues they have by their Office in an holy place, that is, by way of Analogie and proportion, their houses in which they spend the allowance they have for their office, should be holy places; for the offerings of the people were such as the Priests had in lieu of their office, and they were to eat them in an holy place. So Ministers now should eat their means they have coming in, in holy places, their houses should be Sanctuaries, and not Taverns or stews, or sinks of wickedness and sin. (But that by the way.)

For the meaning here, *They eat up the sin of my people.*

Where lies the Charge?

First here, in that they did flatter them in their sin, and so got advantage thereby: So *Gregory* hath it, Why or how are they said to eat up the sin of people, but because they do nourish the sins of those that are delinquents for their own advantage? So all your Court-flatterers and others, that flatter men in their sin for their own advantage, they may be said to feed upon the sins of the people.

*Greg. Cur peccata populi comedere dicuntur, nisi quia peccata delinquentium &c.*

Secondly, They eat the sins of the people in this regard, Because they were negligent in their office, and took all the profits, the advantages that came in by their office, but neglected their charge, and so let people go on in their sin, and cared not what became of them in that regard, so that they might have their tithes and means coming in they cared not; These Ministers may be said to live upon, or to eat the sins of the people, and to wear the sins of the people, their very backs

are

are covered and their tables ſpread with the ſins of the people. A Writer upon this place relates a ſtory of one in *Charles* the ſifts time, a Prelate, that inviting his friends unto his houſe and preparing good cheer, they did not eat of it; What ſaith he, wil you not eat of dainties that are bought at ſo dear a rate? this meat which I have prepared for you and you wil not eat, it is like to coſt me the pains of hell: He was convinced in his conſcience of the neglect of his duty, and ſo looked upon his very dyet that was on his table as the ſins of his people, and that which was like to coſt him eternal miſery.

*Obſos ci-  
bes ego ad-  
dicor ge-  
nua panni,  
& vos da-  
pes tantis  
empias non  
comedeti.*

But further, to open it far more clearly, [*They eat up the ſins of my people*] That is, the Sacrifices which were offered for ſin.

But you will ſay then, how is this ſo deep a charge that they ſhould eat of the ſacrifices that were offered for ſin? for God allowed the Priests to eat the ſin offering, as that place *Levit 10. 17.* ſhews. Queſt.

This therefore was the evil that was in it, that they were greedy of the peoples ſacrifices, but why? Not that God might have honor; but that themſelves might have advantages. It is true God had honor by the peoples offering of ſacrifice, but they looked not to that ſo much as unto their own advantages. Hence they put on people as much as they could to ſacrifice, teaching them to reſt in their ſacrifices, and indeed making light of their ſin; though you ſin, Come, and I will offer for your ſins and they ſhall be pardoned. Juſt as the Papiſts do at this day; they teach the people though they ſin yet by ſo many *Maſſes*, and *Pater-noſters*, and *Indulgences*, and *Dirges* they ſhall be delivered; and by this means they get the wealth of Kingdoms and eat up the ſins of the people. The Priests in thoſe times were images of the Papiſts now. Anſw.

Again, They were glad when people did offend and ſin againſt God, why? becauſe then their ſacrifices muſt be multiplied, and ſo their gains would be encreaſed: And ſo it is a rebuke of the covetouſneſs of Priests. It is a moſt abominable thing for thoſe that are to watch over ſouls that they ſhould regard their own profit and ſenſuality more than the good of ſouls; Juſt like your Chancellors and Commiſſaries Courts that were wont to be, they cared not what offences

Bern.  
 Populi mei  
 peccata co-  
 medunt ;  
 quasi licet,  
 peccatorum  
 prelie exi-  
 gunt, &  
 peccantib.  
 debitam sol-  
 licitudinem  
 non impen-  
 dunt &  
 rursum :  
 Quam da-  
 bus mihi de  
 numero  
 prepositorum  
 qui non plus  
 invigilet  
 subditorum  
 vacuandam  
 marsupij,  
 quam vitij  
 excerpandas

Simile  
 swine.

there were, they joyced at long presentments, all brought  
 griest to their Mill. And Bernard in his 77. Sermon upon the  
 Canticles quoteth this place, (It seems there were such then in  
 his time) and saith he, *They eat upon the sin of my people, as if he  
 should say ; they exact the price of their sin, but take not due care for  
 the sinners.* And again, Give me (saith he) any one of those  
 that are Governors in the Church that doth not watch more  
 to empty peoples purses than to save their souls : How many  
 Commissaries and Chancellours of late grew extraordinary  
 rich, and went up and down in their silks and fattins and in  
 their Coaches, and all this was the sins of the people.

It is then a most cursed thing to desire or rejoyce in the sins  
 of others because of our own advantage. That is the special  
 observation here. How many are there that watch for the  
 falls of their enemies, and rejoyce in their sin ? I appeal unto  
 you, had you an enemy to you, when you heard of his fall,  
 though it were a sin against God, yet if it tended unto his  
 disgrace, did not you rejoyce in it ? were you not glad of it ?  
 because the more an enemy is disgraced the more you think  
 your self justified and honored. Oh this is horrible ! Oh be  
 humbled before the Lord for this, and seek unto God that if it  
 be possible he may pardon the thoughts of thy heart in this  
 thing. What, to rejoyce that the infinite blessed God is dis-  
 honored because thou thy self hast an advantage, it is a most  
 horrible cursed thing. How many are there that looking up-  
 on the professors of Religion whom they think to be adver-  
 saries unto them, do rejoyce when they see them fall, why ? be-  
 cause they think by their disgracing themselves to be thereby  
 justified. This is to feed upon the sins of people. You shall  
 have vermine and swine rooting in filth and in dung, so there  
 are many that feed upon the filth and dung of others, upon the  
 filth of their sins. It is a vile and cursed wickedness to be glad  
 of the afflictions of our neighbor for our own advantage,  
 much more to be glad of his sin. When thy neighbour falls  
 into affliction thou shouldst not rejoyce at his affliction though  
 thou hast advantage by it ; but when thy neighbor falls into  
 sin, to be glad of it for thine own advantage, this is a most  
 cursed

curſed thing indeed. For a Chirurgion to be glad of another mans wounds and to prolong the healing of them becauſe he thereby ſhall have ſome advantage, would not every one cry out of him? And truly this were wickedneſs. So for Soldiers to love war, and to lengthen out war, and care not what becomes of the lives of men and the woful miſeries of a Kingdom ſo they may have long pay, (I ſay) for them willingly to lengthen out war becauſe of their own advantage, this you will all account a great wickedneſs: But this is not ſo bad as to be glad of the ſins of people for our own advantage. Certainly as Chirurgions that ſhall lengthen out the affliction of their Patients for their own advantage may be ſaid to feed upon the matter and filthy ſtuff of the wound; and Soldiers that ſhall lengthen out war for the encrease of their own pay may be ſaid to drink the blood of people; thoſe cups of wine that go down ſo merrily and thoſe diſhes of meat that they are ſo jovial with, may be ſaid to be the fleſh and the blood of people; but this is not ſo bad as to feed upon the ſins of others. Thou that feedeſt upon the ſin of thy brother do thou know that this diet of thine muſt needs breed diſeaſes, It is no whoſom diet to feed upon the ſins of people, it is ſuch a diet as will breed Worms, breed the worm of conſcience one day, and thou wilt get ſuch a ſurfet as will need a ſtrong purge of humiliation to purge thee from that ſurfet. It was once an expreſſion concerning a Prelate that was very fat, one being asked the reaſon why ſuch a Prelate was ſo very fat? why ſurely (ſaies he wittily) he grows ſo fat by ſo often eating of his own words; but no mervail though men grow to have fat hearts that feed upon the ſins of people. As this is the ordinary diet of many, meerly to feed upon the ſins of others, ſo eſpecially of Miniſters, and for Miniſters to feed upon the ſins of people ſo as to keep them alive by their flatteries & connivence, that is evil; but if by their faithful preaching they did firſt ſlay the ſins of the people and then receive maintenance for their work, this is allowed by God, and this they may do: when God bad Peter ariſe and eat, he firſt bid him ſlay, *Ariſe Peter ſlay and eat*: ſo Miniſters if firſt they would ariſe

rise and slay the sins of the people by their preaching, they may eat, that is, they may comfortably then receive maintenance and allowance for their work; but if they keep their sins alive, then their diet is ill diet for they feed upon their sins.

What, is there such wickedness in the hearts of men as to rejoyce in the sins of others for their own advantage? Oh how much more then should the Saints rejoyce in the graces of God in others for Gods glory? In Ezek. 8. 17. you have an expression that seems hard to be understood. God chargeth the people there as with other notorious evils so with this among the rest, that *they did put the branch to their nose*; In these words the people are charged with a most notorious wickedness, this may be often read and little understood what it is, I conceive the meaning to be this, It is a charge of this people for Idolatry, that they worshipped the Sun, or *Vesta* the goddess of the earth, either of both, because by them the sweet flowers and branches of trees came forth from the earth, they attributed the flourishing of trees and of the plants wholly unto the Sun whom they worshiped as a god, or unto *Vesta* whom they worshipped as a goddess, and when they worshipped either of those in the acknowledgment of the honor due to them, they took a branch and put to their nose, thereby shewing their respect and their homage unto them as rejoycing in that good and sweet fruit that was caused by the Sun or by *Vesta* their god or goddess. So that God chargeth them here for so rejoycing in these creatures as to worship the Sun or the earth as the cause of it. To apply it to our purpose; As Idolaters because they looked upon the Sun or the earth as causes of such flourishing of plants and sweetness of branches and flowers, did put them to their nose and delighted in them and thereby shewed their honoring of the Sun and of the earth, so should we take the graces of the Spirit of God in our brethren that are the fruits of the Sun of righteousness, for the Sun of righteousness causeth them to flourish in the hearts of our brethren, and we should put them to our nose, smell at them, account them fragrant and thereby do honour unto

Jesus

Confeg. ex  
ofosaro.

Ezek 8. 17  
Opened

Sol & ho-  
mo, gene-  
runt bom-  
mem.

Smile



Jeſus Chriſt as the Author of them, this is quite contrary to this of rejoicing in the ſins of people. Thus much for that phraſe *they eat up the ſin of my people.*

*And they ſet their hearts upon their iniquity.*] The words are וְנִשְׂאוּ לְבָבָם *not* וְנִשְׂאוּ לְבָבָם *They liſt up their hearts, every ones heart.* Calu. It may be interpreted either of the heart of the Priests or the heart of the people, both waies, and according to the ſcope of the Spirit of God either way.

First the heart of the Priests, they liſt up their hearts to the iniquity of the people, ſo it may be underſtood, for ſo this phraſe, liſting up of the heart to a thing, doth note in Scripture the earneſt deſire that there is in the heart for the attaining of ſuch a thing; as in *Deut. 24. 15.* ſpeaking of poor men *He is poor ſaith he, and ſets his heart upon his wages.* A poor man that wants proviſion for his family, he ſets his heart upon his wages, Oh when ſhall I have my wages that I may provide for my family! now the word is here in this text of the poor man, he liſteth up his heart to his wages, Oh my wages that it might come. And *Jerem. 22. 27.* the land whereunto they deſire to return, thither ſhall they not return, that is, the land whereto they liſt their hearts; ſo the word is the ſame here in the text, they have an earneſt deſire unto the land; And *Ezek. 24. 25.* *I will take from them the deſire of their eyes and that whereupon they ſet their minds, their ſons and their daughters;* it is ſpoken of their love unto their children, they liſt their minds or their hearts to their children. So that then it notes thus much, the earneſt deſire the Priests had unto the ſins of the people, that they might have the greater advantage by them; As it is noted of ſome who are of poor ſervile ſpirits and whoſe greateſt means comes in by burials, that they are glad and joyce when they hear the bell ring, and they are ready to deſire the death of men out of reſpect to their own fees, becauſe the more die and the richer they die the more advantage cometh in to them. So the Priests at this time they deſired the multiplying of the ſins of the people that they might have the more ſacrifices thereby.

But I rather think, according to other Interpreters, the ſcope

I

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Sextons.

scope to be more principally in regard of the lifting up of the hearts of the people, that the Priests did lighten the hearts of the people, that is thus, that they might have the more advantage by their sacrifice, they do make the sins of the people nothing & encourage them in their sins, & lighten their hearts; they lift up their hearts above their sins, perswading them that if they offer sacrifice all should be well, they should be fully cleared, they need not be further troubled: Whereas indeed the Priests ought to convince mens consciences of the evil of their sins, when they came to sacrifice they ought to have shewed them how they deserved death for their sins, whereas this poor beast dies, and you are to lay your hands upon the head of it, know that your sins deserve the death of your souls eternally; and they were to instruct the people how the sacrifices typified the blood of Christ, they were to tel them, you come now to offer sacrifice and to have the blood of the beasts shed, this typifieth out the Messiah that is to come into the world, the Son of God that is be made Man and to shed his precious blood to pacifie the wrath of God for your sins, and you are to exercise your faith upon this Messiah that is to come: they should have told them that no sin could be pardoned but by the blood of Christ, they should have loaded their consciences with their sins, they should have made their sins heavy upon their consciences, but they lightned their minds by putting such apprehensions into them that if they did but offer sacrifice all would be well, they might take their liberty then, and though they committed sin again yet still there was a sacrifice for it, and so they lightned the sins of the people that way.

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fice what  
it taught

This was a most abominable sin of the Priests, *Calvin* upon this place brings in *Plato* himself that Heathen, inveighing against the absurdity and ridiculousness of peoples offering sacrifice thinking thereby to pacifie their gods and then take liberty to sin again, Even *Plato* thought it an abuse of an Heathen god for people to think it enough to offer sacrifice. And yet is not this the distemper of the hearts of many people amongst us, that they commit sin and take liberty to themselves

ſelves to ſatisſie the luſts of the fleſh, and what will they do? They will pray to God to forgive them, and ſome go ſo far that they will faſt, and then ſin again, and then pray and faſt again, and then to it again, thinking to put off God with ſuch kind of ſacrifices as theſe are; It is true, we are all ſinners and we muſt repent, and ſo ſin, and repent, and ſin and repent again, and ſo make repentance that ſhould be the death of their ſins a means to nourish their ſins. The Priests here did abuſe the type, the ſacrifices, they lighten the hearts of people by telling them that there was a ſacrifice to expiate their ſin, and have you not at this day many that abuſe the Antitype as much, that tell the people with ſuch kind of expreſſions as theſe, “Sin as faſt as you can, there is a ſufficient ſacrifice for ſin, it is but to beleeve in Chriſt, Chriſt hath ſhed his blood for the greateſt ſins of all, and ſin as faſt as you can yet there is a price paid for ſin. It is true there may be ſome truth in the words ſome matter in them without cloathing them with ſuch abſurdities, that is, that there is a ſacrifice for the greateſt ſin, but now to ſpeak to people upon this in ſuch a manner, ſin as faſt as you can there is a ſacrifice for ſin, for it is the manner, the *Modus*, that doth either encourage or keep back people from ſin. I appeal unto you, whether have you not many that do reveal Chriſt in ſuch a way and manner and open the rich and glorious free grace of God in Chriſt as is an encouragement to people unto ſin. It is true when they come to be examined they deny it, no God forbid, they do not encourage men to ſin, they only tell them of Gods free grace: Yea but they tell them of it in ſuch a manner without ſuch cautions as prudent wiſe conſcionable Miniſters uſe to do; And therefore you find that all your lewd and looſer ſort of Profeſſors cloie with them becauſe they have ſuch a way of preaching of free grace. It appears that in *Hierome* his time there were ſuch a kind of people, for he hath this expreſſion of ſome in his daies; when they ſaw any to live wickedly they would ſay thus to them. you ſin and offend, but God requireth nothing elſe but only abide in the truth of the faith, do but beleeve and that is enough.

*Ierom* againſt the abuſers of Free-grace.

nough. And again he hath a further expression, which saith if you do but keep God doth not so much regard your lives what they are, only looks that you do beleve: And by this means saith he men repent not neither are they humbled, but they walk up and down with a stretched-out neck; you shall find them by their very gate, they walk so peartly abroad and cast up their heads, because they think they hold the true faith and so take liberty to sin. The Church hath been continually troubled with this generation, and no mervail there be such men now amongst us, for there being not yet a full Reformation (for we are but in the way tending toward it) and all things cannot be reformed at once, therefore some kind of liberty for the present is permitted to such men, and therefore I say no mervail that we have such among us that are of such spirits to abuse the free grace of God and lighten the hearts of men in their sin by telling of them there is a sacrifice in Christs death sufficient to pay for all. And so much for this eighth verse.

Verse 9.

*And there shall be like people like Priest; and I will punish them for their waies, and reward them for their doings.*

**T**HE Lord threatning of the ten Tribes, especially points this threats against the Priests, as the great cause of the evil both of the sin and punishment of the people, as ever they have been; Evil Ministers in a countrey have been a chief cause of the sin and of the misery of the Countrey. Divers of Gods threats against them we saw before and still it follows.

Observ.

*There shall be like people, like Priest.]* Here is a mixt threat, both against Priest and people. They have made themselves like one another in sin, God will make them like one another in punishment. They joyn themselves together in sin and were alike there; God wil joyn them in judgment and they shal be alike theretoo. There is a likeness between people and Priest upon two grounds, I mean in evil especially.

Obfer.

First,

First, They are like in ſin one to another uſually from the juſt judgment of God upon people. When people diſlike the powerful Miniſtry of the word, when their hearts cannot bear a ſpiritual and lively Miniſtry God in juſt judgment ſendeth unto them Miniſters according to their very luſts; Miniſters that ſhall be ſutable unto that very diſpoſition of their hearts to harden them in it. And this is a fearful judgment upon a people. They may rejoyce and bleſs themſelves in it and think themſelves now quiet and in ſafety, and ſay they have got a very honeſt man, a brave man, a quiet man amongſt them; but while they are rejoycing the wrath of God is in a moſt dreadful manner let out againſt them, in ſending them a Miniſter according to their luſts; As God threatneth in *Ezek. 14.4.* *If a man ſet up an Idol in his heart, God will answer him according to his Idol*; ſo when people ſet up Idols in their hearts, their hearts are bent unto ſuch and ſuch luſts and wicked waies, God in his juſt judgment will answer them according unto their own hearts and luſts, they ſhall have ſuch Miniſters ſent amongſt them as will harden them in thoſe wicked waies.

Again ſecondly, [*Like people like Prieſt*] In evil in regard of the great influence that there is mutually from the Prieſts to the people and from the people to the Prieſts, ſo they come to be like one another in evil. Sometime from the people to the Prieſts. If people be Malignants and ſuperſtitious and looſe and vain, the Prieſts that are among them being carnal, they will ſeek to humour them; they love to be made of by them and therefore they preach ſuch things as may ſuit with ſuch kind of humours. But this is a very vile thing. It is an extreme diſhonor to the Miniſtry of the word to ſubject it unto the luſts of men. It is this that makes it ſo contemptible in the eyes of wicked men. Though they be pleaſed with it yet the truth is the ſuiting of their luſts makes the Miniſtry of the word contemptible. How is that you will ſay, they are pleaſed with it, commend ſuch men and like them well? While they commend the men and like them well, yea like what they ſay yet they contemn the Miniſtry, upon this ground,

Rev. 19. 10  
Opened

because they come to see that even their ministry is under their humours, and it is to please their humours; upon this they look upon themselves and their lusts as above the Ministry, and so despise any authority in it. They are pleased with the suiting of it to their lusts, but they despise it in regard of any authority, for they see apparantly it is under their humours. In *Revel. 19. 10.* When *John* did but fall down to worship an Angel, the Angel cometh to him and saith, *O see thou do it not, why? for I am thy fellow servant and have the testimony of Jesus.* What you a Minister that have the testimony of Jesus to fall down to an Angel; An Angel, what is an Angel? The glory of an Angel it is to be a fellow servant with you and to have the same testimony of Jesus that you have. A Minister must not in his ministry fall down under the lusts of any man living, upon this ground, because he hath the testimony of Jesus with him. It is true those that are Ministers in regard of themselves should be willing to be under all, servants unto all for Christ; they should I say be willing to put their persons under every man for Christ, but they should keep their Ministry above every man. Their Ministry and the authority of that is to be kept above the greatest and that for Christ too.

3.

Again, A great influence as from people to the Minister so from the Minister to the people. Look how Ministers are, so usually the people are. *Like Priest like people*, especially in evil, they have an influence there. You know it almost in all places where you have malignant superstitious Ministers you have accordingly such kind of people. *Jerem. 23. 10.* *The land is full of adulterers* (saith the text) then in the next verse, *For both Prophet and Priest are prophane*, that is the reason. And again *vers. 14.* *I have seen* (saith God) *in the Prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing; they commit adultery and walk in lyes; they also strengthen the band of evil doers, that none doth return from his wickedness.* Here we see how they harden others in sin, they walk in lyes, they tell people we need not be so strict, we may take more liberty, it is but the fancies and humors of such and such men, they walk in lyes and so they strengthen mens hands

hands in wickedneſs and none returneth from his wicked waies. And then verſe 15. *From the Prophet there goes prophaneſſe quite thorough the land*; if they be prophane and wicked they have an influence quite thorough the land to make the whol countrey wicked and prophane. And on the other ſide, there is a great influence in the Miniſtry of the word upon people for good many times. If Miniſters continue painful, faithful, conſcionable, it is very rare but that they bring people to ſome kind of obedience or other. Very few godly, conſcionable, powerful Miniſters that have lived any time in any place but they leave ſome favour of their ſpirits behind them, that in their people you may find the favour of ſuch a Miniſtry. It was wont to be ſaid, *Da Ambroſios et habebimus Theodoſios* let us have *Ambroſes* and we ſhall have *Theodoſius's*. Let us have godly Miniſters at Court and we ſhall have godly Princes; that is the meaning; The reaſon why *Theodoſius* was ſo good, it was becauſe he had an *Ambroſe*. So we find it in 2 *King. 12. 2.* that *Jeboasb* ſo long as *Jebojada* the Prieſt lived, did that which was right in the ſight of the Lord, ſo long as he had a godly Miniſter with him that inſtructed him, he did that which was right in the eyes of God. No mervail then ſo much evil at Court and other places becauſe we know what kind of Miniſters they ever have had. And becauſe of the influence that a Miniſter hath upon people, hence it is that the evil and malignant party ever deſire to nourish theſe Miniſters; and the force of their rage and malice is againſt godly Miniſters, for like Miniſter like people they think; and indeed ſuppoſing their principles it is but that which is prudential for their ends; for when they cry out and ſay that theſe Miniſters are the cauſe of al, they ſay true, & there is ſome kind of truth in it, that is, they are the cauſe to diſcover to people their evil and wicked waies, and to cauſe thoſe to whom they preach to cleave to the truth, and that is it their ſpirits do vex and rage at, that they ſee the Miniſtry of the Word prevail ſo much upon the people as it doth. Therefore I remember a policie that I have read of *Xerxes*, that when he was in ſtraights by reaſon of *Agifelam* who prevailed much in his

country, he took this course, he sent men with good store of money to corrupt the Towns in Greece, and they went and corrupted Athens and Thebes, and so caused great disturbance in Greece, by reason of which Agiselaus was sent for home to look to his own Country. They went especially for the Universities Athens and Thebes and there corrupted the Orators and so thought to prevail much. It hath been the policie of our men in these daies to corrupt Universities much, thinking by Scholers and others there to prevail most. There is a story of the Wolves that they would make a league with the Sheep, but they would by any means have one article granted, that was that their Shepheards must be delivered up unto them and then they would be at peace with the Sheep and do them no hurt. I make no question but if our adversaries should come to article with us, there is no one thing they would stand more upon than the delivery up of the shepheards and then there would be good peace between the Wolves and the sheep. *Like people like Priest.*

They are like in evil and they shall be like in punishment, they shall be involved in the same punishment, I will make the Priests as contemptible and as miserable as the vilest of the people; their places exalted them above others, and their sin hath made them as vile as others, and so they shall be dealt withal accordingly. You will say, what great judgment is here threatned that *like people like Priest*? Yes certainly to them the judgment was very bitter and grievous, was most against the hair, for the Priests have at all times been puffed up with their callings, so that they looked upon themselves as above the people abundantly, looked down to the people with scorn and contempt. The Pharisees in *John, 7. 49. This people (say they) who know not the Law are cursed*, this same vulgar sort are they that are accursed; so these Priests here, though the truth is they were made of the vilest of the people (as they were in *Jeroboams* time, for it is spoken of those) yet being once got up into that place they were puffed up as if they had been of another kind of mould than the people were. It is usual for wicked Ministers though never so base and vile o-  
ther



ther waies either in birth or breeding, yet when they get up a little and are come to preferment, to look upon others as very contemptible in their eyes. This is a Master-design in Popery, to advance Priethood and make them to be great above the people; and we know what a way they were going in of late; what were your Gentry in the Kingdom but even slaves and vassels to every Popish Priest in the Countrey, but especially unto Prelates; And we cannot imagine (but we must look at the hand of God in his dreadful judgment besetting men) why the Gentry should desire to have prelacy come in again, knowing how they were contemned and despised of them before. There was scarce any Vicar in the Countrey but if he were *Filius Ecclesie* as they called him, a child of the Church, a ceremonious man but he was able to vaunt himself above any of the Gentry whatsoever; and it was an evident argument of the coming in of Popery upon us, a too much extolling of their Priestly Office, although that wherein the true honour of their office consisted, the faithful Preaching of the word, was not regarded. I have read of some of the Papists, (to give you an instance or two that you may see what way they went, just as they did here of late) one *Riconius* hath this passage, *The Priest excelleth the King as much as a the pride of popish Priests.* *man a beast; yet as much as God is above a Priest so is a Priest above the King;* these very words he hath. And Pope *Innocent* the second, he would have *Lotharius* the Emperour painted in his pallace as a vassel lying down at his feet. And to *Becanus* he calls the Pope the chief Priest, their Shepherd, and Emperors and Kings are their Dogs and Curs saith he, and if they will be faithful and be at the hand of the Shepherd well and good, they must be made of, but if they will be lazie and troublefom, they must be removed. Is it possible now that Kings and great ones should ever love Popery and think to bring in that for their honor when as they do advance their Priethood far above themselves; only for the present they would puff them up to procure what lies in them an Arbitrary government, but still that that Arbitrary government of theirs must be Arbitrary under them, and then it suits very well

well with their ends. There is a spirit of fornication (as follows afterward) upon men, or otherwise it were impossible they should be so besfooted as they are.

But though they lifted up themselves above the people thus yet saith God, *I will make them in punishment like to the people.* God is no respecter of persons, to spare any for their place above another; So neither should we, we should not say, Oh it would be a disgrace unto the calling, therefore it must be past over; rather because he is a Priest or because he is a Magistrate, let him be what he will be, let him be in place of Magistracy or Ministry or of Parliament, yet proving to be a Delinquent and an enemy unto the State, certainly he must be dealt withal and be made an example in judgment as well as the meanest of the people, and for those that be under to be executed and for them to be spared in that regard, God forbid ever such a thing should be. God is no acceptor of persons in regard of place neither should men be.

Quest.

Yea but it may be you will say, *Like people like Priest*, one would rather think that God should say, *I will make their judgment greater than the judgment of the people*, for the sin of the Priests is far greater than the sin of the people.

Ansiv, 1.

To that I answer first, It is true the sin of the Priests is greater than the sin of any of the people, but it is not greater than the sin of the whol Congregation. In *Levit. 4.* compare verse 3. with verse 13. and you shal find that the same sacrifice that was offered for the sin of the whol Congregation, it is offered for the sin of the Priest, so that the sin of the Priest it is equivalent to the sin of the whole Congregation. So there is a parallel here, *like people like Priest*, that is, *I will deal with the Priests as with the whol Congregation.*

2

Yet further for a second answer, As the condition of the person aggravateth the sin, so the condition of the person aggravateth the judgment. It is a greater punishment for a man of an high condition to suffer the same thing that a man that is of a lower condition doth suffer.

*And I will punish them for their waies.*] The reading you have in your books of *punishing* them for their waies, it is otherwise

wiſe in the Hebrew פקדתי I will *viſit* them for their waies, and ſo it is I think tranſlated in ſome of your books, *Super vi-  
as ejus*: I will viſit them upon their waies, or viſit their waies upon them, ſo the words are. *God hath his daies of viſitation wherein he will narrowly enquire into the waies of men, and call to* Obſerv  
*an account for ſins long before committed*; that's the Note from thence. *Exod. 32. 34. In the day when I viſit I will viſit their ſin upon them*; I will ſpare them for the preſent, but I have a day to viſit, and then I will come upon them even for this ſin. God ſpareth ſinners now, why? becauſe the day of his viſitation is not yet come, but when that is come then look to your old ſins; look that now your repentance be thorough, for otherwiſe you may be ſpared a while, but when the day of viſitation comes then all your old ſins ſhall be call'd over. In ſome mens viſitations of late, the more conſcionable men were and godly, the more were they aimed at, and it alwayes went worſt with them in their viſitations; But it ſhall be otherwiſe in this viſitation of Gods, God will viſit the viſitors, and viſit them for their viſitations, and then as *Eſa. 10. 3. What will you do in the day of viſitation?* You knew what to do in the day when you your ſelves did viſit, but what will you do in the day of Gods viſiting of you? As *Mic. 7. 4. The day of thy watchmen and thy viſitation cometh, now ſhall be their perplexity.* Certainly thoſe viſitors did begin to be in perplexitie, for their day was coming, and we hope their day is yet coming.

*But in the day of Gods viſitation mens own waies will come upon them*; that's the ſecond Note. *I will viſit their waies upon them.* Men may have ſhifts to put off God for a while, but when God ſhall viſit, then they ſhall ſee that all the evil that is come upon them it is from their own waies; And that will be the very torment of the damned in Hell, that they ſhall clearly ſee that all the evil that is upon them it is but their own waies. ſimile  
As it is reported of ſome birds that lime is made out of their dung by which they are taken, ſo out of the dung of mens ſins doth God make his limetwigs to take them withal, that is, the judgment that comes upon them it is no other but  
their

their own waies, they have procured this unto themselves.

*And reward them for their deeds.*] The word that is here translated *deeds*, it signifies *Cogitationes, studia*, their studies, their thoughts as well as *opera*, their works: From whence there may be these two Notes, First that God will call men to account for their thoughts; the uncleanness of your thoughts, the vanity of your thoughts, the envy, the malice of your thoughts; you must look to your thoughts, they are not free before God; that's the first point. Then, that studied wickedness, thoughtful wickedness is the worst wickedness; when men shall plot wickedness in their thoughts, that is the wickedness that above all wickedness God will come to visit.

*And reward them.*] There is a great elegancy in these words that in your English you pass over very lightly. *Reward them their doings*: We know that God will reward every one according to their doings; but I say in the Original in the Hebrew it signifies *Redire faciam*, I will make to return your doings, that is the propriety and elegancy of the word, I will make your doings return back upon you. From whence there is this Note, "Sin passeth away in the act of it with much sweetness, but God will make it return back again in the guilt of it with much bitterness." As Gideon said in *Judg. 8. 7.* unto the men of *Succoth*, *When I return, (saith he) I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness, and with briars*; How many men and women have past over the act of their sins very pleasantly, but within a month perhaps or a quarter of a year, or it may be within a year or two or sometime seven years after, God hath made their sin return upon them, and it hath returned as Gideon did return upon the men of *Succoth* and hath torne them with briars and thorns that they have lien roaring in the anguish of spirit for the horror that hath been upon them for their sins. You sinners that have not returned unto God in the way of repentance, do you expect that all those pleasant delightful sins of yours will one day return upon you and that in a dreadful way.

And

And from the propriety of this word *Redire faciam*, I will make to return, I may give a hint of a meditation the other way too. Surely the good works of the Saints shall return upon them, return upon them with comfort and peace. It may be you have some troubleſom afflictions in the flesh in some works and ſervices you are exerciſed in, yet know they shall return with abundance of peace and joy. Do not think that what you do for God shall be quite loſt and that there is an end of it. If you venture any thing of your eſtates for a good uſe in the cauſe of God, as never ſince you were born nor ſince your forefathers were born, that there was a more full opportunity to glorifie God than is at this day; that which is called upon you to venture for the calling in of our brethren the Scots into the Nation, it is ſuch a thing that hath ſo much in it, ſuch an opportunity of ſerving God, that you never had nor never are like to have the like ſo long as you live, For it is not the bringing in of ſo many men into the Kingdom, but the engaging of a Kingdom for us; and not only an engagement, but the greateſt testimony of the goodneſs of our cauſe before all the Nations that are about us; for though now the Nations about us know not which part to take there having been ſuch proteſtations on both ſides, but when they shall hear that ſuch a Kingdom that heretofore did carry themſelves ſo loyally though being here in *England* with an Armie yet went away in ſo much peace, ſo that the King himſelf by proclamation declared they are his faithful and good Subjects, when theſe I ſay that had ſuch an opportunity in their hands, yet have ſhewn themſelves ſo loyal and ſo faithful, shall now engage themſelves on one ſide, certainly this will be a mighty high witneſs before all the Nations about us, and no queſtion cannot but gain many amongſt our ſelves. Therefore I ſay; it is the higheſt and largeſt and full-eſt opportunity for the ſervice of God and good of your countrey as ever you or your forefathers had; And though you have done ſomewhat and much already, yet you never had ſuch an opportunity as this is which you may bleſs God you are imploied in.

Obſer.

Scots coming in

do i quite gone and lost, Oh no, the Lord will make it return, you shall have a good return for it. You that are Merchants are you not willing to venture your stock at Sea upon expectation of a good return? you will venture the winds and waves and seas and venture your servants that may prove unfaithful. You never ventured any thing in all your lives that you could have such assurance of a good return as what you venture in such a case as this is. It is not adventured, God will certainly make your good works to return as he will make the doings of the wicked return upon them. It follows.

Verse 10.

*For they shall eat and not have enough.*

Some would carry these words, *They shall still grow worse and worse in eating the sin of my people*, and so would refer to the eating of the sin of the people in that sense you heard before, that is, they shall never think they have advantage enough from the sin of the people; they desire the sin of the people for their own advantage, well, they shall eat their sin in that respect, but they shall never have enough, they shall never be satisfied, but still desire that people may sin more and more that they may have more advantage by their sacrifices.

But I rather take it thus, more plainly according to the words, *They shall eat and not have enough*, howsoever they think to provide for themselves by that which they get in such a base sinful way, yet they shall find no satisfaction unto themselves in it, they shall be deceived. The truth is, if they should find satisfaction, it were a great matter, seeing they shall come to answer for it after wards; but they shall not only be judged for it afterwards, but for the present they shall find no satisfaction in that that they promised unto themselves satisfaction in, They will get an estate perhaps, get money and get riches this way, and be brave in the world, but I will curse that which they have got. Take goods that are lawfully got yet there is a vanity in them, a vanity in goods got by good means, though we have them we cannot enjoy them except God give us to enjoy them, God is the God of all consolation,

conſolation, it is the mercy and goodneſs of God conveyed thorough creatures that can bring any comfort in the uſe of them. If a man ſhould think to fill his belly with wind, it were a poor ſatiſfaction; but it were worſe if he ſhould open his mouth to fill his belly with air infected with the plague: When thou thinkeſt to ſatiſfie thy ſelf with goods never ſo well got, it is but opening thy mouth to the wind, but when thou thinkeſt to ſatiſfie thy ſelf with goods unlawfully got, it is opening thy mouth to draw in peſtilential air, there is no ſatiſfaction there. *Eccleſ. 5. 10. He that deſires ſilver ſhall not be ſatiſfied with it.* Howſoever men think with themſelves if they had ſuch an eſtate what brave lives ſhould they live; but when they have it they find it otherwiſe. Thoſe that hunger and thirſt after righteousneſs ſhall be ſatiſfied, but they that hunger and thirſt after any thing in the world they ſhall find it to be an empty thing unto them. It is true, there is a kind of ſatiſfaction that God gives ſometimes unto wicked men, but it is a curſed ſatiſfaction, a fearful judgment of God. *Prov. 14. 14. Wicked men ſhall be ſatiſfied with their own waies,* that is, they ſhall have enough of them; as when a man will go on in his own waies and he ſuffers much for it, we ſay, what have you not enough of it, enough of ſuch a courſe, ſo he ſhall be ſatiſfied, he ſhall have enough of his waies, that is he ſhall find ſuch plagues and miſeries that follow them as he ſhall be ſatiſfied, he ſhall be filled with them. It is ſpoken of an Apoſtate, a backſlider in heart, one that will apoſtatize from God and think to provide for himſelf better in the waies of his Apoſtaſie, he ſhall be ſatiſfied but it ſhall be with his own waies.

*And they ſhall commit whoredome and ſhall not encreaſe.*

If we underſtand this of bodily whoredom, then the ſenſe muſt carry it thus, that God will croſs them in that, even in the way of their whoredom, they ſhall commit whoredom and not encreaſe. You will ſay what great judgment is that, Whoremasters do not care for encreaſing? It is true now whoremasters do not deſire encreaſe, only to ſatiſfie their luſts,

Whore-mongers & plausible Ministers alike and in this thing they resemble evil and wicked Ministers as much as in any thing; as many Ministers desire only to please the fancies of their Auditors and never look after begetting any unto God; they are like harlots or whoremasters in this, they love to please the fancies of men and their own fancies too, but to get children unto God, that they look not after; as whoremasters & harlots when their lusts are satisfied, they have their ends, for to bring forth, that they care not for. This is now, but in former times, in the time when the Prophet did prophesie, encreasing in a numerous offspring was a special thing that all gloried in, therefore they sought it any way, not only by marrying many wives, but by their concubines and whores too. But God threatens to send out a curse upon them that they shall not encrease. And for this it is very observable (for you may take it more general) Gods curse upon a man in any thing he undertakes unlawfully, he can never expect to prosper in it; that is the Note from it, *Whatsoever a man undertakes unlawfully he can never expect to prosper in it.* And that is very observable for this one particular concerning *Solomon*, you know he had seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, a thousand in all, yet we reade but of one son that *Solomon* left behind him, and that son was but a foolish son neither, *Rehoboam*, whom the Scripture calls a child when he was above forty yeers old, *2 Chron. 13. 7.* *When Rehoboam was young and tender hearted, he had a childish foolish heart though a rugged and churlish heart. Solomon* was not blessed with a numerous progeny notwithstanding he gave himself liberty to satisfy his flesh so much as he did. But on the other side, of al the fathers in the old Testament we reade of *Isaac* from whom came the promised seed that were to be as the stars of Heaven and as the sand of the sea shore for number, yet he had but one wife, he took not that course that many of the Patriarches did to marry many wives, but contented himself with one wife and yet from him came the promised seed so many as the stars and the sand for number. From which we may infer that it is the best way for us to keep to Gods Ordinances, we shall prosper more in what we would

have.



have, to keep to Gods waies than to go out into our own finful waies.

*They ſhall not encreaſe*] The words are read otherwiſe by ſome, <sup>Hierom</sup> Hierom hath this Note upon it, *they have committed whoredom and have not ceaſt*, ſo he reads it, his note upon it is this (I think that which hath been delivered unto you is the main ſcope, but I will only preſent what he notes upon it, and it is of good uſe) ſaith he, they have committed fornication & whoredom till they have ſpent all their ſtrength yet they have not ceaſt, their hearts are ſtil that way; juſt as it is with many old whoremasters they have committed whoredome and ſpent their ſtrength in their young time, yet they ceaſe not, they have unclean hearts, their luſts boil within them notwithstanding their ſtrength is ſpent. And if you reade the words ſo and then either take it for bodily or ſpiritual whoredom, *they have committed whoredom and have not ceaſt*, that is, they ſtill go on and on in the waies of Idolatry, Idolaters ſeldom <sup>Obſerv:</sup> come in and return.

<sup>Tarnovius</sup> he hath another expreſſion in the reading of it, *Non per rumpant eximent legibus aut penis*, they ſhall not break forth, for ſo the word in the Hebrew doth wel carry it, that is, they think to take liberty in their whoredom and idolatry, they break forth from Gods Laws and puniſhments and think ſtill to eſcape Laws and puniſhments, to break forth from all bonds whatſoever, no ſaith God, they ſhall not break forth, God will lay fetters upon them that they ſhall not break forth. But I take the firſt to be the more ſpecial, and ſo we ſhall leave that expreſſion, *they ſhall commit whordom and ſhall not encreaſe*. Why?

*Becauſe they have left off to take heed to the Lord.*

There is a great deal of elegancy in this expreſſion. *They* <sup>7705</sup> *have left the Lord to take heed* (ſo you may read the words, *ad cuſtodiendum*) to keep themſelves within any bounds of the Commandement of God. They run wild (as if the Prophet ſhould ſay) and have left off to take heed of God or any of his waies. Perhaps they have not left the Lord wholly, for they will worſhip God in ſome external waies of worſhip.

worship, but God cares not for that, they have left the Lord in this to take heed of him. Though we think to follow the Lord in any external duties, if we leave to take heed of God in all his waies, he takes no notice of it: that may be one Note.

But the special thing is this, [*They have left off to take heed to the Lord.*] At first though temptation may prevail against a man, yet the Truth of God will be working in his conscience (I speak to one enlightned and a professor of Religion, as these were) Though at first a temptation prevail against a professor of Religion, yet he having an enlightened conscience the Truth of God will be working still in his conscience and in his heart; but now if he still give way to that lust, at length his lust will so far prevail as that he will wholly leave minding and regarding that Truth of God that is against his sin and give himself fully up unto the waies of his own heart; and this mans condition is very dangerous. Oh take heed of this, take heed of this not taking heed; you that begin to decline and you find some secret lust prevailing in your heart; well, yet you have the Truth of God boiling and bubbling in your hearts and will not let you go on quietly, but yet your lusts strive against that truth, well, if this lust be not mortified, if you give way to it that it continue a while, you will come to be weary of that truth that is against that lust and you will turn your eyes from it, and you will leave off to take heed further to think of that which should make against your sin; and when you are come to this pass your condition is very dangerous.

Observ.

Use.

Obl.

[*They have left off to take heed.*] The way to keep the heart and life in order, in waies of obedience, it is, to take heed to the Lord, that is the special Note, to take heed to the infinite glorious blessed Majesty of the holy and great God, to mind God in his sovereignty, in his authority, in that infinite worthiness that is in him of all obedience from all his creatures, to look upon God the only Jehovah, the high and eternal God: This is the way to keep our hearts and lives in order, to take heed of God thus, to have God in our thoughts and hearts and to heed him diligently and his waies.

Euc

But yet there is a further note from hence and that is eſpecially intended. The evil that they are accuſed of is, *That they did leave off to take heed of God in point of worſhip*, for that is the thing that God eſpecially charged them for, that they did corrupt his worſhip, and they did leave off to take heed of God in things of his worſhip, that is thus, that kind of worſhip that they thought to be moſt ſutable to their own reaſon and politick ends, that worſhip they ſet up; but now to take heed to God for the rule of worſhip, to look up unto God, that whatſoever they had in his worſhip ſhould be according to the rule he ſetteth, that they left off, they minded that no more now but altogether what was ſutable to their own ends. And that is an evil thing in any Kingdom that men ſhould leave off ſo to take heed; as it is almoſt come to that now. I make no queſtion at firſt but that for the government of the Church the primitive Chriſtians had a ſpecial eye to the rule, to Apoſtolicall inſtitution, but it is come to paſs I know not how, it is almoſt a general concluſion amongſt men, yea amongſt good men, amongſt Divines and good Divines, that we can ſcarce have a rule, a rule of inſtitution, they think it needs not at all, and we can find no ſuch thing at all in the word, and ſo they have quite left off ſo much as to examin things in the word: I ſay they have done ſo. It is an evil thing for any in matters that concern the worſhip of God not to take heed of Gods word in it; Though in civil things we are left to prudence and reaſon, but when we come to matter of worſhip we muſt take heed to the word, in every particular that is properly Eccleſiaſtical, that is properly Church-work, we muſt I ſay in every thing take heed to the Word of God. It is a notable expreſſion that *Luther* hath about this, It is not faith he ſo much in Religion to look at what is the thing as who commands it; and he citeth *Seneca*, *Seneca* ſaith he gives this rule, obſerve not who commandeth but what is commanded, but in the Church and in Religion it is to be turned quite another way, it is not ſo much *Quid* but *Quis* and *Qualis* and *Quantus*, but the Devil ſaith he changeth this into *quid quæ quantum*, that is, he changeth this:

Obſer.

Uſe.

this:

this who, and what manner of person, and how great a one commandeth; into this; what, what manner, and how great a thing. So that this is the reason why many despise some Ordinances in the Church, why what great matters are there in these things? So they look to the thing and not to the institution; whereas did we look to Christ the Institutor which we should do, we should look more to the institution than unto the thing it self. Let the thing commanded be never so low and poor, never so mean in it self, yet the institution must be honored. Take heed to God especially in the point of worship. So we have done with the tenth verse. It follows.

## Verse 11.

*Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.*

Still the holy Ghost envyeth especially against the Priests; for their whordom, their wine and new wine did take away their hearts. *Take away*, The words are translated diversly, either *Take the heart*, or, *Take away the heart*.

*Take the heart.*] So I find someturn it, and there is a good sense of it, that is, these lusts do take possession of their hearts. It is one thing for a man to be overtaken with a lust, and another thing for a lust to take a man. It is said of the godly that they are overtaken, but it is said of these that their lusts take them; but now when it comes to this that you do not only yeild to a temptation but a temptation takes you, when you are taken captive, whoredom and wine they have taken their hearts. So some.

But I rather think the other more proper, these lusts take away the heart. It is true, of any one lust there is not one lust harboured in the heart of a man but in time it will take away his heart, will eat out all the juyce and strength and vigor of any thing that is in him. That is the reason that many professors grow so sapless, so heavy, so dull, so dead in the way of Religion, there is some secret lust or other that they have a haunt after and that doth take away their hearts, that now their hearts are like to dead beer, all their

their ſpirit and life is quite gone and their luſt hath eaten it out; And that man is in a ſad condition whoſe vigor and ſtrength is gone and eaten out by ſome luſt in his heart.

But to ſpeak of theſe luſts as they are here ſet forth unto us, theſe two ſins, whoredom and drunkenneſs. I ſhall not ſpeak of the nature of the ſins, I have ſpoken ſomewhat of that in the beginning of the Chapter, but I ſhall only ſpeak of them in the expreſſion of the holy Ghoſt here, to ſhew you a little how theſe take away the heart.

Fiſt, For both the ſins in general, as they are ſins of ſenſuality, joyning them both together. Only one Note fiſt from the connexion, they left off to take heed of God in point of his worſhip, now it ſeems they are left to the ſins of whoredom and drunkenneſs; the Note therefore is, It is juſt with God that they that will not ſeek to ſatiſſie their ſouls in himſelf they ſhall be given over to baſe filthy delights of the fleſh, that they ſhall never have any other comforts but thoſe. Let them have thoſe comforts ſaith God, there is all the comfort that ever they ſhall find. So we reade in *Rom. 1.* that when they did not glorifie God as God he gave them up unto unnatural affections and unclean ſins. Obſer.

Senſuality it is a beſotting ſin (that is the Note) ſenſuality either in whoredom or intemperancy in drinking. You know how it took away the heart of *Solomon* (who was ſo wiſe) as that his wives did trun away his heart from God, and turned him to Idolatry. And ſo it did *Sampſon* who was ſo ſtrong, when *Delilah* had fiſt taken his heart then ſhe took away his heart, for you know in the ſtory though ſhe ſought his deſtruction many times, he ſaw it apparantly that ſhe ſought his life, to give him up into the hands of the Philifines, yet for all this *Sampſons* heart could not be taken off from *Delilah*. The Scripture ſpeaks of the ſin of luſt for this moſt fully. *Prov. 2. 19.* None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life; None that go unto the whore returneth, or as ſome would read it interogatively, do any return that go unto her? It is a rare thing for any one to return whoſe heart is taken with a whore, or ever to enter into the paths of life. Obſer. Uncleanneſſe. Solomon Sampſon

The holy Ghost speaks this, make of it what you will. And  
 2 Pet 2. 14. *Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot*  
 Opened *cease from sin*; when aseyes come to be full of adultery they  
 cannot cease from sin; their hearts are so taken off from all  
 good. And *Prov. 23. 27 A whore is a deep ditch, and a strange*  
*woman is a narrow pit*; It is hard to get out of a deep ditch, e-  
 specially if the mouth be narrow too; those that are got in  
 there are like to *Jeremih* that was put in the dungeon where  
 there was no water but filth and mire so that he sunk in the  
 mire; and except the Lord send from Heaven long cords of  
 his mercy, it is unlike they should ever come out but they  
 must die and perish, and how many thousands do die and  
 perish? Nothing ever deaded *David's* heart more than that sin  
 of adultery; *Psal. 51.* he cries out *Obestablissh me with thy free*  
*Spirit*, as if he should say, Lord I was wont to have more power  
 over temptation, but now I am weak and quickly overcome,  
 Lord stablissh me. And as the sin of uncleanness takes the  
 heart away from God and from truth, therefore in that place  
 of *Peter* verse 18. the professors were allured thorough the  
 lusts of the flesh unto much wantonness, even such as had e-  
 scaped, virtually escaped the pollutions of the world and  
 from them who live in error: So drunkenness, that likewise  
 takes away the heart, wine takes away the heart exceedingly.  
 When *Solomon* gave himself to wine, he took hold of folly at  
 that time, *Eccles. 2. 3.* though somewhat of his wisdom re-  
 mained, yet wine took away his heart in a great measure. He  
 gave himself liberty (as appeareth by that Scripture, though  
 we reade not of drunkenness) yet he gave himself liberty to  
 satisfie himself with wine and then he took hold on folly.  
 Those that give themselves liberty in drinking wine and  
 strong drink they are besotted in their very parts, as you  
 know by experience, they are as a snuff of a candle in a soc-  
 ket, drowned in the tallow, a while since it gave a good light  
 over the room, but now being even drowned in the tallow  
 there is nothing left but a little smoke and a stinking snuff  
 and little or no light remaining; so manie men when they  
 were young were like a candle upon the table that gave light

to all about them, but now having given themſelves up to the ſatisfaction of that filthy and vile luſt of drinking, all their parts are become like a ſnuff of a candle in the ſocket, almoſt drowned in the tallow. Or rather they are become as a quagmire, we know if the husband man ſhould ſow never ſuch precious ſeed in a quagmire, what fruit will it bring forth? *Auſtin* hath this expreſſion, juſt as when the ground hath too much rain it grows miery and dirty and is not fit for ſeed, ſo do thoſe that ingulge themſelves in drink. Therefore in *Ezek.* 47. 11. it is ſaid the waters of the Sanctuary did not heal the miery places and the marſhes, miery hearts are ſeldom healed by the waters of the Sanctuary. *Baſil* in a Sermon of his upon intemperancy, makes drunkenneſs as the Idols ſpoken of in the *Pſalms*, that have ears and hear not, and eyes and ſee not, and feet and walk not, it takes away their ſtanding and their underſtanding likewiſe, their very parts are taken away and they are left at liberty unto all kind of wickedneſs. How many are there that were excellent when they were young, yet being taken with that luſt, how are they grown like *Eſau* that ſold his birthright for a meſs of pottage, ſo theſe will ſell Heaven for a cup of wine; yea they are more prophane than *Eſau*, for he was in a ſtraight, he came out of the field and he was very hungry and he thought he ſhould die if he had not the pottage, ſo that he ſold his birthright for a meſs of pottage out of a kind of neceſſity, which he might plead; but theſe will ſell their ſouls and Heaven and all meerly to pleaſe that humor, that luſt, venture the health of their bodies, the conſuming of their eſtates, the loſs of their friends, the ſhaning of themſelves, the ruin of their names and the damnation of their ſouls and all for a little drink. Oh how doth this beſot men that otherwiſe have excellent parts!

Well, But theſe two are applied here unto the Priests, and ſo we muſt make uſe of them eſpecially, That whoredom and wine and new wine did take away their hearts, for theſe Priests (as before we have heard) they did reject the knowledg of God, and ſo left off the work they were appointed to do, to inſtruct the people, therefore the people were brought up in

Obfer,

ignorance; now they leaving their office, their duty that they should perform in the place they were set in, they gave themselves up to sensuality, to whoredom and to wine. From hence this may be the note, "That Ministers when they are negligent in preaching usually they grow sensual. We find it so in experience, we need not go about to prove it. Have there not been many that in their younger time have been forward preachers, and when they have gotten livings and preferment, never minded their studie and preaching any longer, but gave themselves to satisfie the flesh in uncleanness and filthy lusts and grew to drinking? do we not know some that have had excellent parts when they were young and having gotten preferment fell to drinking and uncleanness? People are but in an evil case when they have such Ministers. *Esa. 56.* 9. *Ye beasts of the field come to devour, yea all ye beasts of the Forrest,* what is the matter? the 12. verse shews what kind of Priests and Prophets they had, *Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill our selves with strong drink, and to morrow shall be as this day and much more abundant;* such kind of Priests they had, and then *all ye beasts of the field come to devour,* you lie open to all kind of misery. *Paul* would have *Timothy* when he was weak drink a little wine for his stomachs sake and often infirmity; he good man out of conscience it seems would drink but water, though he were but a weak young man, yet for fear least it might do hurt he would drink but water till he had a commission from *Paul*; he was fain to exhort him to drink wine and yet it was but a little, *drink a little wine.* Oh those in publique places especially should take heed of intemperancy. I have read of some Heathens that they have made it death for a King or a Magistrate to be drunk. It follows.

Verse 12.

*My people ask counsel at their stocks, and their staff declareth unto them.*

There is a little more difficultie in these words than in the former. Only first from the connection there is this useful Note,



Note, "That bodily and ſpiritual whoredom uſe to go toge- Obſerv  
 "ther. *Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart,*  
 and then, *they aſk counſel at their ſtocks, and their ſtaff declareth un-*  
*to them.* Firſt they are beſotted with theſe luſts and then they  
 fall to the moſt groſs waies of Idolatry, for theſe words in  
 this verſe ſeem to expreſs the moſt groſs and ſtupid Idolatry  
 that ever was in the world, to aſk counſel of their ſtocks, and  
 their ſtaff to declare unto them; but when they had given up  
 themſelves to the luſts of their hearts then they grew moſt ſot-  
 tiſh in their way of Idolatry. "Therefore we are not to mer- Uſe.  
 "vail though men that ſeem to be men of underſtanding yet  
 "will worſhip ſtocks and ſtones, as your Papiſts; why? they  
 "give themſelves up to their luſts and then they grow to be  
 "ſots, and the moſt groſs Idolatry in the world will go down  
 "then. I remember I have read of one that ſaw one go to  
 Maſs and preſently after go to a houſe hard by where a whore  
 was, he hath this ſpeech upon it: *A lupanari maſſam tantum*  
*eſſe paſſum*: that is, there is but one ſtep from the Maſs to a  
 whorehouſe. Spiritual whoredom and bodily go together,  
 their hearts are taken away by their whoredom, and they aſk  
 couſel at their ſtocks. Jewel in his Apologie relates this that Jewel,  
 by very credible report ſearch being made in the year 1565.  
 for harlots belonging to the ſtews in Rome, there was found  
 in Rome to the number of 28. thouſand women of that ſort.  
 Thus bodily and ſpiritual whoredom you ſee how they go to-  
 gether; 28. thouſand of ſuch kind of women found in one  
 City, in that City which we know is called the *City of whore-*  
*doms*, it is not only in regard of ſpiritual whoredom, Idola- Rome  
 try, but of bodily whoredom likewise, for thoſe two as I  
 ſaid uſually go together.

Now for opening this, *They aſk counſel at their ſtocks, and*  
*their ſtaff doth teach them.*

*Their ſtocks,*] That is their Images, God puts that contemp-  
 tible name upon them; they aſk counſel of them. And that  
 is to be obſerved too, *My people*, there is the emphasis; Mine  
 by profeſſion, not wholly caſt off yet, yet theſe aſk counſel at  
 their ſtocks, their Images, which perhaps they beautified  
 with

with Silver and Gold, yet God calls them their stocks.

*And their staff teacheth them.*] Here is a peculiar way of Idolatry to be taught by their staff. *Vatablus* and others interpret it thus, their false Prophet upon which they leaned as upon a staff, and so they they think by staff here is meant their false Prophets. But I rather think it is to be meant literally, There was a kind of Idolatry which the Jews had and likewise the Romans after this, a way to ask counsel by the staff, which the Prophet here charged them with, which they call

Divinatio *καθ' ἄμυνται* or *καθ' ἄμυνται* *Divinatio ex virgis*, divination by rods, or sticks, or arrows, or staves; And there were four

1 waies by which they did divine by these. The first was to put arrows or staves into a close thing having the names written upon them of what they divined about, and then drawing out one or two, according to what they found written upon the staves they determined any business; thus their staff declared to them either good or bad; And thus *Nebuchadnezzar*

*Ezek. 21.*  
22.

Opened

seemed to do *Ezek. 21. 22.* there Interpreters shew that the business was, that *Nebuchadnezzar* being in doubt whether he should war against *Philadelphia* or against *Jerusalem* he took two arrows and wrote the name of *Jerusalem* on the one and *Philadelphia* on the other and so came to divine which way he should go. And this is the first way of declaring by the staff.

2 A second was by casting up staves or arrows into the air, and according as they did fall, on the right hand or on the left, before or behind, so they did divine their good luck or their

3 ill luck as they call'd it. A third way was this, they used to peel off the bark of some part of a stick and then cast it up and divined according to which part of the pith either black or

4 white appeared first. A fourth was (which we find in the Roman antiquities) that their Augures or South-sayers used to sit upon the top of a Tower or Castle, and the air being very clear and fair without any clouds, having a crooked staff in their hand which the Latines call *Litum*, there they quartered out the regions of Heaven, so much as was for their purpose, & when they had quarter'd them out they did reach forth this staff (having first offered sacrifices and prayers to their gods)

upon

upon the head of a perſon or a thing they would divine for, and ſo they came to have good or ill luck to be ſhewed according to what at that time they obſerved in the Heavens; the birds flying &c. when that ſtaff was upon the head of the party. This the Romans did, and it is like they had it ſomewhat from the Jews, they did aſk counſel of their ſtaff.

By all this we may ſee what poor waies Idolaters have had to know the mind of their gods. When men forſake the right way of knowledg of Gods mind, what poor waies do they go to know the mind of God. Oh by this how ſhould our hearts be raiſed up to bleſs God that we have ſuch a way to know his mind, that we have his Word, that we have his Son that come out of his boſom to declare the eternal counſel of his father unto us. Theſe are the poor waies that Idolaters have to know the mind of their gods.

Now follows the ground of all: *For the ſpirit of whoredomes hath cauſed them to er, and they have gone a whoring from under their God*

*For the ſpirit of whoredomes*] Some would have it thus, that look as there are particular ſins, ſo there are particular Devils to attend upon them; As there is a devil eſpecially to attend upon Idolatry, another to attend upon whoredom, another upon drunkenneſs, another upon envy, another upon pride, another upon paſſion and the like; and ſo the *ſpirit of whoredom* that is (ſay they) that devil that eſpecially attended upon this ſin cauſed them to er. But I think this not to be the ſcope, but this rather, *the ſpirit of whoredoms hath cauſed them to er, the ſpirit*, that is, that *impetus* of ſpirit that was in them; there is an impetus an ardency, a vigour, an activity of their ſpirits to ſuch a kind of ſinful way, it is that which hath carried them on and cauſed them to er. The Scripture oft ſpeaks of ſeveral ſorts of ſpirits, as ſometimes the *ſpirit of perversneſs*, *Eſa. 19. 14.* it is tranſlated in your books, *a perverſe ſpirit*, but the words are *Spiritus perversitatum*, a ſpirit of perversneſs, there is an *impetus* of ſpirit that hath cauſed Egypt to er in every work thereof. So the *ſpirit of uncleaneſs* *Zech. 13. 2.* it is tranſlated in your books *the unclean ſpirit*, but it is *הַפְּתָאָה הַבְּרָאָה* the ſpirit of defilements

Obl.

Uſe.

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2

gements or uncleanness, so the spirit of lying, 1 King. 22. 22. the spirit of error, 1 John, 4. 6. He that knoweth God beareth us, he that is not of God beareth not us, hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error, that is, there is an Impetus, a strength of spirit that carries men on unto such an erroneous way. And

Use.

strong in-  
clinations  
of spirit.

the consideration of that will be of marvelous use unto us. Let us look to our spirits my brethren, and consider what spirit we are of, especially when we are carried with an Impetus of spirit to a thing, that is, when we find an eagerness or spirit that way, to such a thing we would fain have, let us then take heed to our selves: when you find I say your spirits very eagerly and strongly set upon such a thing, examine then what spirit you are of, that it be not a spirit of lust, of envy, of malice, as sometimes there is in mens hearts when they are carried with a more than ordinary strength after such a way. There is many people when they find themselves carried on with such an impetus, and ardency, and fervency, they cannot endure that any body should cross them in it, no, but they must have it; As they in *Samuel* that would have a King, when they heard all the reasons that could be to perswade them against it, they would not answer one reason but held to their conclusion, *No, but we will have a King*, say they. So a man that hath a spirit of such an evil, a spirit of envie, a spirit of error, a spirit of Antichrist in him, a spirit of domineering in him, a spirit of cruelty, a spirit of bitterness in him, first he will rush upon such a thing without examining of it, and further, if there come any thing against it, any truth, he flights it presently and casts it off and thinks there is nothing in it, why? because he hath a spirit that carries him that way, and if the truth come more strongly that he is convinced by it, yet he hath a spirit that carries him on, and though he meet with many difficulties in the way he will break through them all. Oh it is a dangerous thing when men have a spirit of error, or a spirit of bitterness. You shall find some men that have much remaining of Antichristianisme in them, do but speak to them of any thing that concerns an Ordinance of Christ, of Christs institution, of the will of Christ in the word,

word, aſſoon as it is but mentioned, you ſhall not hear any answer to the argument, but you may perceve a ſpirit of bitterneſs, a ſpirit of envy, a ſpirit of frowardneſs and paſſion preſently to riſe in them. So in other things you ſhall find men, and ſome that have good things in them, that if you do but diſcourſe with them of ſome things that you know are according unto the mind of Chriſt, yet they have been brought up otherwiſe and have drunk in other principles, and they have a ſpirit of bitterneſs and anger and vexation that preſently will appear in them to caſt off any truth that is ſuggeſted unto them.

But let us labour on the other ſide rather to be acted by the Spirit of God; the Children of God are led by the ſpirit. And it is true, the Saints of God have a Spirit of holineſs in them, as wicked men have a ſpirit of uncleanneſs in them ſo Gods children are carried on with a ſpirit of holineſs, the love of Chriſt hath taken hold of their hearts, and perhaps they are weak and cannot reaſon out the caſe with ſome ſubtill Sophiſters, but they have the ſpirit of Chriſt, an *Impetus* of ſpirit that carries them on. But take heed, the Spirit of Chriſt is joyned with much humility and holineſs; do not ſay you are carried with the Spirit of Chriſt and yet bitterneſs and pride is mixed with it; but if there be humility and holineſs, then perhapſt though you cannot answer every objection of every Sophiſter yet there is the Spirit of Chriſt in you; that as wicked men have a byas upon their hearts that ſwaies their judgment, ſo the godly have a byas upon their hearts, the truth and love of God doth byas their hearts and carries them on with ſtrength in the waies of God; as the poor man, the Martyr that ſaid, *I cannot diſpute for the truth, but I can die for it;* There was ſuch a ſpirit of love in him unto Jeſus Chriſt that carried him on and made him favour and reliſh holy things though he could not diſpute for them.

Fox Act.  
Mon.

We are to pray unto God that he would ſatiſſie us not only in body and in ſoul but in ſpirit, that that *Impetus* of ſpirit may be ſanctified, for great things depend upon that *Impetus*, that force, that activenenſs of our ſpirits; almoſt all

Uſc. 3.

Sick men things in the world they are carried by the *Impetus* of mens spirits. Hence is the reason that men that are very wicked, yet cometo them upon their death beds, then they will hearken to what you will say and they will hear reason, why? because then their affliction doth abate the *Impetus* of their spirit, the activeness and fervour and keenness of their spirit, and do but take off the *Impetus* and keenness of ones spirit and you may say any thing unto him. They have a spirit of *wboredoms*.

And they are gone a whoring from under their God.] *Drusius* turns it thus, by a Paraphrasis, they have cast off the yoke of God. In the Hebrew if it should be read word for word it is, a *sub Deo suo*, from under his God, much according to our English. And it notes these two things.

First, They have gone from under the command of God. The pride of their hearts refused to be under the command of God, especially in his worship. Oh my brethren this is that we should look to, we should look to God above us, and be willing that God should be above us, and be willing to lie under God, be willing to lie under the command of God, the authority of God, especially in his worship. Take heed of the rising of your thoughts in the matter of Gods worship.

2 Secondly, They are gone a whoring from under their God] that is, from under the protection of their God. From under the command of their God and from under the protection of their God. As whores, so long as they will keep themselves under their husbands in duty and subjection that is due, then they are under the protection of their husbands, but some whores will go from under their husbands, and from under their commands, they are too good to be under their laws and commands, and so they refuse to be under their protection. So do my people saith God, they will be from under my commands and so they are from under my protection. Hence there are these two Notes.

3rdly, *That all false worship* (so far as it is false worship) doth put a people from under the protection of God. No mervail that mi-  
series

series do befall a people that corrupt the worship of God. Oh we were in a sad case not long ſince, we were even from under the protection of God, things ran on at riot with us, and because the people of this land have not yet hearts to entertain the true worship of God, we may fear lest we should not have the protection of God as we desire. Would we have the protection of God? then keep close to the rule of his worship.

The second is this, *To be from under Gods command and from under his protection are joynd together, so far as from under Gods command so far from under Gods protection.* You would fain have liberty to your selves, you will not be under Gods command, you shall have liberty but not Gods protection, and what good have you in that? In any way of sin, when you go abroad and are in any sinful act, you are in that act from under Gods command and from under his protection too. But now the protection of God is over us when we are in his waies. Keep close to Gods commands and what ever trouble befalls you yet still you are under Gods protection. The difference that is between a man that is under the command of God and will keep himself close to that, and another that will have liberty, is as a Deer in a Park, so long as it is within the pale it is under the care of the keeper, that there shall no dogs or any thing come to do it hurt, and if it should be snowy weather that there is no grass to be got, the keeper provides for it; but if the Deer will go from within the pale and get out, it is true it hath more liberty, but then every dog follows it, and it is subject to a thousand dangers more than it was within the pale. So it is with a man that is willing to be within the pale of Gods command, to be under Gods command, there he hath Gods protection, to look to him, to provide for him, but if he will have more liberty to get from within the pale, let him never expect the protection of God in that thing. Oh that those that are gone astray from God would observe this! It may be some here their consciences tell them that they are got from under Gods commands, there was a time that they trembled at Gods word, at his commands, and their hearts

Applic.

Obs. 2.

simile

Uſe.

fell down under the dreadful authority of those commands, then it was well with them, but now you have got from under this, you do not fear Gods word as you were wont to do, you will not tremble at his commands as you were wont, now you run wilde and frisk about in your own waies; Oh poor creature whither art thou gone? thou art got from under the protection of the Lord.

## Verse 13.

*They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills under Oaks, and Poplars, and Elms, because the shadow thereof is good; therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.*

In the former verse the Prophet in the Name of God had charged Israel for having the spirit of fornication, and accused them for going a whoring from under their God, And now shews to them wherein, and in what particular. "General accusations without particular specification will not prevail with stubborn hearts. Above all Idolaters must be convinced wherein they have committed Idolatry." They will stand it out exceedingly if you charge them only with Idolatry in general, of going a whoring from God, except you demonstrate wherein. It is so with many sinners: *Mal. 1. 6. Ye have despised me, and yet you say, wherein have we despised thee? verse 7. Ye offer polluted bread upon mine Altar, and yet you say, wherein have we polluted thee?* Stubborn hearts will stand it out with God a great while untill it be shewn in particular wherein they have done such and such evils. And it is wisdom therefore for all Gods Ministers not to leave things in general, but if they would have their Ministry a convincing Ministry they must not only charge people that they are wicked and naughty in general, but they must instance. Instancing preaching it is the most convincing preaching.

Use for  
Ministers

Now the Prophet doth instance in that kind of Idolatry that seems to have the most specious shew and fairest intention of any thing in the world, and one would have thought that there



there ſhould have been as little evil in that which he inſtanceth in as in any thing we can imagine. Why what great matter is it they might ſay? You accuſe us for going a whoring from under our God, what is the matter? we offer ſacrifice upon mountains, we ſacrifice under trees; is that ſo great a matter? It is ſacrifice, and you cannot ſay but we ſacrifice to the true God, we do not ſacrifice to Idols, why do we go a whoring from God then? Nay the ſhew of this is very ſpecious that they ſhould ſacrifice thus upon mountains and under trees, in this they ſeem to be more devout than *Judah* was; the people of *Judah* they ſacrificed only in one place, they ſacrificed only in a Temple, and did as it were confine and limit God to that place, and they ſacrificed only upon one Altar; Now ſay they, we think God worthy of a great deal more than ſo, we think it is fit to ſacrifice unto him every where, in every place, and eſpecially upon mountains, for it is to the high God that we ſacrifice, therefore we go to mountains to expreſs the high eſteem we have of God. Juſt as the *Papiſts* at this day, they will have their Images in every place and their Croſſes in every high way as they travail, that by them they may be put in mind of God continually. What a ſpecious ſhew is this? Yet the Lord by the Prophet chargeth them with going a whoring from under their God, and he inſtanceth in this which they thought they had moſt pleaſure in.

From whence we may note firſt, *Whatſoever ſeems to be moſt ſpecious in our eyes, yet if it be not according to the rule, it may prove moſt abominable in the eyes of God.* And, Obſ. 1

Secondly, *That for a thorough conviction of people in their ſin, Miniſters ſhould eſpecially labour to preſent to them the foulneſs of thoſe things that they think have leaſt evil in them.* To come to people and to cry out of notorious wickedneſs that they themſelves cannot but acknowledg to be notorious, this will never ſo convince as thoroughly to humble: but to come and cloſe with them and to open the evil of their waies in thoſe things that they bleſs themſelves moſt in, and ſhew how they make themſelves abominable unto God even in thoſe things, that is the way to have our Miniſtry a convincing & an humbling Obſ. 2  
for Miniſters

*Hierom.*

bling Ministry indeed. Thus the Prophet doth, you sacrifice upon the mountains and high places and under the shadow of every tree. *Hierom* upon this place hath this Note, *Israel, saith he, loveth high places, for they have forsaken the high God, and they love the shadow, for they have left the substance.* It is thus with men, ordinarily when they have left the high God, forsaken him, then they have somewhat or other that they set up high in their hearts; they forsake the shadow of the wings of God and then they seek after vain shadows to be their protectour.

But to open this Scripture yet more clearly, to shew wherein their sin lay here, that they sacrificed upon the mountains and hills and under trees. For that, we are to know that in former times before the Ark and the Tabernacle and the Temple was built, it was lawful to sacrifice in any place, and God approved of sacrificing in mountains, and did direct *Abraham* to go and sacrifice his son upon a mountain, upon *Moriab*, *Gen. 22. 2.* And we reade of *Abrahams* planting a grove when he called upon the name of God, *Gen. 21. 33.* So that the forefathers did sacrifice upon mountains, and they planted groves and trees by the places where they sacrificed; there was no hurt then in such things. But afterward God prohibiteth this, *Deut. 12. 13. 14.* *Take heed to thy self that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest, but in the place which the Lord shall chuse in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings.* God would limit them the place of his worship. When the Ark was made and the Tabernacle they were bound to come to that and sacrifice there and no where else, and so when the Temple was built they were bound to come thither and to sacrifice there and no where else. Yea then the Lord commanded them to pull down the high places, and to cut down the groves and trees, *Deut. 12. 2.* *Ye shall utterly destroy all the places wherein the Nations which ye possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree.* When once God had appointed a place of worship then they were to destroy the other places where the Heathens were wont to worship their gods.

The

The Note is this from it, *When once God choſeth places or things, when God once putteth a ſtamp of holineſſ upon places or things, then* Obſer.  
*no men may choſe places or things and put ſuch a ſtamp of holineſſ upon them as God hath put.* If God appointeth a way of worſhip of his own, this ſtops us from all other of our own. If God makes a place holy this ſtops us that we muſt never make any place holy but that; ſo it is true of things, of ceremonies, any thing, if once God ſets a ſtamp upon a thing to make it holy, we muſt confine our ſelves to that, and not think to immitate God in it, to make any thing of the ſame kind to be holy as God hath done. It was now a ſin for them, and God ſtands much upon circumſtances we ſee in his worſhip. You ſhall have many men plead why ſhould men be ſo ſtrict and ſcrupulous to ſtand upon circumſtances? what muſt we have every circumſtance in the word of God commanded? My brethren, that which is natural and moral and may be ſubſervient to religious things, may be left (it's true) unto prudence, but whatſoever hath any Religion in it, though it be but a circumſtance, God ſtands muſh upon it, and we muſt have a Divine rule for it. "Natural circumſtances, moral, civil, circumſtances, prudence is enough to guide us in, but any religious circumſtance we muſt have a rule for it." Here they are not accuſed for ſacrificing the things they ought not to ſacrifice, no queſtion but they offered thoſe ſacrifices which they were commanded, ſheep and beeves and the like, but only in the circumſtance of place, they did not ſacrifice where God would have them ſacrifice, therefore God charged them in this thing that they went a whoring from under their God. It is true, we reade ſometime of ſome godly mens ſacrificing elſe where, *Gideon* under an Oak, *Judg.* 6. and *Sa-muel* upon an high place, *1 Sam.* 2. and ſo *David* in the threshing floor of *Araunah*, *2 Sam.* 24. Now to all theſe inſtances the anſwer generally is given by Divines, that they could not be any way lawful for them to do thus but by ſome ſpecial diſpenſation of God himſelf, ſome ſpecial revelation from God to give them order to do it there or elſ it could not but be a ſin. For the Kings of *Iſrael* and *Judah* they alſo are charged  
for

for their sacrificing in the high places; Even *Solomon* himself in 1 *King.* 3. 3. where when he is commended for loving the Lord and walking in the Statutes of *David* his father at first, yet the text saith, *Only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.* And amongst other high places we reade in 2 *Chron.* 1. 2. that *Solomon* went to *Gibeon*, that was a great high place. And though some excuse him because it is said the Tabernacle was there therefore he might go to *Gibeon* that great high place to sacrifice, yet for all that *Austin* in his Questions upon *Judges* he thinketh *Solomon* isto be blamed though the Tabernacle was there, for he it seems sacrificed in other high places besides, and though the Tabernacle was there yet it seems he put a more than ordinary respect upon that high place, wherefore else is it called the great high place? and he went there not only for the sake of the Tabernacle, but because it was that great high place, therefore he is to be blamed. So that we may go to Gods Ordinances, but if we do go to the Ordinances of God where yet there are other mixtures, and we do the rather go and esteem of them because there is some addition of mans inventions, this is a sin against God. And further, this is observable, though *Solomon* were blamable for going unto that high place though the Tabernacle were there, having some more than ordinary respect unto that high place, yet we find that God revealed himself unto *Solomon* in a wonderful gracious manner even in that place, and bad *Solomon* ask what he would. *Solomon* had very gracious manifestations of God unto him when he went to that high place though there was evil in it and he put more respect upon it than he should: So certainly many of Gods people have found God so far indulge them that though sometimes they have been in the use of Ordinances where there hath been such mixtures as they have sinned against God, that Ordinance hath been polluted unto them by those mixtures, yet the Lord hath been so gracious unto them that he hath accepted of the uprightness of their hearts, and they have had many sweet manifestations of God unto them even in these Ordinances: they can remember those times when they have been at Sacrament, and they have.

*Austin*

Obfer.

have known how they offended againſt God by reaſon of ſome pollutions, yet they have found for all this God letting out of abundance of mercy unto them, reſreſhing their ſouls with comfort and joy in the holy Ghoſt. This was Gods mercy. Do not you think therefore that there was no evil in it becauſe God let out himſelf ſo far unto you? There was evil in *Solomons* reſpecting this high place ſo much, yet God let out himſelf abundantly unto him. Other Kings there were that are exceedingly blamed that they did not take down the high places, which were all one with theſe mountains here ſpoken of.

Uſe.

Yet there were ſome of the Kings that were very careful in this thing, As amongſt the reſt *Hezekiah* and *Jehoſaphat*. *Hezekiah* in 2 *King*. 18. 22. where he is charged by *Rabſhekah* for taking down the high places, *Is it not he that hath deſtroyed the high places and Altars of God ſaith he?* God approveth of it well though *Rabſhekah* thinks he hath done ill; Oh ſaith he, *Hezekiah*, do you truſt in him? he hath taken down the high places. He thought that *Hezekiah* had been an enemy unto Religion and to the worſhip of God for taking down the high places. Thus it is with ignorant people at this day that do not know the way of Gods worſhip; becauſe ſome in authority (as the Parliament) ſeek to take away corruption in the worſhip of God, abundance of people cry out that they are enemies unto all Religion, that they will take away all Religion. Thus it is reported by your countrey people that dwell far off, as in *Wales* and in other places, the people are there perſwaded that the Parliament are a company of vile men that ſeek to take away all Religion out of the Kingdom. But this is ſo but in the underſtanding of a *Rabſhekah* that thinks the taking away of high places to be the taking away of Religion.

Parliam

The other King is *Jehoſaphat* that is commended for taking away the high places, and it is noted of him, that his heart was lifted up more than ordinary in the waies of God when he did it; For this ſacrificing upon the high places was ſuch a thing that the people were ſo ſet upon it, what ſay they, is it not a brave decent thing that we ſhould go up to a high place

to offer unto the high God? therefore when *Jehosabhat* took them away the text saith, his heart was lifted up in a more than ordinary manner. So it should be with Governours when they see corruptions in Gods worship, though the people stick close to them, yet they should have their hearts lifted up with courage and zeal to go on in the work. In 2 Chron. 17. 6. there you have it, *His heart was lifted up in the waies of God, Moreover he took the high places and groves out of Judah.* Here is two things that Israel is charged for, the high places, and the groves, *Jehosaphat* took away, and he took them away out of Judah. He was of a lift up mind and his heart took boldness for the waies of God, so the old Latine hath it. But mark, what course, what way did *Jehosaphat* take to remove the high places and the groves? In the 7. verse of that chapter you find this, *He sent to his Princes to teach in the Cities of Judah.* Mark here, Princes are become Preachers; *He sent to his Princes to teach in the Cities of Judah, and with them Levites and Priests, and they taught in Judah, and had the book of the Law with them, and they went about all the Cities of Judah and taught the people.* This is the course to take them away. If he had only by an Edict removed them he could not have done so much, but he took this wise course, he sent faithful Preachers throughout all the Countrey, in all the great Cities especially. He was careful they should have faithful Preachers and then the work would be easily done. So that it appears it was because of the ill Preachers they had before or because they had no Preachers at all that the high places were so hard to be taken away. How easie would it be in *England* at this day to make a Reformation, to take away corruptions from the worship of God, if in all Cities and Towns there were faithful Preachers! For we see apparantly that people that have been brought up in ignorance they stick most to these things. Let a faithful Minister come into a Congregation and take pains, so that the people may see and be convinced that he takes pains, and expound the Scripture unto them, they will begin to confess we get more by this than by all the reading of prayers all this while, and this is more painful to the Minister.

Use.

Princes  
preacherspreaching  
the way  
to remove  
superstition

They

They would I ſay be convinced of this if they had teaching. This was *Jehofaphats* way, and Oh how happy were it if we took the ſame courſe? But there is one thing more observable it is ſaid in this 7. chapter that *Jehofaphat* took away the high places; but in Chap. 20. ver. 33. it is ſaid he took them not away; but how is it? It is put upon the people, the text ſaith, *The high places were not taken away, for as yet the people had not prepared their heart unto the God of their fathers.* The people were the cauſe. Now for the reconciling of theſe two places, it ſeems *Jehofaphat* did what lay in him, in chap. 17. therefore God accounts it as being done for his part, but becauſe when he had done what he could yet the people were ſo ſtubborn and ſtout and would not yeild to the command of the King, therefore in this 20. Chapter it is all layed upon the people; As if God ſhould ſay, they were not taken away becauſe the people had not prepared their hearts, but as for *Jehofaphat* he did what lay in him for the taking them away. God will accept of the intention of Governours, Let them do what they can in it and if it be not done the fault will lie where the cauſe is. You may ſee by this that people may hinder the work of Reformation much, *their hearts were not prepared*, that is, they were not fit to receive ſuch inſtructions as were ſent unto them. And truly in *England* many people are not yet prepared to receive the work of Reformation. We never read (that is observable too) of any difficulty of any of the Kings either of Judah or *Israel* to bring in any falſe worſhip, obſerve it in all the ſtories of the Kings or *Chronicles* when there was any King that would bring in any falſe worſhip there was never any difficulty in it; But when good Kings did ſeek to bring in true worſhip and to caſt out falſe, it was too difficult a work for them. Thus mens hearts do cleave more to falſe worſhip than they do to true.

And this is one thing further observable for the high places, that it is not ſaid here in the Text only that they ſacrificed upon the Mountains, but upon the top of the mountains. There are two things very observable from hence.

- 1 First, It noteth the publickness of their way of Idolatry. They would not do it in a corner, in a hole, but they would go to the mountains, to the top of the mountains and were not ashamed. Idolatry is brazen faced, it is impudent and loveth to be publick. Oh why should we not have the true worship of God as publick! It is a lamentable case when the true worship of God must get into holes and corners and dare not appear in publick; yea when they are persecuted because they are in corners and they say they get into holes and corners and there they do thus and thus. Well my brethren, let us pray and endeavor what we can to bring in the true worship of God to the most publick way that may be, that we may not be ashamed of it in publick before the world. In Revel. 14. 6. there is mention of an Angel flying in the midst of Heaven having the everlasting Gospel in his hand to preach unto them that dwell on the earth; Now it is ordinary in the Revelation to set out the Ministry of the Gospel by an Angel, and so it is a prophesie of the Ministry of the Gospel, that it shall fly in Heaven, aloft, publickly, that all the world shall see it. And mark what follows upon this, verse 8. *And there followed another Angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen.* So that the Note from thence is, "That when the Ministry of the Gospel and the Ordinances of the Gospel comes to be made openly publick, then is the time for Babylon to fall, and so long as Babylon stands and Antichrist stands so long is the Gospel fain to be preach'd in corners, but when the time of Babylons fall cometh then shall the Ministry of the Gospel be in Heaven, above, in the eyes of all the people, in a publick way.
- 2 Secondly, They sacrificed not only upon the mountains, but upon the tops of the mountains. Idolaters they seek to rise to the height of their way of false worship, they would do it unto the uttermost; they content not themselves with hills and mountains, but the very uppermost of hills and mountains, if there were any higher than other, if they could get up to Heaven they would do it. Idolaters do not content themselves with a lower degree of false worship. How much less
- Observ Use. Revel. 14. 6. Observ.



ſhould we in the way of Gods worſhip? we ſhould not content our ſelves in a mean way but get up to the top of godlineſs, and labour to gain the very height of the worſhip of God; Not content our ſelves in one Ordinance, but get all Ordinances, and get them in the full exerciſe of them as much as may be. That place in *Ephes.* *Walk accurately, circumſpectly Eph. 5, 15. not as fools but as wiſe*, the word is *ἀνεπιβόως* as if he ſaid, walk to the top of godlineſs, to the height, if there be any higher degree than other labor to get to it, as Idolaters will get up to the tops of the mountains. Thus for their ſacrificing upon the mountains.

The next is, *Their ſacrificing under Oaks, and Poplars, and Elms.* And theſe trees that are here named are ſuch whoſe leaves are broad and did abide longeſt upon them. But why did they ſeek to ſacrifice under trees and ſuch trees as theſe? There are five or ſix reaſons why the Heathens and theſe people were ſo ſet upon ſacrificing under trees.

The firſt was this, The Heathens did conſecrate many trees to their Idols. The Poplar to *Herculus*, the Vine to *Bacchus*, the Myrtle to *Venus*, the Bay to *Phoebus*. They conſecrated ſeveral trees to their ſeveral gods and therefore ſacrificed under thoſe trees.

Secondly, They ſacrificed there in imitation of the Patriarchs, as I ſhewd before, *Abraham* built a grove by the Altar he made; and ſo many of the Patriarchs had groves and trees by their Altars, and in imitation of them they did it, and ſo did the Heathens, for the Devil did ſtrive much to imitate the way of the true worſhip of God, but now when they came once to abuſe the ancient practice of the Patriarchs, God removes it.

Thirdly, They thought that dark and ſhady places, dark by the ſhadiſneſs of theſe trees, might ſtrike ſome fear and reverence in the hearts of men when they came to worſhip, there is a kind of diſmalneſs as it were, and it doth cauſe a kind of reverence in coming into woods where there are high trees and ſhady places, there is a kind of ſolemnneſs in it, and they thought it was a means to put reverence into the hearts

Why the Heathens ſacrificed under trees.

I  
*Populus Al-*  
*cideo. graif-*  
*fima, vitis*  
*Iacho, for-*  
*meſio myr-*  
*tus Veneri,*  
*ſua Laurca*  
*Pterbo,*  
*Virg.*  
*Aeneid. 7.*

3.

of

of the worshippers. Even Heathens themselves when they worshipped their Idols they sought to have the hearts of the worshippers to be filled with reverence. And,

- 4 Fourthly, They thought that the spirits of their Heroes were up and down in the woods and groves. It was the tradition of the Heathens, they were taught it by their Priests, that the ghosts of their great men, their Heroes were in woods and in groves: *Nulli certa domus, lucis habitamus opacis.* So

*Virg.*

*Aneid. 6.*

you have it in *Virgil*, that they themselves have no certain houses to dwell in, but they dwelt in dark and solitary places, in woods and groves.

5. Fifthly, They were fit places for committing of filthiness when they came to those places, which many of them did. The sacrifices of the Heathen many of them were mixed with filth and abominable uncleanness, and those places were fit for such uncleanness, and therefore the Devil liked well of them. So *Philo*, and *Sozamen* in his history he tells us of this reason of their sacrificing there, because of the filthiness that was there committed.

- 6 Lastly, It was the conceit of many of the Heathens that it was too much to the dishonor of God to be worshipped in any place covered above head or to be circumscribed within any limits. Even the Heathens, some of them looked upon God as infinite, and for him to be worshipped within any place covered above head they thought it was a dishonor, therefore they would worship him in the open fields and under trees. This was the reason of their sacrificing under trees.

Now the holy Ghost saies they did this, *because the shadow of them was good.* The holy Ghost instanceth only in one reason; *the shadow was good*, that is, they pleased themselves in their own waies, they thought there was more solemnity in this way of worship than to go to the Temple to worship there. The shadow was good, Oh it was brave to go to the open fields, and it was more solemn they thought to go there than to worship in the City. *The shadow was good*, they applauded and blest themselves in this way. *“Usually superstition thinks it*

*“but*

“*hath a great deal of reason for what it doth*, that is the Note from hence. Therefore it is observable of the Papiſts, the way of their worship it is most rediculous and absurd, yet they write whol volumns of their Rational, of Divine Service to shew reason for what they do, as if it were a reasonable service, and in *Colof. 2. ult.*, it is spoken of will-worship, that it hath a *shew of wisdom*. Now the words in the Greek are *λογον σοφίας* it hath the *reason of wisdom*, for so it may be turned, for is used for *Ratio*, it hath the reason of wisdom. So that word your *Reasonable Service*, it is *λογικη λατρεία*. So that Idolaters think that it is not only wisdom, but that they have the very reason the very quintessence of wisdom in their way of false-worship, they can give such account of it, *the shadow is good*; And especially in that very thing that they think their worship is more sumptuous and brave and hath more solemnity in it than the Ordinances of God have: This is the vanity and pride of mens spirits, to think that the worship of God appointed in his word hath not solemnity enough in it: That is the point naturally rising from thence. “It is the pride I say of mens spirits to think that Gods Ordinances are too plain, too mean for them, they can find out a way that sets out the worship of God thus and thus, they will shew more reverence of and respect to God than others shall. But certainly if it be not Gods own; whatsoever outward respect can be given unto God in it, he abominateth it and abhorreth it. I have read of a Lady in *Paris*, that when she saw the bravery of a Procession to a Saint, she cried out, Oh how fine is our Religion beyond that of the *Hugonites*, that is such as those who in *England* they call *Puritans*! They have a poor and mean and beggarly Religion, but we have a fine and brave Religion; so your Papiſts with decking up their Churches and their Altars and their crings and bowings, they have a fine and brave Religion, their *shadow is good*, there is bravery and solemnity in it. Oh take heed of this in any point of Gods worship, to think that any addition of mans makes it more solemn and more reverent. It is the worst argument you can use, to say can we do things in Gods worship with too great reverence?

Obfer.

Rationale  
divinorum  
efficiorum

Obf.

A Lady  
in Paris.

Is it that which you have warrant out of Gods word for? doth God enjoyn it? Have you not either some rule or ensample at least for it? If you think by your own addition to do it with more reverence, this very argument spoils it, though it were lawful in other respects. Take some gesture, suppose it were indifferent, suppose it were lawful some way; but if you take it up thus, to think that by it you put more reverence and respect upon Gods worship than there is, there you spoil it; upon some other grounds it may perhaps be granted, but upon that ground you spoil it quite. Therefore the Lord forbid his people when they were to make an Altar to him, to lift up a tool upon it, for then saith he, *you pollute it*: They might have said, Lord we would fain have thine Altar not so plain as other things, we would fain bestow carving and some cost upon it and so shew some respect to it: No saith God, If you lift up a tool upon it, you pollute it. So if you think to put more reverence and solemnity upon Gods worship by any invention of your own, certainly you defile it. That was the sin of Israel at this time, they would sacrifice here, why? *because the shadow was good*. So much for that, for their high places, and their worshiping under trees.

simile

Now follows the judgment threatened: *Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredom, and your spouses shall commit adultery.*

You commit adultery in going a whoring from me, you shall be punished in the like kind, your daughters and your spouses shall go a whoring from you.

*They shall commit adultery.*] Take it first under this consideration, as a judgment of God upon them.

Secondly under this, As that which they themselves were the occasion to produce.

I  
 Observ. First, It was the judgment of God upon them. Hence note, *God sometimes punisheth sin with sin, he punisheth spiritual adultery with corporal uncleanness*; Corporal pollutions are the fruit of spiritual filthiness. So Rom. 1. They worshiped not God as God but

but in an Idolators way, after the ſimilitude of an Ox that eateth graſs, therefore God gave them up to uncleannels. If men be not careful to maintain purity in Gods worſhip, God cares not for their bodily chaſtity. If you pollute my worſhip, be unclean then ſaith God. Not that he doth permit it as lawful but in juſt judgment he leaveth them unto it. What care I for all your uncleannels otherwiſe in your bodies if you pollute my worſhip. And it is uſual for bodily and ſpiritu-

al adultery to go together. The word *Roma*, turn the letters and it is *Amor*, there is a deal of unclean filthy love in *Rome*, as I ſhewd before. *Where there is moſt Idolatry there is moſt adultery.* But ſecondly, The ſin of Parents is puniſhed many times in the children and in the family. *Your daughters and your ſpouſes, I will leave them ſaith God, and mine hand ſhall be upon them.* When a parent or a husband ſees the hand of God againſt his child or againſt his wife he ſhould conſider, how doth God meet with me in this? is it not a ſign of Gods diſpleaſure againſt me in this particular? It is obſervable, that of the woman of Canaan, *Mat. 15. 22.* when her child was vexed with an unclean ſpirit, ſaith ſhe, *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, my child is grievouſly vexed with a Devil;* ſhe did not ſay Lord have mercy upon my child, but Lord have mercy upon me, for my child is vexed with an unclean ſpirit, as if ſhe ſhould ſay, O Lord, my ſin may be this unclean ſpirit, it may be the puniſhment of my ſin, therefore Lord have mercy upon me & forgive me my ſin that hath cauſed ſuch a thing as this, yea Lord it may be I have had an unclean ſpirit, and this my child did imitate me in ſomewhat that was evil, and ſo thy hand is come upon it, I am the Original, therefore Lord have mercy upon me, for my child is vexed with an unclean ſpirit. So ſhould you, when you ſee the hand of God upon your children, not only outwardly upon their bodies, cry out, Lord have mercy upon me for my child hath ſuch a diſeaſe, hath ſuch convulſion fits, hath ſuch pain and ſuch extremity, Lord pardon my ſin. And doth God leave your children in wickedneſs? do you ſee unclean ſpirits in your children, the ſpirit of filthineſs? Cry out, Lord have mercy upon

*Roma Amor inverſio.* That is prepoſterous love becauſe of the unnatural filthineſſe there practiſed. *Iobannes à Caſa Arch Biſhop of Bennaui.* wrote a Book in commendation of Sodomy.

me; perhaps it was by imitating of you that they came to have such unclean spirits.

Obf.

Thirdly, *It is a great reproach unto any family to have uncleanness committed in it. Fornication and adultery is a great reproach unto a family, especially when the daughter or the wife is unclean. It is a reproach unto a family if a servant prove naught, especially to some families more than others, the family of a Minister, or of a Magistrate, or a man in publick place and esteem, to have a servant prove naught: which by the way should teach Governours to be more careful of their families than they are, for many times thorough their carelessness God sends such a judgment, puts this disgrace upon their families. Many of you for your pleasure and delight can go to your country houses, and while you are there your servants are doing wickedness. You should have an especial eye over your families in this, lest God as a just judgment upon you for your neglect bring this reproach upon your families. But especially your children, your daughters and your spouses, and above all, the children of Ministers, Levit. 21.9. it is said there, if the daughter of any Priest profane her selfe by playing the whore, she shall be burnt with fire; Now fornication was not punished with death in any other, though adultery was, but the fornication of a Priests daughter was to be punished with death, she was to be burnt with fire.*

Use for  
Governours

Country  
houses.

Ministers  
daughters

Obf. 4

The fourth note is this, which is the note I specially aymed at from these words. *Our ill dealings with God, our unfaithfulness towards God is made more sensible when those that are near unto us deale ill with us, and are unfaithfull to us.* Well saith God here, you goe a whoring from me, your spouses they shall goe a whoring from you, you have beene unfaithfull to me, your children shall be unfaithfull to you, they shall goe a whoring too, and then by that anguish and trouble that you have when you see this in your wife, or in your child, you shall be made sensible how grievous this is to my Spirit, that you go a whoring from me. You have many Parents if they should hear that their daughters were grown strumpets and have played the whore, Oh how would they beat their hands upon.

upon their breſts, and tear their very haire, and ſtamp upon the ground and cry out, I am undone, I am undone, and though they had never ſuch great eſtates they would think they had no comfort in any thing but would even look upon themſelves and their family as ruined and undone; And if you ſhould hear that your wife had played the whore, how would it be as a dagger in your hearts. Are you ſo ſenſible of this? then by that extremity of grief you would have in ſuch a caſe, know ſuch is the extremity of the grief of Gods heart when a child of his goes a whoring from him. If his people go on in waies of ſuperſtition and Idolatry from him, yea though it be in things that otherwiſe ſeem to be but ſmall (it is but a circumſtance of place I told you here) yet it goes as near to the heart of God to have his people ſet upon ſuperſtitious waies in his worſhip, as it doth to the heart of any husband or father to have his wife or daughter play the whore. Oh that you would conſider that there is this grief in Heaven when God looks upon his people forſaking the true way of his worſhip. We think indeed that murder and blaſphemy provoke God, but we little think how the corruption of his worſhip provokes him. Let us know that the great provocation of the moſt high God is the corruption of his worſhip, I mean when his people ſhall corrupt his worſhip any way.

Uſe

And further, As in this particular ſo we may take occaſion to make uſe of it other waies. Do your children prove ſtubborn, ſtout to you? Oh how many times doth the father or mother get alone into their chamber and fall a bemoaning of themſelves, Oh what a ſtout, ſtubborn child have we, nothing will reform him, no admonition! It may be the mother goes alone and wrings her hands and cries out becauſe of the ſtubbornneſs of her child. Well, are you ſo ſenſible of this when your children prove ſtubborn towards you? Oh conſider how ſenſible God is if you carry your ſelves ſtubbornly towards him. If a husband have an ill wife that is froward and troubleſome, that grieves his ſpirit and loves him nor, he goes alone and laments his condition and thinks himſelf one of the miſerableſt men upon the earth. Is this ſo grievous to you?

Inſtances

1

2

Oh how grievous is it unto Jesus Christ to have his Church so to him? And have you any friend that hath dealt unfaithfully with you? Oh such a friend hath dealt unfaithfully with me, was ever any served so? Oh consider how you have dealt unfaithfully with God, and as it goes to your hearts to have a friend deal unfaithfully with you, so it goes to the heart of God when you deal unfaithfully with him. This is the note then, *Our ill dealings with God and our unfaithfulness to him, is made more sensible when those that are near unto us deal unfaithfully with us.* And thus much for the words under that consideration. I will make you sensible saith God of your dealings with me, if nothing will do it, it shall be by this way of mine, to bring this judgment upon you, *your daughter's and your spouses shall commit adultery.*

Obfer.

But the next is under the other consideration, as they were causers of it. Now the people of Israel were the causes of the uncleanness of their daughters and wives by this their way of false worship in two respects.

1 First, By going abroad from their families to hills and mountains to worship, in the mean time they committed filthiness and adultery. *Calvin* hath this note upon the place, As it is in Popery when they go a Pilgrimage, that is the opportune time for filthy places, places of bawdry to have the most trading. So it was here, when they went unto the hills and mountains to worship, then the unclean places had most trading. So when husbands and parents go up and down without any lawful call, then their wives and families do oft miscarry. Therefore it should teach them to be as little from their families as they can be, to abide at home until God calls them out, if they have a lawful call they may trust God with their families, if not, they may have some mischief befall them before they come home.

*Calvin.*

Pilgrimages.

absent from the family

2 Secondly, They were the causers of it thus, By carrying them into those places, mountains and groves and under trees, because (as I said before) those places were chosen on purpose for the committing of filthiness as being most fit for it. It is dangerous for young women to go into places that are fit for filthiness.



filthineſs, and parents and husbands are exceedingly to blame for that, and it is to be charged as a great evil upon them, when they ſhall venture to carrye their daughters or wives into places that are fit for filthineſs. But this ſhal ſuffice for that thirteen verſe. Play-houſes.

## Verſe 14.

*I will not puniſh your daughters when they commit whoredom, nor your ſpouſes when they commit adultery.*

This is as ſevere an expreſſion as any we have in the Scripture, *They ſhall commit whoredom and adultery, yet I will not puniſh them.* It is ſtrange, God hath threatned whoredom and adultery with death, and threatned the Priests daughters that committed fornication, with fire; and this is ſpoken here of the Priests eſpecially; but here ſaith he, I wil puniſh none of them when they commit whoredom or adultery.

Theſe words are read by ſome interogatively, *Will I not puniſh them?* and then they carry another ſenſe. But I think that is not the ſcope. 1.

Others read theſe words comparatively, and that I confeſs hath ſome probability in it, *I will not puniſh them,*] that is, I will not puniſh them in compariſon of you, for your example makes them ſuch as they are, you ſhould reſtrain them, and though the ſin be great in them, yet in compariſon of you they ſhall not be puniſhed at all. Wicked parents they look upon their children when they are wicked, as ſwearers, lyars, unclean &c. they look upon them as thoſe that it will go very ill withal. Well, it ſhall go ill with them indeed, but if you be ſo too, it ſhall be worſe with you: Many wicked parents are loth their children ſhould be wicked: I have known ſome drunkards and whoremaſters, have put their children to be educated by Puritans; they are wicked, yet their conſciences tell them it is not good for their children to be ſo. But the truth is, if you be wicked and your children too, though they may periſh in their ſins, yet you ſhall periſh with a ſeven-fold deſtruction. 2.

3

But thirdly it is read plainly by most thus, *I will not punish them when they commit adultery* } that is, I will shew my wrath against you in this that I will even give up your children and your wives, let them do what they will I will not restrain them by any punishment. And this is many times a way of Gods judgment against wicked ones, that the Lord will not restrain them in their evil waies, that's the especial Note from these words, "That it is one of the most fearful judgments of God in the world, for the Lord not to restrain men from their wicked waies but to let them go on and to have their will in them for a while. Hierom upon those words in Ezek. 7. 4. *I will not spare.* God doth not spare saith he that he might spare, he hath not mercy that he might have mercy upon people, that is, when God intends any good then he will not spare, that is, he will afflict and chastise, those that he loves he will chastise, but if you be bastards and not children he doth not care for chastising of you. All the while a parent hath any respect to a child and intendeth he should inherit, he doth correct him, but when once he hath cast off a child and is fully resolved he shal never inherit one penny of all that he hath, he lets him go on and take his course. A Phisitian doth so with a patient, he will give him potions and bitter potions all the while that there is hope, but if the disease be grown too strong and there is no hope, he lets him alone; thus God

deals with sinners many times in this world. Origen in one of his Sermons upon *Exodus* quoting this Scripture he hath this expression, *Will you hear the terrible voyce of a provoked God! I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredom nor your spouses when they commit adultery,* this is the most terrible thing this is the most extream thing of wrath and judgment that can be imagined, here is a terrible voyce of God indeed, I will not punish you. So Luther, *Wo to those men at whose sins God winketh.* It is a fearful judgment to fall into the hands of the living God, but it is a more fearful judgment to fall out of the hands of the living God in this regard. Many men blefs themselves in this that they can go on in the world and sin and sin and still prosper and thrive, they do not pray in their families as others

Obfer.

Hierom.

simile

Origen

Hom. 8.

in 20. cap

Exod.

vs indig-

nantis Dei

terribilem

vocem au-

dire, &amp;c.

Luther

Vt illi ad

quorū pec-

cata commi-

tuo Deus,

others do, they are not ſo ſcrupulous in their conſciences as others are, they are not ſo ſtrict to walk exactly as others, yet they thrive in their trades as others, they are as rich as others, as healthful as others, they have as fine bodies, as handſome children as others, and upon this they are hardened in their ſin. Oh but know, though thou mayeſt bleſſe thy ſelf in this thing, yet it is the heavieſt curſe of God that can bee upon thee unleſſe he ſhould ſend thee quick unto Hell. There is no ſuch brand of a reprobate as this for God to ſuffer a wicked man to proſper in his ſin.

*Hierom* hath this Note upon theſe words, when thou ſeeſt ſaith he a ſinner flow w<sup>th</sup> wealth, when thou ſeeſt him boaiſting and braving of his power, when thou ſeeſt him very healthful and hail and have a luſty body, when thou ſeeſt him delighting in his wife, when thou ſeeſt him to have a company of brave children, bravely arraied, then ſay the threatning of God by the Prophet *Hosea* is fulfilled upon that man.

Thy judgment is very great in this, for the leſſe puniſhment thou haſt now the more thou art like to have hereafter. The leſſe puniſhment the more ſin and ſo the more miſery. Know that Juſtice will have ſomewhat and much too for the forbearance of her act, of her ſtroke, and certainly it were better for thee that art a wicked and ungodly man that thou ſhouldeſt beg thy bread from door to door. Perhaps now thou haſt much coming in, thou lieſt ſoft and fareſt daintily, while others are put to miſerable extremities and have ſcarce a rag to cover them, or a bit of bread to put in their bodies, and in cold weather have no fire to warm them, and yet thou art ungodly and wicked, know that it were better for thee, and thou wilt one day ſay it and wiſh it thy ſelf, that thou hadſt been in ſuch a caſe as the poor beggar that hath begged a farthing at thy door, and it is Gods wrath upon thee that thou art not now as miſerable as they. Let us therefore ſtop the troubles of our thoughts in this, we ſee the wicked how they proſper in the world and how vile men are exalted, and though they undertake cauſes that we know are abominable in the eyes of God, and we know their waies are loathſome

*Hierom*  
Quando  
videns pec-  
catorem  
divitijs af-  
fluentem  
jactare ſe  
potentem &  
ſanctate a-  
bandare  
delectare  
conjugem co-  
ronam cir-  
cundare li-  
berorum,  
dic in illum  
commina-  
tionem  
compleri.

before

before God, and they provoke the God of Heaven in their wicked waies and tempt him to his very face, yet they prosper. They are indeed ready to take this their prosperity as an argument that God approveth of their waies, and that God loves them. Oh let us not (i say) be troubled at their prosperity, for it is so far from Gods shewing it as an argument of his approbation of their waies, that it is one of the greatest judgments that can possibly befall them in the world, when God shall say let them go on and fill up the measure of their sins, they shall have their hearts detre for a while and so shall be tatted up to their destruction. This few will conceive of but such who have spiritual eyes. Carnal hearts are ready to call the proud happy, and to think those to be in the best condition that are most prosperous in the world; but this text teacheth us the contrary. It follows.

*For themselves are separated with whores.*

Text  
Opened

*For themselves.] Ipsi.* Here God chargeth the persons (your daughters and your spouses, for they are separated with whores) *per modum indignationis*, so interpreters note upon the place, God chargeth the persons by way of indignation. As when one man is speaking to another and his anger riseth, he turns from him and speaks to some body else, so God seems here to have his anger so arise against his people, that he turns as it were from them as if he did speak to some body else, though indeed he meaneth them; themselves are separated, or divided themselves.

Junius.

*Junius* reads it only so, *they have separated*; and so addeth to it *Res opimas*, they have separated fat and plentiful things; their choice and rich things that they had at home, so he carries the meaning and not improbably, the best meat they had or any precious thing they had at home, they would set it apart under pretence of consecrating it to a religious use, and then when they went to sacrifice they would eat that among their whores, and so deceive their spouses at home, and say they would set this apart for their gods and so carry it  
and

and ſpend it among their whores. That is the interpretation he makes upon the word *Seperate*.

Others I confeſs carrie it thus, *They have ſeperated themſelves from their God*: firſt in ſpiritual whoredom: and then from their wives in bodilie uncleannefs. 2

Or elſe thus, *Separated*: That is, gone alone in ſecret where they might not be known, as the filthineſs of that ſin cauſeth men to deſire to be hid, and when they have got into a ſecret place or ſeperated themſelves from all that know them, then they commit that bodily uncleannefs; as many men when they are gone abroad from their own houſes, in their journies in their luns, that is a fit opportunity for their filthineſs. 3.

Thus God gives the reaſon why their daughters and their wives commit this uncleannefs, becauſe they themſelves do ſo. Thence the Note is, *When parents are filthy and unclean, what can be expected from the children but that they ſhould be ſo too?* Take it either in bodily or ſpiritual uncleannefs. In bodily, *David* commits adultery, and *Amnon* commits inceſt; and in ſpiritual, *Jer. 7. 18.* *The children gather wood, the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough to make cakes to the Queen of Heaven.* If fathers and mothers be idolaters children will be ſo too; ſo it is at this day, in ſuperſtitious places, take any that are ſuperſtitious that ſtand upon the old way, if the father and the mother do ſo, the children will do ſo too, any that are Malignants, if the parents be ſo, the children though young it is ſtrange to hear in what a way they will ſpeak, becauſe their parents are ſo. Which ſhould be a good caveat unto all parents to make them take heed what they do before their children, *he that ſins before a child ſins twice*, for the child will do as his father doth, he thinks it enough that my father ſaid ſo, or my father did ſo. Take heed how you ſin before your children. Obſerv. Uſe.

But this word translated *Whores*, and the other that follows *Harlots*, have a further ſignification than our Engliſh here expreſſeth it. According to moſt Interpreters it hath this meaning. It preſents to u thoſe women that worſhipped *Baal Peor*, or *Priapus* that unclean god. In *1 King. 15. 13.* it is ſaid

ne esse  
princeps  
in sacris  
priapi.

of *Asa* that he took away *Maachab* his mother from being Queen, now it is interpreted by some that he removed her that she might not be a special Queen in the solemnity of that unclean god *Baal Per*, which Idol she had set up in a grove. So then those women that were devoted to the service of that unclean god, in whose worship there was most abominable filthy uncleanness, yet these people did separate themselves to those women, not to ordinary whores, but to those that were consecrated to the service of that unclean god, and so went to worship that unclean god, and committed uncleanness with the women devoted to that service.

Obser.

And the other word, *Sacrificed with harlots*, if we were to take it merely according to our translation, *harlots*, then the Note is only this, *That those that are filthy and unclean, yet they will sometimes make some shew of Religion.* Harlots and yet sacrifice? how can these two stand together? One would think harlots should cast off all sacrifice. No, many times such as are filthy and unclean will make a shew of Religion, to think to satisfy al their filthiness with some Religious action; as the harlot in the *Proverbs* she had peace-offerings, and the rather she had them, she made her peace-offerings but preparations for her committing of uncleanness. What horrible wickedness is this! yet this is ordinary for many that are very devout in some Religious duties, and upon that they think they have served God well, God hath had his turn and so they think they may take the more liberty to the flesh afterward; It is true we are sinners, we cannot serve God alwaies, we will serve God sometimes and so take the more liberty because of that. It is an abominable thing to joyn filthiness and sacrifice both together.

But this word translated *harlots* here, hath a great deal further meaning I suppose than our English can express or bear. The word קדושים translated *harlots*, it is meant of the Priests with the consecrated ones. This doth more justify the interpretation of the other word *whores*, for I told you by that was meant those women that worshipped *Baal-Peor*, for there the word signifies the consecrated ones, the holy ones. You will

קדושים  
קדושים

will ſay, holy ones, how can it be tranſlated harlots then? Yes, meerly by way of contrariety, for ſo the Scripture expreſſeth things and words, and ſo doth other languages too, as wood is called wood by a name that comes from light. per Anti-  
phraſin.  
Lucus qui  
minime  
lucet. So here, *holy ones*, that is, devoted to filthineſs as others do conſecrate themſelves to God and therefore are called holy ones in a quite contrary ſenſe, becauſe they rather devoted themſelves unto all manner of filthineſs. And that I think is the meaning of this place, the Priests of *Baal-Peor* they are here thoſe that are meant that this people did ſeparate themſelves for.

*Hierom* upon the place hath this Note, he ſaith that the Romans in diſgrace of the French uſed to ſeparate Priests of that Nation for that Idol and to make them Eunuces, from whence all ſuch Priests to that Idol that they had (which was the like to that of *Baal-Peor* the Jews had) they uſed to call *Gallos*, French-men to put an ignominy upon that Nation for ſome eſpecial revenge they had to them, and they would have them to ſerve that Idol being firſt made Eunuches. Hierom

Take it thus then and it will afford us a very profitable inſtruction. Theſe people were grown ſo corrupt that they had forſook the true Priests of God and the Prophets of the Lord and ſeparated themſelves from the Lord to joyn in ſacrificing with theſe filthy Priests of *Baal-Peor*, that unclean Idol that is ſayd in Scripture to be that ſhame.

But only here is a Scruple how can it be meant of Priests when the word in the Hebrew is in the feminine gender? That is answered thus, becauſe of the effeminateſs of theſe Priests, ſome of them were made Eunuces and ſo might be put into the feminine gender in that regard, and they were grown to be ſo ſottiſh and filthy that they loſt the very name of men. Therefore *Aquila* he turns it, *Cum mutatis*, ſo he calls thoſe that were effeminate, they were changed from men into women, and ſo the Scripture ſpeaks of men that have loſt their true fortitude and are changed from it, they are called women or men of womaniſh ſpirits; And ſo the Heathen Poet *Virgil* he calls the Trojans women not men, which he had from Aquila  
περὶ τῶν  
μαλλὰν  
ἡρώων  
ſic vocales  
feminatos.

mer,\* because they were rather to be of the feminine than the  
 masculine gender. Therefore the Priests here of that unclean  
 Idol had the feminine gender put upon them.  
 Or as *Cyril* and *Theophylact* and others think that these  
 Priests seemed to be men, but were indeed women. So that  
 then by this text is meant such notorious prostituted filthy  
 ones that were consecrated to be as Priests to the service of  
 this unclean Idol. Now then here riseth the Note from hence  
 this was their abominable vileness, to forsake the Priests of the  
 Lord, to separate themselves from them and to joyn with such  
 unclean Priests as these Priests of *Baal-Peor* were. Here were  
 Separates indeed. Have we not many amongst us at this day as  
 vile and wicked, of as wicked spirits as these, whose hearts are  
 against the faithful Ministers of God, against the purity of  
 Gods Ordinances, & they separate themselves to any drunken  
 unclean filthy Malignant Priest? It was just so here for all  
 the world, there were the true Priests of God in Judah, they  
 had the true Ordinances of God there, and yet these men ra-  
 ther than they would joyn with them in the true service of  
 God, they will separate themselves to the Priests of *Baal-Peor*,  
 to these filthy and unclean and base Priests, and they think  
 there is more good to be had in joyning with them than with  
 the true Priests of God. How hath God of late discovered  
 the filthiness and malignancy of our superstitious Priests who  
 cared not what became of our Liberties of Religion, of our  
 Liberties as men, of our Religion as Christians, so they may  
 have their lusts; yet how vile are mens spirits stil that though  
 faithful and conscionable Ministers are sent amongst them  
 who would reveal the mind of Christ and the way of Heaven  
 unto them, that they may now know more in one month  
 than before they knew in many yeers if they had hearts to  
 hearken to them, yet they will separate themselves and joyn  
 rather with such as are manifested to be of most vile spirits, not  
 only malignant but filthy and wicked in their lives, and  
 commend them for the only men, these they love with  
 their very hearts. Heretofore when they had but some Sr.  
*John* that could only reade prayers sent by the Bishop, and  
 godly

Women  
 shall rule  
 over the,  
 Isa. 3.  
 Hier.  
 \* Oxi:  
 phrygia,  
 neq; enim  
 phryges.  
 Virg.  
 lib. 9.  
 Αχαιδες,  
 ἐκ ἐστὶ  
 Αχαιος.  
 Hom.



godly Miniſters were thruſt out, yet if men did then go from their pariſh Church to hear a Sermon, how did they cry out upon ſuch then, they were called Sectaries and Schiſmaticks preſently; but now when men of vile and malignant ſpirits are by a better Authority put out for their wicked lives, and godly and holy men are put in their rooms, yet theſe they will not hear though it be in their own pariſh Church, but if a malignant Preacher be in the City, to him they will flock: Who is the *Separate or Schiſmatick now*? they ſeparate themſelves now to ſuch men, and now they think they may hear thoſe men they can moſt profit by, that is thoſe that preach things ſutable to their ſpirits. When the caſe comes to be mens own how partial are they in their judgments? I know nothing ſets out the condition of theſe men as theſe words do, though as they are read in your books there is no ſuch thing appears, but the words according to the Original ſignifies ſeparating themſelves to unclean Priests.

*Therefore the people that do not underſtand ſhall fall.*

This is the cloſe of the verſe. Well might he ſay that they are a people that underſtand not indeed, idolaters are no underſtanding people, they do not underſtand, they are ignorant people. You will ſay, ignorant, many of them are Scholars and learned? But they are ignorant of the waies of God, even their Priests are and for the moſt part the people are, and their very deſign is to bring ignorance into places, that their Idolatrous waies may be the ſooner embraced.

*The people that do not underſtand ſhall fall.*] Underſtand what? what did not theſe people underſtand that was the cauſe of their fall? They did not underſtand theſe things.

Fiſt, *They did not underſtand the deſign that Jeroboam had and thoſe Princes that followed him.* Poor ſimple people they were led by vain pretences, *Jeroboam* he pleaded this, that he was for the true Religion, he was for the worſhipping of the true God, only he would not have the people ſo tired as to go up thrice a year to Jeruſalem, that was not ſo neceſſary. But the truth

is, that the design that *Jeroboam* had under al his pretences of worshipping the true God and being a friend to the true Religion, it was to bring them under his own government, to tyrannize over them, and to keep them from that right way of government that they should have had. Now this people they did not understand this, they were carried away with fair words, if *Jeroboam* did but pretend Religion and profess that he did it meerly out of respect and love and in favour unto them, and that for his part he intended to set up the worship of God as much as any, though his design was another thing, yet this people were led away and did not understand. They did not understand the design of *Jeroboam* and his Princes.

2 Secondly, *They did not understand that the acceptation of Gods worship did not depend upon the outward pomp and bravery of it, but upon the rule, according to what God had required.* They understood not this. They were led away meerly with the fair shews and pomp of Religion, but they did not understand that al the acceptation of divine worship cometh from having a divine rule. Most people at this day understand not this, and that is a great evil.

3 Thirdly, *They did not understand this, That their safety did more depend upon the true worship of God than upon all the politick wisdom that possibly could be.* They understood not that their protection depended upon Gods service and worship, but they thought to go politickly on to provide for their own safety, and they thought their safety depended upon their wise men that understood better than they. And then,

4 Fourthly, *They did not understand, that whatsoever was commanded by their Governours or taught by their Priests, yet if it was against the mind of God it would not excuse them from judgment and deliver them from the wrath of God, though their Magistrates did command it and their Priests did teach it.*

They did not understand these four things, and for not understanding these four things they shall fall. This was that which brought them down and did ruin this people.

There are divers degrees of not-understanding.

First,

First, When people do not understand meerly for want of the means of knowledg. This excuseth not wholly, but they shall even fall though they have no means.

Secondly, When men have means yet thorough their negligence in the use of the means they do not understand.

Thirdly, When they are not only guilty of negligence but they oppose and shut their eyes wickedly against that means of knowledg. Then they shall fall indeed.

Fourthly, When having knowledg heretofore, now they lose it by their often resisting of knowledg and so come to fail in their understanding.

Lastly, When they so provoke God as that he hath given them up unto a foolish spirit so that they shall not understand. Now these people fall deepeſt. Where all these five are (as they are in many places) surely that people must needs fall. My brethren have we not cause to fear our not understanding at this day in these five degrees? And in a great part *Applic.* even in those four *Generals*, The not-understanding the vain pretences of our adversaries of what our Cavaliers say.

First, That they fight for Religion, and they make such and such kind of protestations, and they intend nothing but the liberty of the subject, many people are led away with these pretences and understand not that their design is to bring them under slavery and to take away their Religion. And this want of understanding is like to cause us to fall.

Secondly, People understand not that the worship of God must have the word of God to be the rule, and that the government of the Church must be according to the word. They think what shall be most sutable to the reasons of understanding men that is best. Because men understand not this we are in danger to fall.

Thirdly, People at this day think there is too much to do about Religion, and let us rather go in a way of policy to provide for our selves, as for that why should we injure or  
trouble

trouble our selves so much? we have troubled our selves too much already. People think not their safety is in Religion therefore they shall fall.

Fourthly, people think if they be taught so by their Ministers that's enough for them. Is it not so with us now? Therefore we have cause to fear that the Lord intendeth us a grievous fall.

Yea as those four Objects, so the four degrees of want of understanding.

In many places they have no means, many Towns and Countries have scarce a Sermon in half a year.

In many places where there is most means there they are negligent of it, they rebel and shut their eyes against it and are weary of it.

And others that have had knowledg heretofore, have resisted their light, are grown sottish: yea it is to be feared that God hath delivered many amongst us over to a sottish spirit, it is impossible they should remain so ignorant as they are if God in his just judgment had not delivered them up unto a sottish spirit. To instance in this, Is it not a sottish spirit of men that after all their oppression and misery that they have suffered, yet they will not understand, but joyn with those that have oppressed them and lay all the blame upon them that venture their lives to deliver them. Surely this is most gross sottish ignorance, that when men shall come and spoil them of their goods and ravish their wives and children, yet in the mean time they rather cry out of those that venture their lives to do them good as if the cause of their misery was from them. Surely these people do not understand, can it be expected but that these people should fall, themselves and their posterity, into the depth of misery to be made slaves for ever?

*They shall fall.*] Idolatrous people shall fall; that's the next note. An Angel proclaimeth this, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen.* It is fallen already (my brethren,) how ever Idolaters seem to lift up their heads high yet they are falling, and fall they shall, God hath pronounced it, and the time is at hand; they have fallen off from God, and fall they shall by the hand of God, and

and the prouder they grow the nearer they are to their fall; *Pride goes before a fall*: while the Gospel of Christ and his pure Ordinances that are now so opposed, *they shall stand*; and all superstitious waies, and persons, *they shall fall*. That is observable that place before named, *Revel. 14.6. An Angel flies in the midst of Heaven and preacheth the everlasting Gospel*; and with in a vers. or two, another Angel cries out, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*. When Babylon with all their Idolatrous waies shall be fallen, then shall the everlasting Gospel be preached; the Gospel and the Ordinances of Christ shall be everlasting, shall continue for ever when all superstitious vanities shall fall. We find it so; how ever they thought to bear up all their superstitious waies by all the means that ever the devil or wicked men could devise to keep them up to perpetuity, yet have we not found that God hath blasted them, and many of them are fallen? and though God bring his people into affliction, yet they shall rise, the waies of God shall rise, *Zion shall rise, Babylon shall fall: the people that understand not, they shall fall*.

A word or two about the meaning of the word in the original: The word is from *כָּבַד* *shall fall*. It is not often in scripture, very rare, and I find divers translations of it. *Shall be beaten*, so some. *Shall be brought into captivity*, so others: And others again give this the meaning of the word, and so it doth properly signifie, *Shall be perplexed*. The word signifies to be brought into perplexity and doubtfulness of ones counsels, and waies, that they do not know which way in the world to go; that is the propriety of the word: I say, by their doubtfulness of their way, not knowing which way to go, being perplexed in their counsels, thereupon they come to stumble and fall. *This people that do not understand shall thus fall*. Indeed it is more proper and suitable to the words before, *they do not understand*, therefore they must needs be perplexed in their waies and not know which way to go, and therefore *must fall*; as a man that is in the dark and knows not which way to go he must needs fall; so when men have left the true light and are in the dark they *shall fall*, and when they are fallen they shall be perplexed in that misery into which they are fallen. From whence these two Notes.

- Obs. 1 First, *That it is a fearful judgment of God and a forerunner of a grievous fall, for him to leave men to perplexed counsels.* When men are perplexed in their counsels, one is for this way, and another is for that way, and then carry it back and then forward again, Oh this is a forerunner of falling into grievous misery. In *Esz. 19. 14.* the Lord threatneth Egypt that he wil send a perverse spirit in the midst of them & they shall er in every work as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit; they shall er in their counsels and this comes from a perverse spirit. The Lord many times sends a perplexed spirit and a perverse spirit in judgment upon men, and what then? then they reel and stagger up and down in their counsels, first they will go one way and then another, and so bring a great deal of sorrow and trouble upon a people. The Lord grant our enemies these perplexed counsels, and deliver us from them.
- Obs. 2. Secondly, It notes thus much, *That when they are fallen and are once down and have brought misery upon themselves and others by their ill wies and counsels, then they shall be so insiared and most dreadfully perplexed that they shall not know which way to go or what to do.* Men that are Idolatrous and superstitious, and men that God leaves to themselves they are in miserable perplexity when they are fallen, they are as those poor blind men in 2 *King. 6.* that *Elisha* led to *Samaria* in stead of *Dothan*, what miserable perplexity were they in when they found themselves in *Samaria* among their enemies? So when men are left unto themselves and God hath brought them into those perplexities, when they shall see the fruit of their perplexed counsels, how grievous will it be? On the other side, when a man goes according to the rule of Gods word, and in the uprightnes of his heart desires to be directed according unto that rule, though such a one should meet with trouble and fall into affliction for his trial, he need not be perplexed, there shall be quietness and peace to his spirit in the midst of his afflictions, why? because he hath followed God, he hath gone according to his rule. It may be he knows not Gods end in bringing him into affliction, he understands not the depth of Gods waies, yet having endeavoured in the sincerity of his heart

simile


heart to walk according to Gods will, you that have done ſo, you underſtand much, though you ſhould fall into affliction yet you ſhall not fall into perplexity.

## Verſe 15.

*Though thou Iſrael play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend, and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven, nor ſwear, The Lord liveth.*

The cloſe of this Chapter is a warning to Judah to take heed that ſhe doth not do as Iſrael did, in regard of the vile-  
neſs of their ſin, the fearfulneſs and ſuddenneſs of their judgment.

*Though thou Iſrael.]* Thou wretched, wicked, ſtubborn, ſtout hearted Iſrael, that no means wil reclaim, though thou play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend.

The word tranſlated *Offend*, that is from  it ſignifies *deſolare* likewiſe, becauſe ſin brings deſolation. The Hebrews have divers words to expreſs ſin and puniſhment both in one, becauſe they are ſo neer a kin. Iſrael playeth the harlot and ſo is like to bring deſolation unto her ſelf, but let not Judah likewiſe offend and bring the ſame deſolation likewiſe upon her ſelf.

The Prophet *Hoſea* was eſpecially ſent to Iſrael, to the ten Tribes, but here we ſee he turns his ſpeech unto Judah. “Min-  
“iſters ſhould eſpecially look to thoſe whom they are bound  
“unto by Office, but yet ſo as to labour to do good to o-  
“thers as occaſion is. And not only Miniſters but others  
likewiſe. We ſhould all intend good, eſpecially to thoſe that  
are under our charge, but yet neglect no opportunity to do  
good unto any.

Obl. r.  
Miniſters

Secondly, “When we ſee our labor loſt upon thoſe we de-  
“ſire moſt good unto, we ſhould be deſirous then to try what  
“we can do unto others. If this or the other get not good by  
our Miniſtry, by our Admonition, by our Exhortations, by  
our Counſels, yet it may be the Lord may bleſs our endeav-  
ors upon ſuch and ſuch; let us try what we can do there.

Obl. 2

Exposit. Thirdly, *Let not Judah offend*] Let not Judah do as Israel did. There was a great deal of danger that Judah should be insnared and polluted with Israels Idolatry, and that in many regards, which are the ground of this reasonable admonition of the Prophet. Though Israel do thus and thus yet let not Judah do so, as if he should say, the truth is Judah is in great danger to be defiled by Israel, and why so?

Reas. 1 First, They lived neer unto them, and there is a great deal of danger in living neer unto Idoloaters or wicked ones. All sin, especially Idolatry is as leaven that will spread, and you may see the danger that there was in living so neer them, in Ezek. 16. 46. and indeed afterwards it proved to be dangerous, one special reason of the iniquity of Jerusalem is there given, *Thine elder sister Samaria, she and her daughters dwell at thy left hand, and thy younger sister that dwells at thy right hand; is Sodom and her daughters*; That was an especial reason of the iniquity of Jerusalem, their elder sister *Samaria*, that is the ten Tribes, were on the left hand, and their younger sister, *Sodom*, were on the right hand, and so they came to be sinful. To be neer Idoloaters and wicked ones is very dangerous; then much more to be in the same Town, in the same family where superstitious and wicked persons are, there we had need to take heed to our selves; for there is much danger.

2. Again, This was not only dangerous that Judah should be defiled by Israels Idolatry because of their neerness, but secondly, because they were brethren, and so the danger was the greater to be drawn aside by them. If you have a kinsman, if you have one that is neer to you, not only in place but in nature or affection, that is superstitious, take heed of being defiled by such. Oh how many have suffered shipwrack of their faith by this means, that they have had some kinsman, some Uncle, some acquaintance that have been very neer unto them, and they have drawn them aside from the waies of God. Hence is the reason of that severity that God would have used against a brother or a friend that seeks to draw away from God unto Idolatry, because the Lord sees there



there is ſo much danger in it, Deut. 13. 6. *If thy brother, or the ſon of thy mother, or the ſon of thy daughter, or the wife of thy boſom, or thy friend which is as thine own ſoul, entice thee ſecretly to go from God, thou ſhalt not conſent unto him, neither ſhall thine eye pity him, neither ſhalt thou ſpare, neither ſhalt thou conceal him, but thine hand ſhall be firſt upon him to put him to death. Though he be thy brother, or the wife of thy boſom, or thy friend that is as thine own ſoul thou ſhalt not pity him, but thou ſhalt ſeek the very death of ſuch an one if he ſeek to draw thee unto waies of Idolatry. Becauſe God ſaw what danger there was in this; that is the reaſon of the ſeverity.* Deut. 13. 6. Opened

Thirdly, Judah was in great danger to be drawn aſide by Iſrael, becauſe that Iſrael was the greater number. Iſrael was ten Tribes, but Judah and *Benjamin*, thoſe two Tribes, little *Benjamin* together with Judah were but a few in compariſon of Iſrael. It is a great argument that Idolaters uſe to draw others unto the waies of Idolatry becauſe of the number of thoſe that go that way. *The whole World admire after the Beaſt;* the World doth, the Nations do, and that is a mighty argument to draw; the greater part of people they think that this way of worſhip is the beſt way, there are but a few and in- conſiderable number that are in another way. No queſtion but it was their argument here, as if they ſhould ſay, what; do not ten Tribes know the mind of God as well as thoſe two? Is there any reaſon why we ſhould think that the greater part of the children of *Abraham*, of the Jews, ten Tribes ſhould not know the mind of God? It is the argument at this day. (ſay many that are ſuperſtitious and would go on in their old way of Idolatry) They that are againſt ſuch waies they are but a few, an inconsiderable party, but the chief, the great ones and the moſt of all ſorts you ſee which way they go. We are to take heed of this. Oh let not Judah though Iſrael be the greater part follow a multitude to do evil.

Fourthly, Iſrael was rich and in a flouriſhing eſtate, therefore there was danger that Judah might be carried away by them. Iſrael carried things before them in outward pomp and glory, and we know that way that thrives in the world,

Obfer. men will soon be brought to close with; and the way of Israel when *Hosea* prophesied did much thrive and prosper, Israel prevailed mightily in the world, *When Ephraim spake there was trembling*, therefore it was a wonderful grace of God to keep Judah from following their example. We find it by experience, let a way be persecuted yet let it be but once countenanced in the world, men will cry it up; do we not see at this day that those things that heretofore men would not profess because of persecution, that now on a sudden their minds are changed and now they cry it up? The same things that heretofore have been persecuted, if they once be but countenanced by great ones and by multitudes, how will men cry it up! Things that their hearts were against, things that they would argue and reason against, yet now because they have more publick countenance, their judgments are changed; here is the deceit of mens hearts, that way that hath most countenance in the world, that way they will go on in, especially in the worship of God.

5

Fifthly, Israel had many colours and pretences for what they did, and that might endanger Judah to be led aside by them; for Israel they did not profess themselves Idolaters and superstitious, No, they profess that they did serve the Lord, the true Jehovah, and the difference was not great between them and Judah, they would tell you it was but circumstances in place, you must worship God at *Jerusalem*, and we would have you worship at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and those Images that are set up are but to put you in mind of the same God you worship.

Obfer.

*The nearer any come to you in what is the right worship of God, yet if they retain any corruption, there is so much the more danger that they should draw you from that which is right; for Israel did come nearer to the true worship of God than the Heathens did, now the Prophet doth not say, though the Heathens be Idolaters, yet let not Judah be so too, but though Israel play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend.* There was more danger that Judah should be drawn aside by Israel than that they should be drawn aside by any of the Heathen. And so there is more danger that we at this day should be drawn aside by

by those that joyn with us in many things that are right than by Papists, they are hateful to us, we see their waies to be abominable. Papists and Heathens there is not so much danger (especially for those that profess godliness) to be drawn aside by them, but the danger is in this, to be drawn aside by their brethren, and that by their brethren that joyn with them in many things that are right, and that come very neer to the true worship of God. Applic.

Well, Judah must not do so though Israel doth. As there were many things wherein Judah was in great danger to be drawn aside by Israel; so there were many arguments why Judah should not do as Israel did. As

First, God had graciously differenced Judah from Israel in abundance of mercy, Judah must not now make himself like Israel in sin, seeing God had made them unlike in mercy. God had in mercy made a difference between Judah and Israel, let not then the wickedness of their hearts make themselves to be all one. God had kept Judah to the house of *David* and to his Temple, to be his own people. Exposit.  
Reas. 1.

Secondly, Judah had more means than Israel had, therefore Judahs sin would be more vile than Israels was: For Judah had the true Priests of God to teach them; Judah had the Temple among them; Judah had the Ordinances of God in the right way with them; therefore for Judah to be drawn aside to the waies of Israel, this would be a greater sin in them. Whatsoever Israel doth that have none but superstitious Idolatrous Priests amongst them, Priests made of the lowest of the people, Israel that hath but the Calves and hath not the right Ordinances of God among them, whatsoever they do, yet let not Judah offend that have the true Ordinances of God and the true Priests and Ministers of God among them. "Oh those that enjoy Gods Ordinances in his own way and the Ministers of God in a right way of calling they should take heed of doing as other people do. And then, 2  
Oblerv.:

Thirdly, Judah was not compell'd by her Governours to do so as Israel, for Israel you know by *Jeroboam* and other of the Princes was compell'd to do what they did, and they might pretend. 3:

pretend that it was for their own safety, to save their lives and to save their estates : but there was no such necessity for Judah to do it, for God many times sent godly and gracious Princes to Judah, and there was not such waies there to compel them, they were not so necessitated to that way of false worship as Israel was, (if we may call it any necessity to that which is evil.) When people have liberty and are not forced but God doth give them liberty that they need not (except they will) be idolaters, yet for them to close with waies of Idolatry and superstition, when they need not, this is more sinful. It is true, heretofore there might have been some excuse, we were forced to it, it was as much as our estates were worth, we must have been cast into prison and persecuted, and that made us do that we did: The Lord be merciful to us for that we rather than we would suffer would joyn in those superstitious waies that were amongst us. But now thorough Gods mercy we are delivered from that bondage, we are not so compel'd, yet that now for all this our hearts should yet cleave to those old superstitious waies, this makes our sin so much the greater.

Obfer.

4

Obfer.

Fourthly, *Let not Judah sin*, for what then should become of Gods worship? For God had no other people upon the face of the earth but Judah and Israel to worship him; well, Israel is gone from him, and will Judah go too? what will become of the worship of God? A mighty argument to those that make profession of godliness to keep them from the waies of false worship and wickedness in any kind. If you depart from God too as others do, what honor will God have in the world? what will become of the service of God in the world? Is not God worthy of all honor and of all service from all his creatures? It is pitie there should be any creature in the world that should not honor and serve the blessed and infinite God; But we see most do not, and there are but a few, a handful of people that regard to worship God aright, and shall this few this handful forsake God? where then shall God have any honor in the world? Shall Judah go away too? then the Lord will have no Church, no worship, no service in the world.

Fiftly,

Fiftly, God had much mercy in ſtore for Judah, more than for Iſrael, therefore let not Judah offend: For Chriſt was to come from that Tribe of Judah, and the Lord promiſed that he would ſhew mercy unto Judah when he had ſaid he would reject Iſrael as indeed he did. Though Judah was carried into captivity as well as Iſrael, yet God was with Judah in their captivity and promiſed them a return from it, but he never promiſed Iſrael a return in the like manner as Judah. Therefore ſince God had the more mercy in ſtore for Judah, let not Judah offend.

From hence theſe Notes are to be obſerved.

Fiſt, We muſt not do as others do, eſpecially in point of Gods worſhip; we muſt not make the example of men, not of any ſort of men, not of our brethren, not of thoſe that profeſs Religion, not of thoſe that proſper in the world, we muſt not make them an exemplar or rule in any thing, eſpecially in the matters of Gods worſhip. Indeed the conſideration how others ſin againſt God ſhould be ſo far from being an argument to draw us unto ſin, as it ought to be the greateſt argument to draw us from ſin; Thus, every ſin againſt God it is a ſtriking at God. It's true if there be a common enemy ſimile come into a City or Town, every one deſires to have a blow at him, and when men make this an argument for their ſin becauſe others do it, they deal with God as thoſe in a Town would deal with a common enemy, that is thus, why ſuch and ſuch and ſuch go on in ſuch wicked waies, they ſtrike at God, therefore let me ſtrike at God too, when thou pleaideſt that argument and ſaielt becauſe ſuch and ſuch do ſin therefore I may ſin, thou doeſt in effect as much as ſay ſuch and ſuch ſtrike at God let me have a blow at him too. Is there any force in this argument? For ever take heed of pleading the example of others in waies of wickedneſs, and remember this one expreſſion that thou doeſt in effect as if thou ſhouldeſt ſay, others about me they ſtrike at God and I muſt have my blow at him too as well as they. In any ſin we muſt take heed of example, but above all in matters of worſhip. Hence Deut. 12. 30. *Take heed to thy ſelf that thou be not ſnared by following of*

the Nations after that they be destroyed from before thee, and that thou enquire not after their-gods, saying, How did these Nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. Take heed saith God, thou dost not so much as enquire how these people serve their gods and say, I will do so likewise. God would not have us use that argument. Take heed therefore of pleading thus, other people do so and so and other Nations, why may not we do as other Nations do? It is a very ill argument to plead example in matters of worship, I mean that worship that here Judah is forewarned of, that is, worship that is by institution, and above all things the examples of men are not to be followed in points of institution. In any thing in the world there may be more plea for example than in instituted worship and the reason is this, Because that other things have somewhat of them written in the Law of nature in mans heart, all matters of morality are in some degree or other written in mans heart by nature, every man hath somewhat of the moral Law written in his heart, but institutions they are such things as depend meerly upon Gods revealed will and are not written in the heart of man: Therefore though we might have a plea to follow the example of others in point of morality, yet there can be no just plea to follow the example of others in point of Institutions, there we must be sure to keep to the rule of Gods Word, to look above all things in points of Institutions to what is written and never to make it an argument that such or such people do so and so. And,

Note

Obs. 2.

Secondly, a second Note is, That it goes neer to the heart of God when his people offend much more than when others offend. *Yet let not Judah offend:* Judah was the only people of God, the only true Church of God that remained in the world. When Gods own people offend, Oh that goes neerer unto the heart of God than when others do offend. As Christ said to his Disciples, *Will ye also go away?* and as *Julius Caesar* said to *Brutus* in the Senate that came with a dagger to stab him, *What and thou my son Brute, what thou amongst all others?* so saies God, when those that are professors of Religion, that are his people, that are neer unto him, when they

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ſin againſt the Lord, what and you alſo? will you alſo come and ſtrike me?

First, *There is more unkindneſſ in the ſins of Gods people than there is in the ſins of others.* This grieves the Spirit of God, others do provoke God, do anger God, but Gods Saints do grieve his Spirit, for *grief is out of love*, and the more God loves any the more grievous is it unto his heart that they ſhould offend him. The more you love a wife, or a child or a friend, the more doth it go to your heart that ſuch a one ſhould do any thing that might juſtly offend you. Reaf. 1  
Note

Secondly, *There is more unfaithfulneſſ in the ſins of Gods people than there is in the ſins of others, for they have given up themſelves unto God in another way than others have done, and the heart of God confideth in them more.* What thou my friend that hath eat bread at my table, wilt thou liſt up thy heel againſt me? And *Eſa. 63. 8. I ſaid, they are children that will not lye.* God confideth in them, and for them to be unfaithful, for Judah to ſin, this goeſt to the heart of God indeed. 2

Thirdly, *Gods Name is more polluted by the ſins of his people than by the ſins of others.* Others, wicked ones offend the will of God, but they do not pollute the Name of God ſo much as his own people do. 3.

Fourthly, *The excellency of the graces of the Saints and the excellency of the ſtate wherein they are, makes their ſins to be worſe than the ſins of others;* As ſpots of dirt in a ſackcloth is not ſo great an evil as ſpots of dirt and ſtains in a piece of Cambrick or Lawn, if you have fine cloathes and fine garments and there be but a ſtain comes upon them, a ſpot of dirt, then you will think that a great evil; but there are ſome coarſe garments (as your ſafeguards) that you make of coarſe things, you care not ſo much though they be ſoild and dirty; So the wicked they are of a coarſe thread, their ſpirits are little worth, therefore though they be ſullied and deſiled it is not ſo much; but the ſpirits of the Saints they are renewed, they have the Image of God upon them, therefore a ſpot in them is a great deal worſe: As a ſpot of dirt upon an ordinary Deal board is no great evil, but if there be a curious Image and Picture drawn 4  
ſimile  
ſimile

upon a table, to have that besmeared is a great deal worse: so if thou art godly thou hast the Image of God drawn upon thy soul, and a sin, a spot in thee is worse than in others. Therefore what ever others do, yet let Gods people take heed to themselves that they do not offend.

Yea, the Saints of God they are the very salt of the earth, the very light of the world, they are those for whose sake God continueth the world in that way he doth, they are the supporters of all, and if they depart from God also what will become of the world?

5. *Fifthly, As the sins of the Saints go neerer the heart of God than the sins of others, so they go neerer to the heart of the Saints.* The sin of one Saint goes neerer the heart of another Saint than the sin of any other man doth. Offences of brethren amongst brethren they are the greatest of all. As *Sampson* said to those that came to bind him, do not you bind me, I care not for the Philistines so much, only do you not bind me: so all the railings and persecutions of ungodly men are not so much as the unkindness of the Saints. Unkindnesses from such as we look upon as godly, go neerer to the heart of those that are godly than all the railings and persecutions of ungodly men. If others of the Saints, such as are godly, should suffer opposition, yea if it should come to this that they should suffer persecution from such as they look upon as godly, Oh how would that cut their hearts! Their complaints to their father of this would be sore complaints indeed.

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Applic.

The force of this, *Though Israel do thus, yet let not Judah offend*, if it were applied unto us at this time, it would come to thus much, "Though Prelates, though such as were superstitious and corrupt, though they were bitter against and did persecute my servants, yet let not such as have professed godliness, let not such as have been painful and conscientious Ministers, let not such whose consciences have been heretofore tender in many things, let not them offend in any bitterness in any harshness against their brethren; This will go more to Gods heart and to the heart of the Saints than any offences of any other that ever was heretofore." All the persecu-



persecutions of all the Prelates and Papists and of all your Popish Priests and such kind of men, they would not be the thousand part so much as any bitterness or harshness from the spirits of those that are looked upon as godly against the Saints; Especially such as heretofore have profest so much tenderness of conscience, and have suffered so much for the tenderness of their consciences because they could not do what they were enjoyned to do, and now if they after they have gotten liberty to their own consciences should once come to be harsh and bitter against others that are godly, Oh how sad would this be unto God and unto his people! Oh let not Judah offend what ever Israel do.

*Come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven.*

There are two things to be enquired here.

1. What this *Gilgal*, and what *Beth-aven* was.
2. The reason of the prohibition, why they must not come to *Gilgal*, nor go to *Beth-aven*.

The words are ordinarily read and past over without any great observation, but there is much of Gods mind in them.

For the first, *Gilgal*, it was a most famous place in the borders of Israel, famous heretofore for many things. I know no one place that there are more glorious things spoke of than of *Gilgal*, except *Jerusalem* it self. It was famous for these things.

First, There was that great Circumcision after Israel came out of the wilderness, when God rold away their reproach, from whence it had the name *Gilgal*. For we are to know that all the fourty yeers wherein Israel was in the wilderness, none of their children were circumcised, God was so indulgent to his people for that time, because they were to remove up and down according as God should require, they knew not how soon, now if their children should then have been circumcised they could not have carried them up and down so readily. But yet it seems it was an affliction, for God saith he would roll away the reproach of Egypt from off them.

them and therefore commanded that they should be circumcised. Now when they came over Jordan, as soon as ever they came to set foot upon the land of *Canaan*, or presently upon it, then God required them to circumcise their children. And if we observe it, it was a strange command, for they were now come into the very mouth of their enemies, and all the people of *Canaan*, all the Kings and Princes of the Countrey were gathered together to fight against them, and yet now they must circumcise even their fighting men, those that had been in the wilderness so long, all those that were under forty yeers old must now be circumcised, and though they were even in the very mouth of their enemies and by reason of their foreness after their circumcision they could not be able to stir out against them, yet they must come to it. Thus we see God will have his worship regarded rather than our own safety when he pleaseth. And upon this the place was called *Gilgal*, the text gives the reason, *Josb. 5. 9. This day (saith God) have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you, wherefore the name of the place is called Gilgal unto this day.* The word is from גלגל that signifies to roll, the Hebrew letter *Gimel* being doubled and interposed, it is *Gilgal*. That is the first thing observable of this place, that there was the great circumcision.

Note

2 Secondly, There was the first Pass-over that was ever kept in the land of *Canaan*, as appears *Josb. 5. 10.*

3 Thirdly, In *Gilgal* there the *Manna* ceased, and the people were fed with the bread of the Wheat of the country of *Canaan*; there God gave them that first possession of *Canaan* to eat of the fruit of the Land, that they should not have any need of such extraordinary providence of God to feed them by *Manna*, but they should eat of the fruit of the land; this was in *Gilgal* as appears *Josb. 5. 12.*

4 Fourthly, There did *Josbua* pitch those twelve stones which they took out of *Jordan* for a memorial & perpetual remembrance of that great deliverance given them by God in drying up the waters of *Jordan* from before them until they were passed over, as appears *Josb. 4. 20.*

Fifthly,

Fiftly, *Joſhua* himſelf together with the Camp kept much in *Gilgal*, and that after *Jericho* was taken, after *Ai* was taken, after the five Kings were ſlain, yet *Joſhua* kept there, *Joſh.* 10. 6. Yea after the whole Countrey was poſſelt yet ſtill he kept at *Gilgal* together with the Camp, as appears *Joſh.* 14. 6.

Yea in the ſixth place, At *Gilgal* the Angel of God appeared unto *Joſhua*, *Joſh.* 5. 13. and told him he was Captain of the hoſt of the Lord, and bad *Joſhua* looſe his ſhoes from off his feet for the place whereon he ſtood was holy. The Angel of God appeared to tell him that he went before as the great Captain of the hoſt of God to give them poſſeſſion, and the place was holy.

Seventhly, At *Gilgal* *Saul* was anointed King and thither he and *Samuel* often repaired, 1 *Sam.* 11. 15.

Eightly, *Gilgal* was the place for ſacrificing, the Tabernacle, the Propitiatory was much at *Gilgal*, as appears 1 *Sam.* 10. 8. and 1 *Sam.* 15. 21. And verſe 33. of that Chapter when *Samuel* hewed *Agag* in pieces, it was in *Gilgal*, and the text ſaith, *It was before the Lord.*

Ninthly, At *Gilgal* *Elijah* and *Eliſha* came often, and there they prophesied as 2 *King.* 2. 1. and chapter 4. verſe 38. You ſee how famous *Gilgal* was, and yet though *Gilgal* in theſe Nine particulars was ſuch a famous place, God gives his people a charge that of all places they muſt not come to *Gilgal*. I will give you the reaſon of the prohibition by and by, only I muſt firſt tell you what *Beth-aven* was.

*Beth-aven* was no other than that Town which ſo often in Scripture was called *Bethel*, which *Bethel* ſignifies the houſe of God, and it had that name given unto it by *Jacob* upon Gods extraordinary appearing to him when he fled becauſe of his brother *Eſau*, *Gen.* 28. This place was before called *Luz*, and it had that name from the abundance of Almond trees which were there, which that word *Luz* ſignifies; but upon Gods appearing unto *Jacob* it changed the name and it is called *Bethel*, the houſe of God; And a very ſweet Note we may have from thence, and that is this, "That Gods appearing to his people in any place puts a more honorable reſpect upon it than

“than all the pleasant fruits that can grow in a place. A Garden or Orchard, if they were fill'd with Almond trees and the most pleasant fruits that can be, yet they are not so delightful, they should not be so delightful to our hearts, nor would not be if our hearts were right, as the house of God, where God appears to us. If God appear to us in any place though it should be a wilderness, it should have the honor rather than the most pleasant Garden in the world where we have not the like appearance of God to us. Gods appearing makes that place the house of God : where ever God appears, there is the house of God, and that will make a place far more delightful than all the beautiful and pleasant fruits in the world possibly can do. Thus you see what both places were; but now they are charged they must not come thither. *Beth-aven* it is no other place than *Bethel*, and if you will know the reason of the change of the name from *Bethel* to *Beth-aven*, I shall shew you presently in giving you the reason why they must not come to *Gilgal* nor to *Beth-aven*.

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Reas. 1

Now the reason why they must not come thither, it was, because though they were such famous places before for Gods true worship, yet now they were become the primest places for Idolatry in the whol land, therefore there is a charge here not to come to *Gilgal* nor to *Beth-aven*. So in *Amos*, 5.5. there you have the like charge almost in the same words, *Seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal*; there it is called *Bethel*; though (saith God) it hath the name from my house, and once there was a glorious appearing of mine there, yet now do not seek to *Bethel*, do not so much as enter into *Gilgal*.

Corruptions of  
*Gilgal*.

That both these places were now very corrupt by Idolatry, I will make that appear too. As I have shewed you how famous these places were before, so I will shew you how corrupt these places afterward were made. For *Gilgal*, that place was abominably corrupt, it appears plainly in *Hos. 9. 15. All their iniquity* (saith God) *is in Gilgal*, above all places there is the greatest iniquity committed, *and there I hated them* saith God. It was the place where God loved his people and manifested himself unto them, but now, *there I hated them*, I saw so much

much wickedneſs in *Gilgal* that made me hate them now. And it quickly grew to be corrupt, for in *Ehuds* time the third Judg from *Joſhua* Idols were then begun to be ſet up in *Gilgal*; Judg. 3. 19. the text ſaith, that *Ehud* turned again from the quarries that were by *Gilgal*, now that word tranſlated *quarries* פטילי some turn it, *be came ab Idolis, from the Idols*, and ſo the word may be tranſlated; And it ſignifies to engrave, he came from the engravings. There were Idols at *Gilgal* then. And the reaſon of the corruption that there was in *Gilgal* was this, becauſe it had been an eminent place, and that place was accounted very holy becauſe of the great things that had been done there, upon which they ſet up their Images there, and put much ſuperſtitious reſpect and honor upon the place. They took the riſe of their reſpect to the place from Gods much appearing there and the great things that had been done there, and now they began to think that place was holy and ſo abuſed it: “As men are ſubject to abuſe places and to put  
“holineſs in places more than God doth becauſe of ſome ſpecial things that have been done in thoſe places; As we ſee  
“Papiſts do at this time, at the Sepulchre of Chriſt, Oh what a deal of ſtir was there about going to viſit the Sepulchre of Chriſt! And the very Croſs whereon Chriſt was crucified what a ſtir was there about that as if it were more holy than any other piece of wood! One chip of it was counted worth I know not how much; And the Sepulchres of the Martyrs and Cels of the Munks, men have gone many a ſore journey to viſit thoſe places. This is the old vanity of ſpirit that was amongſt the people of the Jews. Whereas the truth is that it is not the place that can ſanctifie a work except it be appointed by Gods institution therunto, but if there be any ſanctity in a place it is ſanctified by the work, & not the work by the place; and if the work do ſanctifie it, it is but for the preſent while the holy duties are in exerciſing. We may ſay this is the houſe of God, where the Congregation meets for performance of holy duties, but it is only in regard of the work, when the work is done there remains no impreſſion of holineſs upon the place, as if Gods worſhip were not ſo well accepted in any o-

הו  
הפמ  
ילוי  
פרל  
of dolore,  
ſculpere.

Note

ther place as in that. This was the vanity that was amongst the Jews, they did therefore abuse the place, *Gilgal*, because there had been don so great things there, and God hated it so much the more now, I charge you saith he, come not to *Gilgal* that superstitious place. They thought because it was a place so eminent for many appearings of God, it was therefore the more holy; I do therefore abhor it saith God.

Corrup-  
tions of  
*Bethel*.

*Come not to Beth-aven*] The reason why they must not come to *Beth-aven* appears from the change of the name, it was once *Bethel*, and now it is *Bethaven*, and the difference betwixt these two names *Bethel* and *Beth-aven* is wide and great, *Bethel* is the house of God, and *Bethaven* is the house of iniquity, the house of vanity, the house of labor, and the house of affliction, for it signifies all these. That which was my house, which I did once own, being corrupted it is no other but the house of iniquity, and vanity, and the house that brings affliction. *Beth-aven* was one of the places where *Jeroboam* set up one of his Calves, one of the eminentest places for the Calves, and he took the advantage of the conceit that the people had of the holines of that place to set up one of his Calves there, & thought thereby to prevail with the people so much the more: now God chargeth them that they should not come there. There was indeed another Town as in *Josh. 7.* that before was called *Beth-aven*, but generally that by Interpreters is made another Town, not that of *Bethel*, but this Town here is no other than that *Bethel* of which we have such often mention in the Scripture. And some, as *Aquila*, and *Symachus*, they turn the word *Bethaven*, *Domus inuicilis*, an unprofitable place, for indeed sin and idolatry make places unprofitable.

*Aquila*  
Note

Obser,

*Come not to Beth-aven.*] From whence we are to note, First, We must take heed of coming to places that are dangerous to draw us into sin, especially to false worship. Those places that are dangerous for bodily pollution we must take heed of. *Prov. 5. 8.* Remove thy way far from her, and do not come near the door of her house. Do not come so much as nigh her door. Say not, why may not I go such a way? may not I go by her house? No you must not go by her house, nor by that way that leads to her house.

houſe. This is a ſtrange admonition you will ſay; Mark the very words before the admonition, in the ſeventh verſe, *Hear me now O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth;* what are the words of his mouth? *Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her houſe.* Thus wiſdom her ſelf counſels us, howſoever many think they may take liberty to themſelves to come neer a temptation, neer to ſuch a place, many have come ſo neer that they have been taken with the temptation; As you ſhall ſee it ſometimes in your houſes, when you light up a candle, you ſhall have ſome gnats and flies that will flutter up and down the light and at firſt they will keep at ſome diſtance, and then get neerer, till at length they ſinge their wings and loſe their lives too; ſo it is with many, at firſt they think, they will not do ſuch a thing, Oh God forbid they ſhould do ſo and ſo; but they will come nigh a temptation, and be tampering with a temptation and at length they are taken with it and deſtroyed by it. It is dangerous to take liberty out of Curioſity to go to ſee places of Idolatry, with pretence only to ſee Maſs, and to go abroad to ſee the faſhions of the Countrey. *Dinab* went abroad to ſee the faſhions of the Countrey, but ſhe came deſloured home; ſo there are many that will go abroad to ſee the faſhions of Countreies out of Curioſity; I ſpeak not of going when God calleth us to it, but to go meerly out of curioſity, it is juſt with God that we ſhould come home maimed and not whol as we went. In the Lords prayer we pray that God would not lead us into temptation, How do men mock God when they pray to God daily, *Lead us not into temptation,* yet they will venture upon temptations, go to brothel houſes, to many places where they know there will be wicked company, yea even thruſt themſelves into wicked company needleſly, only with this pretence, Oh they will take heed to themſelves, and they mean no hurt; Let not that excuſe you, when you have a temptation to go to wicked places, to play houſes, to brothel houſes, to wicked company, ſatiſfie not your ſelves with this, I mean no hurt; but have you any call from God, can you approve it before God and ſay, Lord thou haſt call'd

Uſe.

ſimile

Curioſity  
To ſee ſuperſtition the danger of it.Play-  
houſes.

*Tertullian* me hither? I suppose you have heard of that story that *Tertullian* hath of a Christian woman, who being at a play was possessed of a Devil, and other Christians coming to cast him out, asked the evil spirit how he durst possess one that was a Christian? He answered, I found her saies he *in my own place*; so if we would take heed of the Devil, take heed of wicked places.

*Obl. 2* Secondly, Whatsoever places have been heretofore, yet when they grow corrupt in Gods worship they lose their honor. *Rome* heretofore hath been a famous Church, as in *Rom. 1.* we find that the faith of *Rome* was spread abroad throughout the world, and so they will yet plead for the glory of *Rome*, because once it was famous. But it is no matter what it hath been, what is it now? suppose it hath been the seat of *Peter*, what is it now? If once they are corrupt in themselves they lose the honor of what once they had. Oh let us take heed unto our selves in this. It is true, *England* hath also been a famous place for Religion, and Travellers that have come hither have blessed themselves, and blessed God for seeing what they have done, they never saw so much of God as in *England*: But if we shall corrupt our waies and grow to be Idolaters and superstitious we may by Gods just judgment be made as infamous and vile as any people upon the face of the earth. And so it is true of particular persons, of persons that heretofore have had much honor among the Saints, have been men of admirable parts and have been useful to the Church, it may be temptation prevails so much with them, I have had such a name, I have done such and such things, I now may be quiet, I cannot but be esteemed of for what I have done. But let a man in his younger time or afterward do never so worthily in the Church of God or Commonwealth, if he decline afterward he loseth all his honor both with God and men, and may be as unfavory salt, and spurned out and troden under foot of men; As *Gilgal* and *Beib-aven* though honored before, yet now the people are charged not to come to them. Some men one would have blest themselves before to be in their company in their families, but now grown



ſo looſe, ſo ſapleſs in their ſpirits, ſo carnal, ſo malignant, ſo ſuperſtitious, ſo vain, that it is dangerous now to come into their company, ſo that now we may even hear a voice from God calling to us, go not into ſuch a mans company, as here, go not to *Gilgal*. Thus you have theſe words opened unto you and what the mind of God is in them. *Come not to Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven*. It follows.

*Nor ſwear the Lord liveth.*] Swearing in it ſelf is lawful, yea it is a part of the ſolemn worſhip of God, when God calls for it; And it is ſuch a part of Gods ſolemn worſhip as ſometimes it is put for all the worſhip of God in Scripture, *Pſal. 63. 12. Iſa. 19. 18*. Therefore oathes are to be eſteemed ſo much the more ſacred; For as God puts an honor upon prayer, that ſometimes all the worſhip of God is called *prayer*, *He that calleth on the Name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved; My houſe ſhall be called the houſe of prayer &c.* So God puts this honor upon

*Oathes*, that all his worſhip hath ſometimes the name of an Oath. Therefore the abuſe of Oaths is much the more vile; & when ſwearing is called for, it ſhould only be by the Name of Lord, we ſhould ſwear by the Lord when it is lawful to ſwear and no other way, for by this we acknowledge the Lord to be the ſearcher of all hearts, the Judger of the heart, the All-ſeeing God, fit to witneſs to al mens waies, and to be an avenger of all their unfaithfulneſs, this we hold forth in an Oath. And here is the reaſon that we muſt ſwear by none but by God, becauſe in ſwearing (I ſay) we do acknowledge him we ſwear by to be the ſearcher of our hearts, the witneſs of all our ſecrets, and the ſupream Judge if we be unfaithful; Now this honor is only due to God whether ſecret or open. God accounteth much of this his honor and will not give it to another. And when we do ſwear by the Name of God, the *Life of God* is the greateſt title we can give to God in an Oath. It is the greateſt Oath of all, God himſelf doth often ſwear by his life, and the Angel ſweareth by the living God. God loveth that his creature ſhould acknowledge him to be the living God for ever, that is to live to reward that which is good, and to revenge that which is

Note

An Oath  
what it  
implies.

Living  
God what  
it implies.

evil.

evil. And therefore *Jer. 4. 2.* there is an injunction, *Thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth,* but it must be *in truth, in righteousness, and in judgment.* And indeed it is Gods mercy to us that he will grant us the use of his Name, that he is willing to be called to witness to our affairs.

But then you will say, why doth God forbid it? In that place of *Jeremiah* you see it is, *Thou shalt swear, the Lord liveth;* and here, *You shall not swear the Lord liveth.* How shall we reconcile these? Thus, because God would not have his Name and this his solemn worship abused by Idolaters; When they were before their Idols yet still they would make use of Gods Name and would seem to honor God; Oh Jehovah liveth, we acknowledg him and honor him as a living God. This was the guize of those Idolaters, though they forsook the true worship of God and his commandement, yet they would seem to honor God much, *the Lord liveth,* and we desire to honor this living God. Now saith God, what do you go on in such waies of Idolatry as these and take my Name into your mouths? what have you to do to take my Name into your mouths seeing you hate to be reformed? I will have none of this honor from you saith God, you shall not swear any more, *the Lord liveth.*

Applica. Many superstitious people they will make much use of the titles of God in their mouths, and have many expressions about God that carry much devotion with them, they will cry out, our blessed Saviour, our Lord and Saviour, and the blessed God, and honouring the Lord and the like, they will I say have many titles of God in their mouths and expressions that carry much devotion with them, but God cares for none of these all the while they worship him according to the traditions of men, after their owne inventions, God cares not for all their seeming honouring him, for all their devotion, let them appear to men to be never so devout, God rejects those devotions when they reject his pure and sincere worship. God loves not to have his worship mixed. *Zeph. 1. 5.* there God chargeth them for swearing by the *Lord* and by *Malcham,* that they would put both together; what is the meaning of that? *Malcham* there signifies, a King, for so the Hebrew

Hebrew word doth, and it ſeems that this people, though it is true they would ſometimes call their Idols by the name of King, *Honoris gratia*, to give reſpect unto them, yet there is ſome probability that in this place more is intended, namely that they would worſhip God, yea but they would worſhip their King too, they would ſwear by God and by *Malcham*, they made their honor of their King come too neer the honor of God; that is one thing (I ſay) that ſeems to be ſpecially intended here, they would not reject the true God, but they would ſet the honor of their King too too neer the honor of the true God. It is true, both are to be honored, but one is to be honored more than the other, and the true diſtance between both in giving honor is duly to be obſerved, and not to jumble them both together, to ſwear by God, and to ſwear by *Malcham*, & not obſerve the true diſtance between them both; Much leſs to prefer the will of their *Malcham* their King before the will of their God. God cares not for any honor that is given unto him if we make any Competitor with him. It is true indeed God rejects not the worſhip of his Saints becauſe of ſome mixtures of evil, for there are none that do worſhip him ſo but they do mix ſome ſin with it; But now ſuch as chuſe to themſelves ſome way of ſin, that ſet up in their hearts and lives ſome way of ſin, and then think it ſufficient to give God ſome outward ſervice and to put off God ſo, while at other times they follow their own luſts, ſuch worſhip God rejecteth, therefore ſaith the Lord here to theſe Idolaters, *You ſhall not ſwear, the Lord liveth.* It follows.

Zeph. i. 5  
Opened.

Note.

Caution.

## Verſe 16.

*For Iſrael ſlideth back as a back-ſliding heifer.*

Here firſt Iſrael, the ten Tribes, is compared to a heifer, and to a back-ſliding heifer. A heifer, that noted the wantonneſſe of Iſrael. And here is one argument why Judah muſt not offend as Iſrael doth, let not Judah offend as Iſrael doth, for Iſrael is as a back ſliding heifer: Iſrael through his ſin hath brought himſelf to be a vile, a wanton heifer, but the emblem  
of

Heifer.

of Judah is to be a Lyon, *Gen. 49. 9. Judah is a Lyons whelp, he stooped down, he couched as a Lyon, and as an old Lyon; who shall rouse him up?* It is true that Judah should not refuse the yoke thorough wantonness and perversness, but through a magnanimous spirit, he should not be willing to be brought under the yoke of bondage. Israel is as a heifer that through wantonness doth refuse to be brought under the yoke, but let not Judah do thus, for Judah is as a Lyon, and although Judah be a Lyon, yet he should come under Gods command, to be subject unto him; but when it comes to be in bondage unto men and that in matters of Religion, Judah should have a magnanimous spirit, a Lyon-like spirit and should cast off the yoke of men in that regard, *Let not Judah be like Israel; Judah is as a Lyon, Israel as a heifer.*

And the word that is translated *back-sliding*, commeth of ככה It signifies perversness as well as backsliding. It is translated in Scripture *stubborness, rebellion*, as in that place of *Duteronomy* about the stubborn and rebellious child, there is the same word that is here, and many other Scriptures might be shewen how this word is taken otherwise than here for *back-sliding*: Israel is a stubborn, a rebellious, a perverse people, therefore let not Judah be so. And I find the *Seventy* translate it thus, *δαμάλις παροισεῖσα*. Israel, the ten Tribes, they were like a stung Bullock, *Juvenca oestro percita*, as if so be they had by a kind of witchery, or by the byting of some venemous thing been put into a fury or madness; that is the force of the word according to the translation of the *Seventy*, they translate it (I say) by such a word whereby they would signify that Israel was not now like a Heifer only wanton, but like a Heifer that was bit with some venemous thing, and ran up and down like a mad thing. There is a great deal of difference between the wantonness of a beast, and a beast that runs up and down in a fury and madness as being bit with a mad-dog. Thus this people was. *Ephraim goeth on madly: As many wicked men go on in waies aparantly against light and conscience, and against the Word, though they know it will prove to be their eternal ruin and destruction, Conscience tels them*

them ſo, yet they go on in a madneſs violently in a rage even down to the pit. This was *Ephraim's* condition here

And that which made *Ephraim* do ſo, it was his proſperity. *Ephraim* was grown proſperous and had plenty of food, was fed full and large, and that made them go on in ſuch a fury and rage in the waies of wickedneſs and ſin. That was now fulfilled of *Ephraim* that was propheſied of him *Deut. 32. 15.* *Thou art waxed fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatneſs; then he forſtook God which made him, and lightly eſteemed the Rock of his ſalvation.* Oh when a people is waxen fat and grown proſperous, then they kick and ſpurn and forſake God that made them, and lightly eſteem the Rock of their ſalvation; God and his Truth and his Saints and his Ordinances, they are nothing with them, they lightly eſteem them, why? becauſe they are waxen fat, they are in their proſperity. You ſhall have many men upon their ſick beds highly eſteem of the Miniſters of God and of the waies of God and of his word and worſhip, and then, Oh ſend for ſuch and ſuch to come to us; but when they are in proſperity they lightly eſteem God and all that concerns God. This was the condition of *Ephraim*. Where have you a man almoſt but if God let him proſper, except he come in with abundance of his grace, but he grows wanton in his proſperity? *Judah* was almoſt in the ſame way, though here the Lord would not have *Judah* to be like *Ephraim* as a wanton heifer ſpurning and kicking with the heel, yet it appears in *Jer. 2. 24.* that *Judah* was not much unlike them, *Judah* is there compared to a wild Aſs uſed to the wilderneſs, that ſnuffeth up the wind at her pleaſure, all they that ſeek her will not weary themſelves, but ſaies God, *in her month they ſhall find her; take her when ſhe is full of ſpirit and ſtrength and there is no dealing with her, but in her month, when ſhe is more weakened then they ſhall find her; So many men, take them at ſome times when they are in the ruff of their pride and proſperity, there is no dealing with them, but when God hath tamed them by affliction then you may talk with them and then they will hear you.*

Reaf.

Note

Applic.

*Israel is as a back-sliding heifer.*] The word that is tranſlated

heifer here, it is in the feminine gender, though it is spoken of the ten Tribes, because being stubborn and raging mad in wickedness, though they did seem to themselves and others to be of brave spirits, yet the Lord looks upon them as people of base and effeminate spirits, of poor and weak spirits. There is none that are stubborn and proud but they think themselves to be of more than ordinary spirits, they are the only brave spirits; but the Lord looks upon those that are stubborn and proud as base and weak spirits, and therefore speaks of them here in the feminine gender.

Obfer.

*Now the Lord will feed them as a Lamb in a large place.*

I find some, *Mercer* and *Vatablus*, they would carry it thus : *Lautè ut Agnus pastus, mox maculatur.* As a Lamb when it hath large food it is soon slain, so God threatneth *Ephraim* here that he will soon make an end of them, only he will let them prosper for a while and feed them largely, but it shall be for the slaughter. Many men that are fed largely and are in their prosperity, they think themselves blessed, God intends them only for the slaughter; But I think that is not the meaning of the place, *they shall be fed as a Lamb.* But thus,

Obfer.

*As a Lamb.]* They are as a heifer raging mad, but I will make them as a Lamb, I will bring such affliction upon them as that I will tame the pride of their hearts. Have you not seen experiences of this kind? did you never see a ruffianly, blasphemous, proud, stubborn spirit, when the hand of God was upon them, tamed?

*Fed as a Lamb.]* *Parce ac tenuiter*, not fed as a heifer, that noted their prosperity, but fed as a lamb, that notes their adversity, for the food of a lamb differs from the food of a heifer, that which will feed a lamb will starve a heifer. Now saith God, they have been proud and wanton by their prosperity, but now they shall have short Commons, I will bring them down, I will lay them low, they shall be but as a lamb that picks up the grass in the wilderness.

*As a lamb in a large place.]* That is, dispersed among the Coun-

Countries, amongst the *Aſſyrians* and *Medes* in their captivity, which was a very large Countrey. They would not be ſatisfied with Canaan (which was a narrower Countrey) and with that Sheep-fold of mine that was there, they ſhall have more room ſaith God, they ſhall go into a large place, but it ſhall be into their captivity.

Or rather, which I conceive to be the full ſcope of the holy Gholt in theſe words, *I will feed them as a lamb in a large place*, That is, as a lamb that ſhall be alone; *one lamb*, he ſpeaks of a lamb ſingly, becauſe they ſhall be ſcattered. They had ſociety and might have made good uſe of their ſociety where it was, but they did not regard to make good uſe of it, to edifie themſelves in the fear of God, they ſhall be ſcattered one in one place and another in another, and they ſhall be as a lamb *alone* in the wilderneſs, ſuccourleſs, helpleſs, ſhiftleſs, bleating up and down in the wilderneſs, in the wide vaſt wilderneſs, and none to have any regard unto them. As now if you ſhould ſee one poor lamb in a vaſt wilderneſs, in a mighty great heath, and in a wilderneſs where there are a great many Wolves that are ready to devour it, and there is no body near it, no ſhepherd to look after it, none that regard it, but it goes bleating up and down alone and none takes any care of it; what will become. think you of this lamb? what a ſuccourleſs condition is it in? So ſaith God, they have been wanton heifers, but I will feed them as a lamb in a large place, their condition ſhall be juſt thus, they ſhall be carried into captivity and there they ſhall be bleating and howling and crying out, and in danger of Wolves, but there ſhall be no body to regard them and ſuccour them. It is a great deal ſafer for a lamb to be in the flock though it be more pin'd in, than to be thus alone in a large place. "We love our liberty, and we may have liberty enough, but this our liberty may prove to be our miſery." To keep within the compaſs of Gods commands is the beſt liberty of all, as *David* profeſſeth *Pſal. 119. Then ſhall I have liberty, when I keep all thy commandments.* As for all other liberty it will certainly bring us into ſtraightneſs, therefore *Rom. 2. 4, 5.* where tribulation and anguiſh is

Obſer.

threatned to be upon the head of every one that worketh wickedness, the word translated *anguish* is straightness of place, *they shall have straightness of place*; you would have elbow room and would fain get out of Gods limits: though God may for a time let you have such liberty, yet the conclusion will be anguish of spirit. Oh my brethren there is largeness, there is room enough in God, our souls may expatiate themselves in God, we need go no further for liberty, If we would have liberty out of God out of his bounds, our liberty will prove our society of undoing and utter destruction. Let us make much then of the Saints to society of the Saints while we are not yet through Gods mercy be improved. scattered up and down in other Countries as some of our brethren have been, though thorough Gods mercy some in strange Countries have met with Gods fold, and have been in Gods fold there, but others have been scattered about and have walked up and down in the streets and have known no body, and have had none to help them in any strait; but now we may meet together, we may be in Gods fold and have our hearts refreshed, we may go into our families and pray together and sing together; Our condition is not yet as it is here threatned against Israel, that they should be as a lamb in a large place bleating up and down and none to regard them. If one should be in some parts of *Germany* and there see an English man in some great straight, wring his hands and making grievous complaints, and no body succouring of him or helping him, there he remembers what he hath been in *England*, in what fashion he hath lived, and now there is none regards him, this were a sad condition. This is the condition here threatned, *They shall be fed as a lamb in a large place.*

Verse 17.

*Ephraim is joyned to Idols; Let him alone:*

You have heard before that God gives warning unto Judah to take heed of the sins of Israel, of the ten Tribes; And many arguments are used; some you have heard, and others remain.

This



This 17. verſe hath two ſtrong arguments for it.

First, *Ephraim* is joyned to Idols, *Ephraim* engaging himſelf in that way of falſe worſhip is now ſo inwrapped in that ſin and guilt that he cannot tel how to get out, he is joyned to it : As it is the way of Idolaters and the curſe of God upon them, that when they are once got into that ſin it is very hard ever to recover them out of it. Take heed *Judah* that you come not into it. 1.

Secondly, As he is joyned ſo, being ſtrongly ſet upon his Idols, ſo the Lord hath given him up to his Idols. There is this curſe of God upon him to ſay, *Let him alone.* Oh *Judah* rake heed what you do then. So that theſe words are brought in as two arguments to perſwade *Judah* not to do as *Israel* hath done, and indeed all the remainder too of this Chapter is brought in this way. 2.

To ſpeak then of theſe :

*Ephraim is joyned to Idols*] *Ephraim*, why *Ephraim* was dead long ago, *Ephraim* was one of the Patriarches, the child of a Patriarch at leaſt, he was the grand-child of *Jacob*, and he had a great bleſſing upon him. *Gen. 48. 20.* *In thee ſhall Israel bleſs, and ſhall ſay, God make thee like Ephraim.* *Ephraim* had a ſpecial bleſſing upon him, ſuch a bleſſing as that the reſt of the Tribes ſhould ſay, *God bleſs thee, and make thee like Ephraim* (for *Joſeph's* tribe was in *Ephraim* and *Mannaſſes*;) and yet now it is ſaid, that *Ephraim is joyned to Idols.*

Why *Ephraim* ?

Becauſe that the chief of the ten Tribes that were now joyned to Idols were the children of *Ephraim*, for *Ephraim* and *Mannaſſes* ſtood in ſtead of *Joſeph*, that Patriarch, and the children I ſay of *Ephraim* were thoſe that were joyned to Idols, which were the chief of the ten Tribes. From whence the firſt Note is this. That Expofit. 1.

*Children that are wicked they are great diſgraces and diſhonors unto their parents.* *Ephraim* that was dead long before ſuffers diſhonor by his children that are now joyned to Idols. Let children out of reverence and reſpect to their parents take heed what they do. Obl. 1.

Ue.

Secondly

Secondly, All the ten Tribes were joyned to Idols, why then  
 Expos. 2. is *Ephraim* named rather than any of the other? The reason  
 is this, because that *Jeroboam* and the Princes were all of the  
 tribe of *Ephraim*, and therefore all is put upon them. He doth  
 not say the ten Tribes are joyned to Idols, but *Ephraim* is,  
 because indeed the Idolatry of all the other nine Tribes was  
 from the Idolatry of *Jeroboam* and the Princes that were  
 of the Tribe of *Ephraim*. From whence another Note is  
 this, That,

Obs. 2. *The Governours of people are usually the causes of the evil of the  
 people, and especially in the point of false worship.* If Governours  
 be superstitious and Idolaters, if they will favour Idolatry,  
 all the people usually or the generallity of them will go that  
 way. They contract the guilt of the Idolatry of all the false  
 worship of the people. *Ephraim* doth, *Jeroboam* and the Prin-  
 ces that were of that Tribe contracts all the guilt of the Idola-  
 try of all the ten Tribes, therefore it is said *Ephraim* only, as if  
 only *Ephraim* was joyned to Idols. Governours therefore that  
 are superstitious and Idolatrous have woful guilt upon them,  
 and we have cause to lament their condition exceedingly. We  
 reade in that second of *Matthew* where the wise men came to  
 enquire after the King of the Jews, they came from a far  
 Countrey, they said they had seen his star and they desired  
 to know where the place was that he should be born in: It  
 was a mighty work, & such a work as did trouble *Herod*, and all  
*Jerusalem* with him was in a mighty trouble what this should  
 be, a strange thing, that such wise men should come so far, from  
 a far Country, and tell us of a star that appeared, and that a  
 King of the Jews should be born, all the people were troubled  
 together with the King, so as that they called a counsel of all  
 the chief Priests and the Scribes and such as were expert in the  
 Law, to know where Christ should be born, and this Counsel  
 told them that the place was to be in *Bethlehem*, and upon that  
 the wise men according to their direction or according to the  
 star, went to find out the place: But mark, you do not reade  
 of any one of all the people of *Jerusalem* that went with the  
 wise men; Although they were stirred at it and thought it a  
 wonder.

Note

wonderful work that a ſtar ſhould thus appear, and that theſe wiſe men ſhould come and enquire for the King of the Jews, and that their own Teachers ſhould tell them that he was to be born at *Bethlehem* and thereupon they went to *Bethlehem* to ſearch it out, yet (I ſay) we do not read that any of the people went with them; No, they durſt not becauſe of *Herod, Herod* that was then their Prince he did not frame that way, and therefore not one of the people would follow after the wiſe men to ſearch after Chriſt. So it is uſual, that when Governours diſcountenance the waies of God, the people generally do as they do; And eſpecially Governours that are in waies of ſuperſtition and Idolatry, and together with thoſe waies ſhall give people liberty to ſatiſfie their luſts, then they will cleave unto them indeed, as *Jeroboam* and the reſt of the Princes did, they ſet up a falſe way of worſhip and together with that they gave liberty unto the people to ſatiſfie their luſts, as appeared partly before and will further appear in this propheſie; And this was one ſpecial way by which they gained the hearts of the people to them in their falſe worſhip becauſe they gave ſcope and liberty to their luſts. Let any Princes and Governours ſet up and countenance any falſe way of worſhip, and together with it give liberty to the people for the ſatiſfying of their luſts and they will gain enow unto them, there is no cauſe to wonder that ſuch Princes ſhould have ſo many to cleave unto them, ſeeing the people know that by cleaving unto them they ſhall have liberty to enjoy their luſts. That is a ſecond Note.

Thirdly, *Ephraim is joyned to Idols.*] The word is קִשְׁרָה and it ſignifies in the Participle, *Incantatus*, ſuch a kind of joyning as your Inchanters in the waies of their conjuration joyn their unclean ſpirits to them, that is the propriety of the word; ſo *Ephraim* is joyned to his Idols, cleaveth to his Idols, or (as ſome turn it) is glued to his Idols, and that unclean ſpirit that carries him on to the waies of Idolatry, he comes to be one with him; as it is ſaid of Beleevers, *that they are joyned to the Lord Chriſt, and ſo they are one ſpirit*; ſo Idolaters are joyned to the Devil and are become one ſpirit, that is the meaning,

Expof. 3.

ning, they are glued to that unclean spirit and so they come to be fastened to their Idols, that is the propriety of the word. From thence the Note is, That,

Obs. 3 *Idolaters hearts are very strongly glued to the waies of Idolatry, so that it is very hard for any to get off their hearts. Jer. 8.5. They take fast hold of deceit; they will not easily be taken off. And Jer. 2. 10. 11. Pass over unto Kedar and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing; Hath a Nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? Kedar was one of the vilest places of all: Wo is me saith David, that I have my habitation in the tents of Kedar: yet saith God, go thither and see whether they have changed their gods. Those that are the most vilest Idolaters yet they will not change their gods, their hearts are joynd to their gods, let their hearts be never so base and their gods never so vile; as the Egyptians, they would worship Leaves, and Garlick, and Cats, base and vile things and yet they would not be taken off from their Idolatrous waies. I have read of a people in India, in the Isle Zolon, that worshiped an Apes Tooth, and when it was taken from them they offered an unconceivable sum of treasure to regain that their Idol again, they are set upon their waies of Idolatry though it be never so foolish, never so sottish.*

An Apes  
tooth.

And especially if Idolaters have outward prosperity, to be as the glew and cement, to joyn their hearts to that way of false worship, then they are joynd indeed. Take men that are superstitious and if they do prosper in their waies, this their prosperity is the glue and cement to joyn their hearts strongly to those waies, there is no getting of them off from them. And though they have been long in that way of false worship, they do not like it ever a whit the worse. I beseech you observe this note. "In any thing that is false worship antiquity will make it venerable, and they will plead for it by antiquity, and say, it is thus and thus ancient, and their forefathers did thus and thus." But observe it, in waies of the true worship of God men are quickly weary, and because they have had it a great while they desire some novelty, some new thing. You shall have many people much affected with  
the

the truth when it is firſt revealed to them, and when they com  
to hear Sermons or ſuch exerciſes their hearts are much taken  
with them, but within a while they loath this Mannah and  
ſo fall off quickly from it! “So that in the worſhip of God  
“that is true and right, there the continuance in it makes it to  
“be leſs eſteemed; but in falſe worſhip the longer people con-  
“tinue in it the more they eſteem it, and there antiquity makes  
“it to be venerable, they do argue frō antiquity to make it the  
“more honorable. This is the wickedneſs of the hearts of men.

But will Idolaters thus joyn to their Idols? will their  
hearts be glued to them? are they willing to be one ſpirit with  
them: Oh how much more ſhould we joyn to the Lord our  
God, joyn to Jeſus Chriſt, to be as one ſpirit with him? That  
exhortation of *Barnabus Act. 11. 23.* that with full purpoſe of  
heart they ſhould cleave unto the Lord, is a reaſonable Exhor-  
tation even at all times. Oh let us cleave unto God and his  
worſhip ſo as whatſoever arguments are uſed yet our hearts  
may never be taken off from the love of the truth; but let us  
ſay as once that Martyr did, *Though you may pluck my heart out  
of my bowels, yet you ſhall never pluck the Truth out of my heart.* And  
the leſs there is between God and our hearts the more firmly  
ſhall we be glewed to him. Thoſe that are godly, gracious,  
they need not the glue, the cement of outward proſperity to  
joyn their hearts unto God, but godlineſs alone, the sweet-  
neſs that they find in God alone is enough to joyn their hearts  
unto him even in an everlaſting covenant. Thoſe men who  
ſeem to be joyned to God and his worſhip, yet if it be the glue  
and cement of outward reſpects that joyns their hearts unto  
God they will quickly fall off from it; But thoſe that are im-  
mediately joyned to God they will for ever keep to him, when  
there is nothing but God and their hearts together, nothing  
between God and them.

Ephraim is joyned to Idols] The word that is tranſlated *Idols*;  
it is by ſome tranſlated *Anguſti*, and ſo indeed it ſignifies, it  
ſignifies pain and trouble, for their Idols did in the concluſion  
bring them to pain and trouble. There are two reaſons why  
it ſignifies pain and trouble:

Uſe.

a Martyrs  
ſaying.Anguſti  
dolore  
afflicere.  
Expof. 4.

Reaf. 1 First, Because that Idolaters were willing to endure much pain and trouble in the worshipping of their Idols; which should teach us not to account the worship of God tedious though it be somewhat hard to the flesh; Idolaters would endure pain and trouble to the flesh in the worshipping of their Idols.

Reaf. 2 Secondly, Such worship will bring pain and trouble to them in the conclusion.

But this is not the principal thing intended here, but the force of the argument is, *Ephraim is joyned to Idols*, therefore meddle not with him, do not you do as they do. So that when we see people set up false waies of worship in any place, and they are set upon those false waies of worship, we must take heed of communicating with them in these false waies of worship; But this Note, to enter into it will take up a great deal of time.

Let him alone] *Demitte eum*, Let him go saith God, he is joyned to his Idols, let him go. First, This is a speech to Judah, let Ephraim go saith God to Judah. *Ephraim*, they indeed are the ten Tribes, the most of the people of the Jews, but yet seeing they set up false worship, let them go, have nothing to do with them, do not converse with them. "It is a heavy judgment of God upon a people when the Saints shall let them alone, when they shall withdraw from them." If God had any Saints in the world they were in Judah, and saith God to these Saints of his, let Israel alone and withdraw from them have nothing to do with them, though they be your brethren and Country men yet let them alone. Many wicked men they make nothing of this, and say when as Gods people that are the most strict, and holy, and gracious, shall withdraw from them, and as heretofore they went out of the land because they saw it so defiled with superstitious vanities, let them all go say they, we are well rid of them; And who

knows but you may meet with such expressions before you die? that you may have many that will be willing to be rid of those that are most godly and gracious. Well, whatsoever men think and say, let them know it is a dreadful curse of God

upon

upon a Nation for the Saints of God to withdraw and go from them, for ſo God threatneth it as one of the moſt dreadful curſes; Judah, let them alone, have nothing to do with them: ſo when God ſhall ſpeak to his Saints that they ſhall withdraw from others of their brethren, (I ſay) it is one of the moſt dreadful judgments of God upon a people what ever they think of it. You know that expreſſion that you have of the moſt fearful curſe of God upon thoſe that are wicked in the *I Cor. 16. 22.* *He that loves not the Lord Jeſus, let him be Anathema Maranatha.* *Anathema*, let him be accuſed, but *Maranatha* the meaning of that is, the Lord cometh; *Maran* it ſignifies the Lord, in the Chaldee and Syriack; therefore in *Dan. 4. 19.* and *Dan. 5. 23.* there that word is tranſlated *Lord, My Lord the dram be to them that hate thee,* and *Thou haſt lifted up thy ſelf againſt the Lord of Heaven,* the word is *Mar* there, from whence that word *Maran* in the Syriack comes; *Daniel* living in *Chaldea* uſed that phraſe for the Lord, And *atha* ſignifies to come, *Deut. 33. 2.* *The Lord cometh with thouſands of his Sains,* the word in the original there is *atha*\* So that you have in Scripture theſe two words *Maran* and *atha*; what then is the meaning of that, *Let him be Anathema Maranatha*? That is thus, when men ſhall forſake Chriſt and the waies of his worſhip after means have been uſed with them, then *Anathema Maranatha*, that is, let all the Saints of God leave them to the coming of Jeſus Chriſt, let them alone, do not meddle with them, when you have uſed all means you can then withdraw your ſelves from them and leave them unto the coming of Chriſt, and Chriſt will deal with them well enough; Let them not only be excommunicated, for ſome when they were excommunicated though the Saints withdrew themſelves from them yet they ſought to gain them again, but ſome were ſo direfully excommunicated that they were to be let alone to the coming of Chriſt; ſo when thoſe that are godly ſhall firſt labour to deal with ſuch as are wicked and ungodly by admonition, and perſwaſion, and counſel, and they ſhall be refractory, and ſtout, and ſtubborn, and be as ſwine to trample under feet thoſe pearls, or as dogs to turn again and rend

*Maran*  
*Atha*  
opened

\* or you  
may take  
it as a  
*Syriack*  
word  
ſignifying  
to come.

Uſe.

them, they are then to let them alone, that is, to let them alone to the coming of Jesus Christ; and even in their own hearts say, we see no means can do them any good, *Maranatha*, the Lord cometh and he shall deal with them himself when he comes.

Expof. 2. *Let them alone.*] The Lord speaks to the Prophet, as if he should say, *Hosea*, you can do no good upon them, it is in vain for you to meddle with *Ephraim*, *Let him alone*; Just as Christ gave order to his Disciples when he sent them forth to preach the Gospel, that if any place rejected them they should go away and shake the dust off their feet, it shall be a testimony against them saith he; So saith God here to the Prophet, let them alone, spend not your strength any more upon them. The exhortations that come from the Saints, but especially from Ministers of the Gospel, from Ministers of God, be they what they will be, they are pearls and precious things, and God will not have them despised, he will not have them spent in vain; therefore there is a time even for the Ministers of God to let people alone. In *Exod* 33. 7. we read that when the people had notoriously sinned against God, *Moses* took the Tabernacle of the Congregation and pitched it without the Camp, he went away from the people and did separate from them till they did repent, and would not come amongst them, he took the Tabernacle and went away from the Camp at a great distance from them, more than ordinary: So there is a time even for the Ministers of God to hold their peace and let people alone. Many people think they are troubled with Ministers, and they could wish they would let them alone, why do they trouble us? we were quiet enough before they came, we would they would let us alone. There are many guilty consciences that cannot come to a powerful Ministry but they find that the Minister hath in every Sermon to do with them, and he will not let them alone in their wicked waies, and this troubleth them and they had rather be let alone; had you so? It is one of the most dreadful judgments in the world for God to say, let such a Ministry let a man alone. It may be some of you may be weary of the faithful Ministers.

Obfer.

Use



nifters of God; you may be rid of them perhaps, God may take them away and you may be let alone, but yet know it is the brand of Gods wrath upon you.

Thirdly, This letting alone, it ſhews that God himſelf Expoſ. 3 would let them alone too, it is an evidence of Gods rejection of this people; It is as if a father that had uſed means to reclaim a rebellious child, and he regards nothing that is ſaid, at length ſaith the father, let him alone: what do you think is the meaning of this if the father ſhould ſay ſo? it is as much as if he ſhould ſay, I have done with him, I will own him no more, I will meddle no more with him: If a ſervant ſhould ſimile be ſtubborn and rebellious and after much means uſed to reclaim him ſhould not be reclaimed; the Maſter ſaith, let him alone let him take his own courſe, I will have no more to do with him; So here when God ſaith, *Let them alone*, it is as if he ſhould ſay, let them take their own waies, let them have their luſts to the full, let them joyn and joyn and joyn to their Idols and ſatiſfie themſelves with their own devices, *Let them alone*. From hence there are theſe two Notes that are of ſimile mervailous uſe.

Fiſt, *That God hath a time to give over men to themſelves, to ſay* Obl. 2 *that his Spirit ſhal no longer ſtrive with them.* Oh many a man hath felt the Spirit of God drawing, ſtrugling, ſtriving with him to draw him from ſuch and ſuch a wicked way; he hath felt (I ſay) Gods Spirit mighty and ſtrong, what will you ſtill go on in this way of wickedneſs, uncleannels, drunkenneſs, oppreſſion, injuſtice, profanation, hypocriſie, ſelf-ſeeking and the like? but he hath been ſtriving againſt the Spirit of God and his luſts have even gotten the victory over the Spirit, ſo that God ſaith, *My Spirit ſhall no longer ſtrive*, I will not ſtruggle in vain, but let him go on and have his own waies; Oh it is dreadful when the Lord ſhall ſay of a drunkard, of an unclean perſon, of an hypocrite, I have been ſtrugling ſo long with them but yet their hearts have been oppoſite to me, let them alone in that wicked way and let them go on and ſatiſfie themſelves in their wicked devices, *Pſal. 81. 12.* *They would none of me ſaith God, they would none of my waies,*

*So I gave them up to their own counsels.* Oh this is a dreadful gift! Many men that will set their counsels against Gods counsels, and will do it so long as that God at length gives them up to their own counsels: You will set your thoughts against my Truth, your counsels against mine, well, take your counsels, satisfie your selves in your own waies. And you know that place in the latter end of the Revelation, *He that will be filthy, let him be filthy still*: Saith God, *Let him alone*; wil you be filthy? be filthy then. And that in Ezek. 24. 13. *Because when I would have purged them they would not be purged, therefore they shal be purged no more* saith God; I will let them alone, I will never seek either by my word or by my works to do them any further good, they shall be purged no more.

And the reason of this is:

Reas. 1

1. *Because God hath no need of men.* God doth this to shew that he hath no need of you; Indeed he seeks by his Word to draw you to obedience to his service, and you stand off and draw from him and will not come on; At length God will manifest himself that he hath no need of your service, he can honor himself without you, though you perish as filth and dung everlastingly.

2

2. God therefore will let men alone in their sin, *because he doth know how to fetch out glory to his own Name from their sinnes.* You will go on in your wicked waies, you will be stubborn and stout saith God, do you think to hinder me of my glory that way? well, do you take your fill of your lusts, I know how to glorifie my self out of that sin of yours that you do so much against my glory, therefore take your fill of it.

Obs. 2.

Secondly, which is the chief, *It is the most wofull judgment of God upon any people, upon any person, when God shall say in his wrath, Let him alone, go on.* The word is *הנהלו* and it is as much as to say, Let him be quiet, and *Tranquillus*: that quiet will prove a dreadful storm. You know what the wise man saith, *Wo to him that is alone*, Oh wo to him that God saith, *Let him alone*, that is thus alone. Many men bless themselves when they are let alone, and desire it, Let us alone say they: Oh but when God shal say, *Let them alone*, this is a most dreadful

ful thing indeed. It was a fearful evil, it proved at leaſt to be a fearful evil to *Adam* in Paradise when God let him alone, when God left *Adam* to himſelf what became of him? he undid himſelf what in him lay and all his poſterity, when he was but left to thoſe natural abilities he had it proved in the concluſion dreadful enough. Yea and when God ſhall but leave his own Saints, that have grace in them, ſhall but leave them for a little while unto themſelves, Oh what miſchief comes of it! As in 2 *Chron.* 32. 31. *Hezekiah* was left to himſelf but a while and what a deal of miſery did he bring upon himſelf, when God did but leave him to himſelf to try what was in his heart? What, are there ſuch evil conſequences upon *Adam* in Paradise left alone, and the Saints left alone here, Oh what a dreadful thing is it then when God ſhall leave a ſinner alone, I mean one that hath nothing elſe but ſin in him, a wicked wretch that hath no grace at all in him?

First, This is a teſtimony of very great diſreſpect in God of Real. 1<sup>o</sup> his creatures, in this, that he accounts them not worthy of any further meddling with, he loves them not ſo well as to meddle any further with them; it is a ſign I ſay of great diſreſpect of God unto them, as if God ſhould ſay, well there are others indeed that are ill enough, that are very great ſinners, but I have mercy for them, I intend to draw them to my ſelf, I intend to ſhew them the evil of their waies and to turn them to me that they may be ſaved, but as for theſe I have nothing to do with them ſaith God, I have no mercy for them, let them alone, let them ſhift for themſelves as well as they can.

Secondly, The evil is great, becauſe they are then let alone Real. 2<sup>o</sup> when they are going apace unto miſery. To let a man alone when he is at home in his houſe and all things convenient about him, is not ſo much, but if you ſhould ſee a man in a mad ſimile humor running to the water to drown himſelf, and then to let him alone this were a great judgment. Though when a man walks in the ſtreet in an ordinary way no man will meddle with him but let him alone; but if you ſhould ſee a man running;

running into the fire, or running to cast himself into a Well or a Pond, no one then would let him alone: But now the Lord sees sinners running headlong into misery, into the bottomless pit, and even then God saith, *Let them alone.*

Reas. 3. Again, They were in the midst of abundance of dangers and yet God saith, *Let them alone.* When a man is in safety among his friends and you let him alone it is not so much, but suppose you should know of one that were environed round about with adversaries, or that there were wild beasts round about him ready to devour him, and this message were brought to you, Oh there is such a friend of ours in great danger, and you should say, what if he be, let him alone, let him shift as well as he can: So we are to know that all sinners that are going on in their evil waies they are in woful danger, dangers on every hand, and the Lord sees and takes notice that they are in the midst of dangers, yet saith God, *Let them alone,* they shall not have my protection and help. And this is a just punishment of God upon wicked sinners that will go on in their wicked waies.

Reas. 4. Fourthly, When God saith, *Let them alone,* he intends this as the making of way unto some fearful wrath that is to follow after. Let my mercy and goodness let them alone but it is that they may fall into my wrath, and that will not let them alone, that will trouble them, howsoever they cannot endure to be troubled by my Word, by my Messengers, by my Spirit, but my Wrath shall trouble them afterward, that shall not let them alone; as in that place *Ezek. 24. 13.* before quoted, *Thou shalt not be purged from thy filthiness any more till I have caused my fury to rest upon thee;* they shall not have any means to trouble them for a while, but at length my fury shall rest upon them. When the Lord shall seem to be quiet toward men and let them alone, it is but to make way for fearful wrath that is coming after.

Reas. 5. Fifthly, If God once inflict this judgment upon sinners to say, *Let them alone,* if God will not vouchsafe to speak unto them any more, he will not then vouchsafe to hear them speak unto him any more. If God once shall take away his Word from

from them. If once the Lord ſhall ſay, they would not hear me, they ſhall never hear me more, *Let them alone*, God will then likewiſe ſay, I will not hear them, let them cry in the anguiſh of their ſpirits I will let them alone; that is certain; When God ſhall let ſinners alone in regard of his mercy then he will let them alone too when the greateſt wrath ſhall be upon them, As thus, when they ſhall come under the greateſt affliction, the moſt dreadful miſeries and torments in this world and eternally in the world to come, when they ſhall then be crying, and roaring, and yelling out in the anguiſh of their ſpirits unto God, Oh that God would now have mercy upon us! God will let them even then alone, I will bring them into the fire ſaith God, and then I will leave them there; Oh think of this when you feel that there was a time when God was ſtirring and ſtriving with your hearts, but now it is not ſo as before, yet you are worſe in your lives than before.

And then further, It is a dreadful ſign of reprobation Reaſ. 6 for God to ſay of a people or of a perſon thus, *Let them alone*.

For firſt, What is reprobation? Reprobation certainly is Reprobation not for God to decree to damn men, you miſtake in that, that is not the firſt act of God upon any man; but thus, reprobation is this, for God to decree whereas there are ſome that he hath ſet his heart upon, he is reſolved to do them good, there are others, he doth not preſently decree to damn them, but he doth decree to leave them unto themſelves, that what they *Earn* they ſhall have and no more, he will deal with them according to their works, he will do them no wrong, he will not be unjuſt to them, he will not damn them but for their ſin. he never decrees to damn any but for ſin; but he decrees this, he will leave them to a courſe of juſtice, I will give them what is fit for them to have in creation, I will make ſuch a covenant with them, and then I will leave them unto themſelves, and what they work for they ſhall have; this is *then* another kind of reprobation, and worſe than that firſt; that is reprobation for God to decree to leave a man to himſelf

when he had no sin in him, as God did not make man with sin at first; suppose you were now made according to the Image of God without sin, yet if God should decree to leave you fully and eternally to your self, you were but a reprobate; but now when God sees a man in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity, now for God to leave him to himself, this is reprobation of the second Edition, this is a most dreadful reprobation indeed,

2. Secondly, There is a reprobation in it in this regard, That God now doth manifest that he doth intend to fetch his glory from this sinner out of his ruin, he manifesteth no other now; for thus, Certainly God will have glory from every creature, howsoever you may resist God in his glory, God will have it, he will fetch it out from you; Well, but now on the first hand, God he would have his glory from his creature in the waies of obedience and service, but they deny this to God, they will not give him this glory, they will have their own will, they will set up themselves in Gods Throne: Well saith God, I have used such and such means to draw their hearts from those waies to my self, but they stand out, *Let them alone now*, As if he should say thus, I have thought now of another way to fetch out my glory from them, as he reasoned in the Gospel, when he could not provide for himself one way, I know what I will do saith he; so saith God, I am denied my glory one way, well I know what to do, I have another way, that is, to glorifie my infinite Justice and the power of my infinite wrath; they have refused to give me glory by obedience and coming in to me, I will not have my glorie that way, but now I will rather chuse to have my glorie from them in their everlasting misery, they shall be spectacles of my wrath and justice, and it shall be known to Angels and men unto all eternity what my infinite justice and power is able to do, therefore let them alone to that saith God.

Reaf. 7 And further, When God shall say of any, *Let him alone*, it is a greater judgment than if he should inflict all the outward judgments of this world upon them: Too many of you are afraid

fraud of ſickneſs, of being ſpoild of your goods, that God ſhould let the enemy in upon you and all ſhould be taken from you, this were a great judgment, Oh but this judgment here in the Text is a greater judgment than if you were ſtrip-ped of all the comforts in the world and brought into the miſerableſt condition that ever any creature was upon the earth in regard of outwards, you were not under ſuch a dreadful judgment as this, for God to ſay, *Let them alone*; better any judgments than ſpiritual judgments; As the ſpiritual bleſſings of God beſtowed upon the Saints are the greateſt bleſſings, *Eph. 1. 2. Oh bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt that hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly things*; ſo the judgments of God that are ſpiritual judgments they are the moſt dreadful judgments of God in the world. Oh that we could have our hearts poſſeſt with a fear of thoſe to fear ſpiritual judgments more than all the judgments in the world!

And yet more, This is not only worſe than all outward judgments here in this world, but it is worſe for a man to be given over by God to himſelf, than to be given up to the Devil. If God ſhould give up any man to the Devil and ſay, Devil take him, poſſeſs him (as once he did poſſeſs many in Chriſts time) it were not ſuch a fearful judgment as this, to ſay, let luſts take him and rule him, let him be given up to his own hearts luſts, let him alone to them. And that is apparant out of that place where the Apoſtle gives order for the inceſſious perſon to be given over unto Satan for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that his ſoul might be ſaved: When one is given up to the Devil in Excommunication or any other way, it may prove to the ſalvation of his ſoul; but this judgment of God ſaying *Let a man alone*, it is for the deſtruction of his ſoul, not of the fleſh, it tendeth directly to the deſtruction of the ſoul though it may be in the mean while the fleſh may be ſaved. It is ſo with many, There are many that God letteth alone and that proveth the deſtruction of the ſoul, but perhaps the ſaving of the fleſh; As thus, perhaps many that went on in wickedneſs, God was chaſtiſing them and afflicting them, well

Reaf. 8.

Note  
Worſe to  
be given  
up to ones  
ſelf than  
to be gi-  
ven up to  
the Devil

this tended to the destruction of the flesh though to the saving of their soul; yea but they would rather live in prosperity and ease and have their sin; well saith God, you shall do so, you shall have ease and prosperity and have your sin, that is, your flesh shall here be saved, but your soul shall eternally be destroyed. Therefore it is worse than to be given up unto the Devil.

Reas. 9. Yea further, For God to say, *Let him alone*, it is worse than or then to be sent down to Hell presently, for when one is left alone to himself he will encrease his sin most dreadfully all the time of his life, and as his sin doth encrease, so his torment doth encrease; therefore it is a most dreadful thing to be let alone.

Reas. 10. Yea further, When God saith, *Let a man alone*, you will say, God should pitie him then, alas what can a man do? No but his condition is thus, when he is let alone though he be without the grace of God, yet he must answer for as much as he might have done if he had had that grace which he hath justly deprived himself of; there lies the evil of it further;

And must answer for When God leaves a man alone he must not think but he is to all that he answer still for the motions of Gods Spirit though he hath might have don, with the grace he might have had, but may be convinced of it; I will give you a plain instance; simile Suppose you send your servant to market to buy a commodity you give him money whereby he may do it, but he goes into an Alehouse or Tavern and drinks it away, he cannot bring you that you sent him for, but you may justly require it, and punish him for not doing of it; he may say, what would you have me do that I cannot? I cannot bring it you without money; yea but the Master may say, I gave you monie, it is your fault you have bezzelled it away: So God may justly require of these men all that they might have done by all the means of grace they should have had, God gave you that means you have bezzelled it away by your sin.



Again further, When God ſhall ſay, *Let him alone*; his condition is dreadful in this, that now all the means of grace are made unprofitable to him, yea curſed to him, and they are turned to the quite contrary end; For the word will work one way or other, either to be the favour of life unto life or of death unto death; and ſo the Sacrament, either to be the ſeal of Salvation or the Seal of damnation. Now all means are not only unprofitable, thoſe means that do other ſouls good; It may be the poor child of a wicked parent comes unto the word, and there he finds God revealing himſelf unto him; and the Spirit of God drawing his heart unto himſelf; but there is his parent of whom God hath ſaid, *Let him alone*, he ſits under the means and gets no good: So perhaps the Maſter, he is one upon whom this judgment is paſt, *Let him alone*, he ſits under the means and gets nothing, and his poor ſervant he comes and his ſoul is enlightned, his heart is enlarged becauſe this judgment is not upon him.

Reaf. 11.  
Al means  
encreaſe  
his con-  
demnatiō

Oh my brethren, upon this (becauſe the point is of ſo great conſequence I could not paſſe by it lightly) you may learn from hence,

First, what poor creatures we are all. God need not ſay, *Uſe. 1.* Let my power, and wrath, & juſtice come upon them to make them miſerable; if God do but ſay, *Let them alone*, we are miſerable preſently, we are loſt and undone preſently, As in nature, If God ſhould ſay to any of you as ſoon as you are born, Let this creature alone and let none help him, what poor ſhiftleſs ſucourleſs creatures had we been? So for our ſouls, take one that hath the moſt excellent gifts in all this Congregation, yea take one that hath the moſt excellent graces, if God ſhould but ſay, Let him alone, he would quickly bring himſelf to miſery; It is through the ſtrength of that grace in the Covenant that God will never ſay to thoſe that are members of his Son; *Let them alone* for ever.

Secondly, Oh let us fear and tremble at this judgment. *E. Uſe 2.* ſpecially let them take this to heart that have felt the Spirit of God ſtirring in their hearts, and the Word coming to their conſciences, yet they have gone on, directly againſt Gods

Word

Word and the motions of his Spirit; Oh that this day the fear of this great God may fall upon them, lest God should say, *Let them alone!* Perhaps God hath not said so yet, but who knows but that upon the next wilful sin thou committest, God may say concerning thee, *Let him alone?* and then thou art undone for ever; Oh fear and tremble.

Perhaps some of you may say, God hath surely said this of me already, I should not be so unprofitable under the means else, I should not hear such powerful Sermons and get so little good, I should not have such and such corruptions prevail over me; I am afraid this is pronounced already against me.

I am loth when I speak of this dreadful judgment (which is indeed the most dreadful in all the Book of God) to let any poor soul go that hath need of comfort without receiving what is due to him.

To answer thee then :

1. First, *It is a good sign that God hath not let thee alone when thou art troubled in the fear of thy heart lest God should have let thee alone.* Commonly those men that God hath left alone they go on and are quiet and are never troubled about it, but please themselves in their own hearts lusts.

2. Secondly, *It is a good means to keep thee from being let alone.* Those that are afraid lest God should leave them alone, and upon that can say in the uprightnes of their hearts, Oh I tremble under this judgment, I had rather God should give me up to all the Cavaliers, to all the Devils in Hell than to my own hearts lusts, it is a signe that this judgement is not upon thee, and it is a means to keep it from thee. And,

3. Thirdly and lastly, *If thou hast yet a heart not to let God alone, God hath not a heart to let thee alone.* So long as thy heart keeps up to God that thou wilt not let him alone, (you know it is the Scripture phrase, when *Moses* was so earnestly seeking God in prayer, let me alone saith God to *Moses*) though thou findest not God coming to thee as thou desirest, thou attendest upon God in the word, and in reading, and meditation, and all

all the means thou knoweſt, and yet thou doſt not find God come, and yet for all this thou art not weary of Gods ſervice and art reſolved thou wilt not let God alone but if thou periſh thou wilt let it be thy laſt breath to be crying unto God and never let him alone, peace be unto thee, God hath not let thee alone ſo long as this frame of heart doth abide in thee. Thoſe of whom God ſaith, let them alone, uſually they begin to be more ſluggiſh in prayer than before, to break off prayer in their families in their cloſets, and then perhaps to fall objecting againſt it, why, *What is there for it to prove ſuch things muſt be done and the like?* and ſo by degrees they will come to have no heart unto any holy duty; but if thy heart be kept in quickneſs and activity and liſe to be ſeeking God and reſolving not to let him alone, ſurely God will not let thee alone.

Note

Laſtly, *Ob bleſs God if thou findeſt that he hath not inflicted this judgment upon thee.* Though perhaps thou haſt many outward judgments in the world, it may be ſome of you are ſpoiled of all your goods and have great afflictions upon you, Oh let this be a means to quiet your hearts that though God hath taken from you many comforts in this world, yet bleſſed be his Name he hath not left me alone, yet I find his Spirit within me, I find his Grace within me, I find his Word working in my heart, there are many other men that have outward comforts, they have fair houſes, great poſſeſſions and lands, and brave cloathes, Oh but the Lord hath let them alone; though I have afflictions upon me yet bleſſed be God he hath not inflicted this judgment upon me, he hath not let me alone.

Uſe, 3.

1.

*And let us bleſs God in regard of the Kingdom.* Surely the waies of God toward this Land are ſuch that we have hope that God hath not pronounced this judgement upon *England*. God might have ſaid unto *England*, *England* hath been joyned to Idols, let him alone. One would have thought that ſome *three years ſince* and a little more that we were in a condition fit to be let alone, but in this time the Lord hath been ſo ſtirring and working for *England* as it may appear evidently that God will not let us alone, and bleſſed be God that he

2

will

will not let us alone, that he will scourge and afflict us sorely rather than not purge out our Idols. And that people, and that soul that had rather have God purge them soundly than let them go on in any sin, surely God doth not let that people and soul alone. It is true indeed, great chastisements are upon us, but stil they al hitherto tend to our purging, not our ruin, it is because the Lord will not let us alone. It may be many think it would be better if it were with us now as as it was four years since, then we had no such noise and rumours of war, there was no such spoiling and killing as now; what is the English of this but thus much? Oh it was well with us when we were going on in superstitious and idolatrous waies, going to *Rome* as fast as we could, that God might have said then, *Let England alone*: If God should have said let them go to *Rome*, let Idolatry be set up there, this would have been a greater judgment than al the blood-shed in *England* at this day: but in that the Lord is yet striving with us, though we be struggling against him, let us bless his Name.

## Verse 18.

*Their drink is sour: they have committed whoredom continually: her Rulers with shame do love, Give ye.*

*Their drink is soure.]* I find some Interpreters carry this word thus, as if it noted their excess in drunkenness and luxury, as if they powred down drink till it soured in them, and then they vomited it up; So *Luther* translate the words, they do most filthily and vildly gormondize drink, and eat and pamper themselves. I remember *Luther* upon the place hath this note, saith he, *Idolaters they love to pamper the flesh, they drink even to vomiting again, but for the true worshiping of God, that saith he, is cut more short in these outward things, and it is hungry and cold.* We find that the false prophets were pampered at *Jezebels* table, when poor *Micaiah* was fain to be fed with bread and water of affliction. So *Luther* and divers other Interpreters carry the word. But I think there is more in it.

Exposit. 1  
fide cr-  
pulantur.  
Luther

The word that is here translated *drink*, it carrieth with it their festival meeting, *Convivium recessit*, that is, their feasts and their meetings, it is as wine that is fowr and hath lost the spirit and savor of it; For drink they understand their drinkings, that is, the comforts that they have in this world, that these Idolaters do so much satisfie themselves in, as your superstitious Idolatrous people they alwaies seek to pamper their bellies and to be sure to have outward comforts: Now saith he, all this is *fowr*. And indeed all the comfort of this world when God is forsaken, it is but as fowr drink, the sweetness and quickness, and life of all is taken away when God and his worship is forsaken: So you may take *their drink* by a Senechdoch, for al the comforts of this world, even al those carnal things they seek to satisfie their flesh withal, it is all fowr, for God is gone when his worship is gone. Perhaps if you had had superstition and Idolatry set up amongst you in *England*, you might have had your drink and your wine at your tables more penitfully, but if God and his Worship had been gone, all had been fowr no sweetness in any thing. I appeal to those that have proved Apostates though they have apostatized to enjoy comforts to the flesh, how fowr and unsavory have the comforts of the flesh been unto them? whereas let a people keep close to God and his worship and then their drink if it be but water it will be sweet unto them; As in *Acts 2.* the Saints that beleved they did eat their bread with singleness of heart and with gladness. We were wont to say, *Brown bread and the Gospel is good cheer*; let us have but bread and water so be it we may have the Gospel and the Ordinances and the Worship of God, and it will be sweet unto us; but let us have wine and all manner of drink at our tables, if we have not the Ordinances and Worship of God, it will be all fowr to us. The ten Tribes had as good drink as Judah had, yet all the drink of the ten Tribes was fowr.

Thirdly, *Their drink is fowr.*] it notes thus much, Their society is unsavory and fowr, for so their *Convivium* their meetings together for feasting and drinking noteth many times communion and converse and familiarity, as the drinkings

kings of people together you know it is a means to keep their converse and maintain familiarity one with another. So the meaning is, that their converse one with another when they met together at one anothers tables and were drinking together, what favor, what relish can any gracious heart take in it? You may observe it of all your superstitious people that have heretofore lived amongst you, how unsavory have they been in their converse? Perhaps heretofore they have been forward in the waies of Religion and then converse with them and there hath been some life and quickness in them, but when they have yeilded once unto superstitious vanitie, all their converse is become unsavory. It would have been so with you if these times had not come, perhaps you might have met together and have had brave cheer and drinkings of all sorts and have had many merry meetings, but the truth is all your merry meetings would have been sowl and sapless, there would have been no sweetness in your converse, and those of your brethren that had been gone from you into the howling wilderness would have found more favour in their water there than you could have had in all the drinks you could have devised to your selves.

4. Fourthly, *Their drink is sowl*] That is, even all their worship and their sacrifices, for so their drink is taken by others, for all their *drink offerings*, they were wont to have feasts in their sacrifices, saith God, all their offerings be sowl, the favour, and sap, and life of them is taken away. These are the four hints by which we may come to understand what the scope of the holy Ghost is in these words, *Their drink is sowl*. It follows.

*They have committed whoredom continually.*

Expos. 1. They are unwearied in their wickedness, continually they go on in their way of whoredom, of their bodily whoredom but especially of their spiritual whoredom, that is, when they are worshiping of their Idols they are never weary, *continually they commit whoredom*. Oh what a shame it is for those that  
are:

are godly that they ſhould be weary of the ſervice of God when Idolaters are not weary of the ſervice of their Idols? What rebuke is this to you that if you come to a Sermon you are weary (perhaps ſome of you) if the glaſs be but out a little; but if you were in company in a Tavern to ſit up all night you are not weary at all? *They commit whoredom continually,* they are at the ſervice of their Idols and ſatisfying of their luſts never weary there, but they are ſoon weary of my ſervice.

But I take it there is ſomewhat further meant, *Fornicantur in furnicando,* they commit fornication in committing fornication, that is the propriety of the word in the Hebrew, that which they do they do it inteniſively, in doing they do it. As the Apoſtle ſaith of *Elijahs* prayer, *Jam. 5. In praying he prayed,* that is, he did pray inteniſively, he prayed ſtrongly, he praied powerfully with his whol ſtrength put out in prayer; So the words are here, in committing fornication they committed fornication, that is, they give up their ſtrength to their Idols, they are mightily intent upon their Idols. And therefore have nothing to do with them (ſtill the argument goes on) Have nothing to do with them for fear that fearful judgment be upon you before ſpoken of: Have nothing to do with them becauſe their ſociety and converſe is unſavoury: Have nothing to do with them becauſe they give up themſelves to their luſts. How ſhould we give up our ſelves to the ſervice of God, to pray in praying, to hear in hearing &c. ſeeing Idolaters in committing Idolatry do commit Idolatry.

הַזִּנְיָ  
וְהַזִּנְיָ

1.

2

3

Uſe

*Their Rulers with ſhame do love, Give ye.*

The word that is tranſlated *Rulers*, it is מְגִלְתֵי הַשִּׁלְדִים her ſhields, that is, their protectors, ſo the word in the Hebrew ſignifies. And there is a very ſpecial note to be learned from hence, it is this, *That Magiſtrates and Rulers they ſhould be the ſhields of the people where they live, for their defence;* And ſo in Scripture phraſe they are called, *Pſalm, 47. 9. The Princes of the people are gathered together, the ſhields of the earth belong unto God;* That is, the Governors and Rulers of the earth (ſo I find Interpreters

Obſer.

Ps. 47. 9. carry it) they belong unto God : they are in Gods stead, and  
 Opened they govern in Gods Name. Rulers, Governors are to be the  
 shields of the people, for they are to bear off al dangers; Al  
 dangers that may come upon the people they are to be willing  
 Applic. to put themselves forward to bear them off. Have not our  
 The Par- *Worthies in Parliament* shewen themselves to be shields in this  
 liament. thing? Have not they put themselves next us and our dangers,  
 next us and our harms? And do you not think if the Adver-  
 sarie prevail they wil first swallow up them, I mean those of  
 them that are faithful? Whereas those that were before in  
 Parliament when they looked upon it as an honor to be Par-  
 liament men and there was no danger, Oh they were brave  
 Parliament men then, and they made brave speeches, but  
 when they saw things come to be hot and that there were  
 darts shot against the people, and that they must be the shields  
 to keep off the hurt of those darts from the people, away they  
 go; they love to be brave golden shields, enameled shields fit  
 for no service, but when it came to service away they go.  
 We are therefore to honor these that still stay, and though  
 they are not perhaps so brave and gilded as those, yet they  
 are proved to be shields of good mettal that will not break,  
 but will keep off the darts that are shot against the people.  
 And indeed Rulers and Governors should be men of good  
 mettal, willing to bear off much hardship from the people;  
 Use. And they should not think to be honored only but they should  
 take their honor as a burden also. We are not therefore to  
 think upon our Rulers as too much honored, Oh consider of  
 their danger together with their honor. So for the Gover-  
 nors in Armies, it is true they have pay more than others, but  
 if they be faithful they hazard their lives more than others,  
 and they are the shields of the people. It is an evil thing  
 when a Common wealth have none but wicked Magistrates,  
 they have then nothing but as if they had shields to defend  
 them that are made of rotten wood.

*They say with shame, give ye.*

Expos. 1. *They love this,* so it is in your books: And I find that it is  
 turned by some, *they love to bring shame,* they love not to say,  
 bring



bring ye, but they love to bring ſhame: and if you ſhould tranſlate it thus it is, the words in the Hebrew only altering the points of them, and ſo they may be read, *they love to bring ſhame*, that is, they being of vile ſpirits themſelves they do not care what becomes of the people, they care not for putting the people upon any ſhameful waies, what care they ſo they may have their ends, let them periſh as dogs and let them do that which ſhall be a perpetual reproach to them to all poſterity, ſo they may have their luſts ſatisfied.

Secondly, Others tranſlate them thus; *with ſhame they call, bring ye*, that is, with ſhame they call for pleaſure to the fleſh, ſo *Arius Montanus*, Let us have our pleaſure, our tables furniſhed, let us have our honors and what care we what becomes of the people, let us have our minds, do you our ſervice what we would have done, and what becomes of them it is no matter. Such kind of Rulers and Governors had the ten Tribes when they were ſuch Idolaters: And it is juſt with God when people forſake the true worſhip of God that he ſhould ſend them ſuch Governors as theſe are.

But I rather take the ſcope of the Spirit of God to be according as we read them, to rebuke them for their bribery, *They love with ſhame to ſay, Give ye*. They will not only take liberty privately but they are grown ſo impudent that they will ſell all the good of a Kingdom, the liberty of the Subject all for their own gain. *They ſay with ſhame, give ye*. It is a great judgment of God upon a people when Magiſtrates and Governors are given to bribery, to regard gifts and the encrease of their eſtates more than the publick good. *Pro. 17. 23 A wicked man takes a gift out of the boſom to pervert the waies of judgment*. It is a ſign of a wicked man to take a gift though it be but ſecretly, out of the boſom, but if he take it openly it is a ſign of more impudence. A wicked man takes a gift out of the boſom, he is loth to be ſeen at firſt, and he doth it to pervert judgment; theſe men that ſhould be as ſhields to the people, for baſe ends they will betray them. What, to ſubject ſuch a glorious thing as Juſtice to baſe ends; Juſtice which is the glory

מִהֵבֹר  
הֵבֹר  
קִלְקֵל

2  
Arius  
Montan.

3

Justice  
-stricken  
dumb  
with the  
appearance  
of angels.

Gregor.  
Naz. in  
distichis.

simile

Cicero E-  
pist. ad  
Quint. frat

of God, the glory of a Kingdom, and the glory of a man, which he should be cloathed with as a robe, as a diadem, to subject it to base ends, for gain, to say, *Give ye, this is abominable. For a Justice of peace to be stricken dumb with the appearance of Angels, Oh it is an evil thing: For Justices to be bound to the peace by a gift in a basket, this is a most abominable thing. Exod. 33. 8. A gift blindeth the eyes of the wise and perverteth the words of the righteous.* Though men are of excellent parts, men of understanding, that can speak exceeding well, yea though they seemd heretofore very honest men and just in their waies, yet when they come to high places a gift will blind their eyes, or as some turn it, pluck out their eyes, irradiate their eyes that they cannot see. *Auro loquente, iners omnis oratio*, saith an Ancient, *Let gold be speaking in the language of gold, and other speeches are to little purpose.* Therefore Magistrates of all men should be without covetousness, fearing the Lord. When God would have Magistrates chose, this is one character of them, That they should be men fearing God, and hating covetousness. In *2 Chron. 19. 6, 7. Take heed what you do, for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord; wherefore let the fear of the Lord be upon you, take heed and do it, for there is no iniquity with the Lord, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* Justice must run down as a river, it must not be pal'd in as a pond for private advantages. Magistrates they must shake their hands from bribery, and despise the gain of oppressors *Isa. 33. 15.* As we reade of *Paul* that when a Viper came upon his hand he shook his hand and the Viper fell into the fire: So should Magistrates do, when any one brings them gifts to pervert Justice, they should look upon it as as a Viper and shake their hands of it and let it even fall into the fire, and say as *Peter* to *Simon Magus*, *Thy money perish with thee:* They should look upon such as bring them gifts with indignation, and even say, thy money perish with thee in this wicked enterprise. Even *Cicero* an Heathen in his Epistle to *Quintus* his Brother, a Magistrate in *Asia*, he hath this expression, That he should not only shew himself an enemy unto them that received gifts, but to them that gave them, he should account them his enemies. And *Isa. 5. 23.*

Woe to him that juſtifies the wicked for reward, and takes away the righteousneſſ of the righteous from him. Many righteous men come before you, ſome of you, and their cauſe is true and good, but you will be ſpeaking bitterly againſt them to give content to others from whom you expect a reward. Deut. 27. 25. There ſhall be a curſe pronounced againſt ſuch as take gifts, and all the people ſhall ſay Amen. If any Magiſtrate ſhould love to take gifts in this kind, the curſe of the people is upon him, and God requires that all the people ſhould ſay Amen. And I have read of the Romans that if it could be proved againſt any Magiſtrate that he had taken bribes, he was to be puniſhed with death, without any deliverance. And *Psalm*, 15. in answer to that queſtion, *Who ſhall dwell with God in his tabernacle?* it is ſaid, *he that taketh not a reward againſt the innocent.* If you would ever dwell with God either here in his Church or in Heaven hereafter, you muſt not take bribes againſt the innocent. I have read of that Saint which you call *St. Edmond*, in his life, That he was wont to have this ſpeech, There is little difference between theſe two words, *to Take, and to Hang*, the words are even the ſame in the Latin, ſignifying thereby, that thoſe that would take gifts ſhewed what their deſert is. *Prov.* 15. 27. *He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own houſe; but he that hateth gifts ſhall live.* It is not enough for a Magiſtrate not to take gifts, but he muſt hate gifts, for the other troubleth his own houſe, though perhaps you may think to provide for your houſe by gifts.

Law of  
the 12.  
Tables

*Prondere*  
*ſpondere*

Verſe 19.

*The wind hath bound her up in her wings, and they ſhall be aſhamed becauſe of their ſacrifices.*

The word that is here tranſlated *Wind*, it ſignifieth alſo a Spirit, and ſo I find *Hierom* takes the meaning of the words to be; that the evil ſpirit hurries them up and down and carries them on violently in their wicked waies. As in *Deut.* 32. 11. God is ſaid to carry his people upon his wings; ſo the Devil here carrieth Idolaters who are ſet upon their wicked waies,

1117  
*Hierom.*  
Expof. 1.

as it were upon his wings, in a violent hurrying manner.

But rather we are to take the expreſſion Metaphorically to ſignifie the power, the ſuddenneſs, the violence, the ſwifneſs of Gods judgments, carrying them into captivity and into miſery. *The wind hath bound the people of Iſrael, the ten Tribes up in her wings,* that is, the judgments of the Lord ſhall come upon them with power, ſuddenly, ſwiftly, violently and take them away from their own Countrey and carry them into captivity and miſery. The power and violence of the judgments of God are ſet out in Scripture by the wind, by ſtorms and tempeſts often times. There is a mighty power of the wind, *1 King. 19. 11. A ſtrong wind that rent the mountains and tore in pieces the rocks. Job. 38. 9. That overturneth the mountains by the roots.* The winds are the voice of the Lord, that breaks the Cedars, even the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and ſhakes the wilderneſs *Pſal. 29. Sabelicus* telleth us that *Camtyſes* his ſouldiers being in a wilderneſs, in a ſandy place, ſuddenly a violent wind came and drove the ſand with ſuch force as that thouſands of them were buried in it. There is a great deal of ſtrength and power in winds. And here by the way we may have hinted unto us a very profitable meditation. Oh how great is the glory and the power of the infinite God then! For the wind what is it but a vapor? and what more weak than a vapor? We uſe to ſay, what is weaker than water? but many drops together will make the waters terrible, and the Seas are call'd the mighty waters; But vapour is weaker than the water, and yet the winds are nothing but a company of vapors joyned together, and many being joyned together what a mighty power have they to rend the rocks and turn up the mountains by the roots? Oh then what is the power of the Mighty God? for in him there is nothing but infinite, and nothing can be added unto him. If a weak vapour being multiplied have ſuch ſtrength, what power then is there in God that hath nothing in him but infinite, ſo as nothing can be added to him.

Obſer.

The wind is of great power and ſo is the judgments of God.

The

The obſervation from it ſhall be this, “That the judgments <sup>Obſer.</sup>  
 “of God toward wicked men who have been ſpared a long  
 “time, when they come they come ſwiftly, and violently, and  
 “ſuddenly, carries them as it were in a *Hurry-cane*.

*And they ſhall be aſhamed of their ſacrifices.*

So long as they proſpered in the way of falſe worſhip they were not aſhamed, but they gloried in their way, and the ten Tribes, Iſrael, rather deſpised Judah, and fought to caſt ſhame upon Judah who worſhiped God in a right way, as appeareth plainly *Amos*, 7. 12. *Go to Judah* (ſaith *Amaziab* there to *Amos* in a ſcorning way,) go your waies thither, and propheſie there. They ſcorned and contemned Judah and gloried in their own way of falſe worſhip. “Such as are ſuperſtitious <sup>Obſer.</sup>  
 “and Idolatrous they uſe to look upon Gods Ordinances as  
 “vile and contemptible, and their own inventions as the moſt  
 “glorious things; But God hath a time to honor his Ordina-  
 “ances and to caſt ſhame upon their ſacrifices. That is the  
 Note. The true worſhip of God is many times in ſuch a low eſteem amongſt men as that they that go that way are exceedingly vilified, and many are kept off from the waies of God becauſe they cannot bear the ſhame of it, there is ſo much ſhame caſt upon it, none but a company of mean, poor, un- wiſe people that take ſuch a courſe: But God hath a time to honor his Ordinances, to ſet up the beauty of them before all the world, and to caſt ſhame and dirt upon all waies of ſuperſtition and idolatry. *They ſhall be aſhamed of their ſacrifices*; a time to make even thoſe that did glory moſt in them to be aſhamed of them. *Iſa.* 2. 20, 21. *They ſhall caſt their Idols of ſilver and of gold, which they have made each for himſelf to worſhip, to the moles and to the bats, to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks.* And *Iſa.* 30. 22. *They ſhall deſile the covering of their graven Images of ſilver, and the ornaments of their Images of gold, they ſhall caſt them away as a menſtruous cloth, and they ſhall ſay unto it, Get thee hence.* They thought they were curious ornaments, but the time ſhall come when God ſhall make

Idolaters see them to be filthy clothes, and cause them to cast them away with indignation and say, *Get ye hence.* That place in *Esai. 66. 5.* is notable to this purpose. *You that tremble at my word* (saith God) *your brethren that cast you out said, let God be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.* There are a company of you that tremble at my Word, and dare not do any thing in my Worship but what my Word requires; others have more loose consciences and they can venture upon things that they have no warrant for in my Word, but you tremble at my Word, and you are scorned for nice scrupulous consciences, and your brethen cast you out because you will not be of the same judgment as they are, because your hearts, your consciences are more tender they cast you out from them, they would willingly be rid of you and think it would be better with the land when you are gone, and they say, *Let the Lord be glorified,* they have pretences that they desire nothing but the peace of the Church and the glory of God; they say, even your brethren that cast you out, they say, *Let the Lord be glorified,* but God shall appear for your glory and for their shame, the Lord will honor you in that way of his Worship that you take up which is according to his Word, though you suffer for the present much ignominie and contempt for it, and though they may ruff it out for a while and seem to carry all before them having that which is countenanced more publickly, but the Lord will appear at length to their shame, the Lord will make them ashamed of their sacrifices.

Causes of  
shame.

There are four things that principally cause shame.

First, *Disrespect from those we desire honor from,* that is shame: When one comesto any, to a superior, and expects respect from him, and finds that he is cast out, this is a great shame. So they shall be ashamed of their sacrifices, they make account that I should honor their sacrifices, that they should have honor from me by reason of their sacrifices, but I will cast shame upon them, they shall have nothing but arguments of disrespect from me. In *1 King. 2. 16.* when *Bathsheba* came to *Solomon* to ask a Petition of him; *deny me not* saith she; the old

Latinea

Latine hath it, *Ne confundas faciem meam*: do not confound my face, do not make me aſhamed, & the Hebrew is, *Ne avertere faciem meam*, do not cauſe my face to be turned, that is, do not make me aſhamed by giving me ſuch diſreſpect when I expect ſuch honor from thee. When God doth caſt off the ſacrifices of men and ſhews diſreſpect unto them, that cauſeth ſhame, it doth confound or ſhould confound their faces.

Secondly, *When a man takes a great deal of pains and it comes all to nothing*, that cauſeth ſhame; and ſo all ſuperſtitious waies will bring ſhame at laſt. In *Coloſ. 2.* it is ſaid of all ſuperſtitious ceremonies that they periſh in the uſe of them, there comes no good of them. Idolaters take a great deal of pains in their waies of falſe worſhip, but all will come to nothing; when they ſhall ſtand in moſt need all their waies of ſuperſtition and Idolatry will leave them ſhiftleſs and ſucourleſs, and helpleſs, and ſo caſt ſhame upon them. 2.

Thirdly, *Diſappointment of hope brings ſhame.* *Pſal. 119. 116.* *Let me not be aſhamed of my hope ſaith David*, If I hope for good and be diſappointed, this will bring ſhame. Divers Scriptures we have to ſhew this. So when thoſe that are ſuperſtitious and Idolatrous ſhall raiſe up their hearts with great expectation of good from God in their waies of falſe worſhip and ſhall be diſappointed of all their hope, in this God will caſt ſhame upon them. 3.

Fourthly, *When God discovers that to be worthleſs and vile which a man hath gloried moſt in*; that cauſeth ſhame. So Idolaters that glorie in their Idolatrous waies, the Lord in time will diſcover them to be baſe and vile and worthleſs things, for indeed they are all but poor aſiſh and beggarlie things, and they are fitter to pleaſe children than God. God will diſcover this. 4.

If it be objected, *Oh but they ſeem not to be ſuch poor and weak Objects things, they ſeem to be more glorious and pompous a great deal than the waies of the true worſhipers of God*; *The true worſhip of God in it ſelf ſeems to be a poor and mean thing?*

The answer is, *That the inſtitution putteth a glory upon the Anſw.*

*waies of worship*; now they not having an institution upon them they are looked upon as apish and foolish and beggarlie things. And then a word of promise and an engagement of Gods presence in his Ordinances puts an honor upon them which the waies of superstition have not.

Use. It is good for those who have been guilty in this kind of  
 Admoni- superstitious waies of worship, even to prevent God by ca-  
 tions to the defi- suring shame upon themselves; for if they do not, God will cast  
 led with shame upon them, he will make them to be ashamed. That  
 superstiti- is our best way, to come in and to prevent God and to lie  
 ous wor- down in our shame, to take shame unto our own souls & to lie  
 ship to down therein. God knows how we have defiled our selves,  
 take shame even all of us, in waies of superstitious worship; and the  
 to them- truth is, God is casting shame upon all those waies at this day,  
 selves, and doth cast shame upon them. Happie are those that be-  
 fore these times did take shame to their own souls for all their  
 defilements in the waies of false worship. Howsoever, before  
 God doth yet further force it upon us it will be our wisdom  
 to take shame to our selves. *Ezek. 43. 11.* that text is a famous  
 text for this purpose; first in the tenth verse, *Shew them the  
 house that they may be ashamed,* shew them the true way of my  
 worship that they may be ashamed. The truth is, if we did  
 but understand the beauty, the excellency, the true beauty of  
 holiness in the waies of Gods Ordinances, in the purity and  
 simplicitie of the Gospel, that were enough to make us asha-  
 med if there were nothing else, we would even be very vile in  
 our own eyes to think that while our hearts have been taken  
 up about such vain and vile waies of false worship, that such  
 glorious Ordinances of God, that beauty of holiness that is in  
 his Ordinances hath been neglected by us; *shew them the way  
 of my house that they may be ashamed*; But further, in the 11. vers.  
*If they be ashamed of all that they have done, shew them the form of  
 the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the  
 comings in thereof, and all the forms thereof, and all the Ordinances  
 thereof, and all the firms thereof, (again) and all the Laws thereof,  
 and write it in their sight, that they may keep the whol form thereof,  
 and all the Ordinances thereof and do them.* First shew them my  
 house,



house, Let them have ſome kind of knowledg of my waies and Ordinances in the general, perhaps that will make them aſhamed: And at this day we know though there be but a little light let out unto us, to ſhew us a little more of the waies of Gods worſhip than we ſaw before, we do begin to be aſhamed of what we have done: But now if indeed we be thoroughly aſhamed before God of all our falſe waies of worſhip, of all our ſacrifices, then mark what a promiſe here is, then ſaith the text, if they be aſhamed of what they have done, *then ſhew them the forms of the houſe, and the faſhion of the houſe &c.* Thus here is one word heaped upon another to ſhew, that this is the mercy of God to people when they underſtand not only the way of Gods worſhip in the lump, but they underſtand the form, and the faſhion, and the Ordinances, and the Laws, the circumſtances and all the ſeveral waies, the exactneſs of the worſhip of God. For we muſt not look upon any thing in the worſhip of God as worthy to be neglected, but we muſt have reſpect to all the forms, and faſhions, and Ordinances of Gods houſe, God ſtandeth much upon his worſhip in every punctilio; and it is a great mercy of God to reveal to us every point of his worſhip. It is true, man ſtands much upon form, and God ſtandeth much upon form; *Many deny the power of godlineſs, but keep the form of it,* they are much ſet upon their forms, and God is much ſet upon his forms. If you be ſet upon forms for worſhip, look upon Gods worſhip he is much ſet upon forms in his worſhip. And mark, then when we are aſhamed of what we have done, then we ſhall underſtand the Laws of the houſe; but firſt we muſt be aſhamed and thoroughly humbled for our former ſuperſtitious ſacrifices, and then we ſhall come to underſtand the right way of Gods worſhip in his own Temple, we muſt not expect it before. Many people they cry out we are at a loſs, we know not what to do, we have rejected indeed falſe worſhip and in ſome meaſure we ſee that that is vile, but we know not what way to ſet up in Gods houſe, what are the forms and faſhions thereof; and the hearts of people tremble to think what may come to be determined, fearing leſt things will not be found out, fearing

Ezek. 33.  
10, 11.  
opened

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difſentions

dissentions and disagreement. Would you but know how you should come to understand the right way of Gods house in the worship and government of it? Be ashamed of your sacrifices, be ashamed of what you have done.

And above all men those that are entrusted to find out the  
 Ministers Laws, and forms, & fashions, and Ordinances of Gods house, above all men they are to be ashamed of what they have done, to be ashamed first of their sacrifices. And that should be your prayer, that God would humble them for all their former superstitious sacrifices that so they may come to have revealed to them the form and fashion of Gods house, and being revealed to them they may reveal it to you. There is a necessity that those men that have been guilty of superstitious waies of worship, that they should be ashamed first of that before they can come to understand the right way of the house of God; Let them be men of never such excellent parts and abilities, yet except they be first ashamed for what they have done and thoroughly humbled, they cannot expect to understand the waies of Gods house in the forms and fashions and ordinances of it. In *Ezek.* 44. 10, 11, 12, 13. there God threatneth those Priests that did depart from him when Israel departed, that did depart from him to false worship, that they should beare their iniquity, that they should never come neare to him; seeing they departed in the general departure and did not keep close to the true worship of God, they must bear their iniquity, they must not come near unto God; only God would be content they should be employed in some meaner out-services: And therefore it may be that God will not use some men of choice parts in any great work of his, to do him any great service, that's the meaning of the text, that those that did depart from God when there was a general departure of the Nation, when Israel did depart they would comply with them to save their skin, and they would conform to those superstitious waies, then did the Lord swear, lift up his hand against them, that though they shall be employed in some meaner services, yet they shall not come near him. And (*Isay*) it may be feared that the Lord may do so against some of us. How ever except there

there be extraordinary repentance & taking ſhame unto themſelves; though they may be men of excellent parts, the Lord may remember what they have done when Iſrael departed from God, what their compliances were; And though the Lord may make ſtill uſe of them in ſome ordinary work, yet he may lift up his hand againſt them, that they ſhall never be employed never bleſt in any choice work he hath to do: God may juſtly leave them to ſuch waies as that they ſhall caſt themſelves in a great meaſure out of the hearts of the Saints “because he doth not delight to uſe them in any ſpecial ſervice and ſo their ſhame ſhall ſtick upon them while they live; “and the more honor they ſeek the more ſhame will God certainly caſt upon them. *Jer. 3. 25.* ſaith the Church there, *We lie down in our ſhame:* Oh there is cauſe that ſuch men ſhould lie down in their ſhame, thoſe that are of diſcerning ſpirits, and obſerve the waies of men and the waies of God, they cannot but ſee that thoſe men ſhould lie down in their ſhame, for ſo long as yeilding to ſuperſtitious vanities and ſubmiſſion to falſe power was uſeful to them to ſave their eſtates, their liberties and livings, they would yeild and they would ſubmit, and then their judgments alter when times alter, when other waies come to be countenanced publickly then they are of other judgments than they were before: ſo long as they could not make uſe of another way they were not of that judgment; now when they can make uſe of it, and there is more countenancing of it, how ſoon is their judgment altered? yea and ſo altered as preſently to grow even bitter againſt their brethren of another judgment. Surely a great deal more cauſe there is that they and we, all of us, ſhould take ſhame to our ſelves, lie down in our ſhame a while and ſo carry things in all humility in all meekneſs, in ſuſpition of our ſelves and of our own judgments in love to our brethren, remembering that we our ſelves were of another judgement and opinion not long ſince; And therefore our hearts (I ſay) ſhould be very low and gentle and very tender and meek even toward all with whom we have to do.

Note

And further; God hath a time to make al carnal men aſhamed. *Obſ. 27.*  
med

med of their sacrifices. We will a little raise up our meditations somewhat higher, from this, *They shall be ashamed of their sacrifices.* All sacrifices, not only superstitious and idolatrous but all other sacrifices that come short of the rule will at length cause shame. "As carnal men that tender up many services unto God, and that lay such weight upon their services, as to lay their claim to Heaven and interest in God upon their sacrifices, God hath a time to make them ashamed of all these sacrifices. Al now, when God shall discover the vanity of their prayers, if God should but shew to us al and to the whol company here, each others hearts in time of prayer, when we have been offering up that sacrifice unto God, and we have seemed to be very devout in our prayers, yet Oh the vanity of our hearts, Oh the vile thoughts, unclean, wicked, ungodly, foolish thoughts that have run up and down thorough our hearts in the time of our prayers! If God should write our prayers before us and interline our prayers with all our vain thoughts, and then bid us reade our prayers, and bid others reade our prayers interlined with such vain thoughts, would we not be ashamed of our sacrifices? the best sacrifice that ever we rendered up to God in al our life we would be ashamed of it. God hath a time (except al be pardoned in Christ and covered in him) to make men that lay such weight upon their prayers, to shew them such an ugly form and fashion of them, as to make them ashamed of them.

Obs. 3. Again, In al our duties performed with a carnal heart there are many mixtures of our own base ends. We seem to draw near unto God, and we would honor and worship God, Oh but the hypocrisie of our hearts! what vile and base ends are there, to give content to this and the other, to set forth our parts and abilities in services; these things have been plain before God, and except we be ashamed of them now and repent and get them pardoned in Christ, God will set all our base ends before Angels and men together with our sacrifices, and shall we not then be ashamed of our sacrifices?

Obs. 4. Again, How foul and vile have our hearts been in our services, and how have our sacrifices been defiled with them! Not only

only by actual ſin mixed with them, by baſe thoughts and ends, but our ſervices have come from unclean hearts, we have had very filthy and unclean hearts, our hearts have been as ſties and links of evil, and it is impoſſible that out of ſuch unclean hearts there can come any thing that is clean; our ſacrifices have been extremely defiled by our filthy baſe and worldly hearts. And then when God ſhall ſhew the infinite holineſs of his Maſteſty and how infinite juſt and righteous he is, and how infinitely worthy of other manner of ſacrifices than ever we have tendered up unto him, Oh then how ſhall we be aſhamed!

How will our hearts be overwhelmed with confuſion and ſhame, when apprehending the infinitenefs of the glory of the great God, when we ſhall ſee how infinitely unworthy all thoſe duties were that we have tendered up unto him of that infinite excellency and Maſteſty of his, Oh that will make us aſhamed. Men think highly of their ſacrifices that they tender up unto God becauſe of their parts they ſhew in them, but they do not know with what a God it is they have to do: when the Lord ſhall ſhew unto us the luſtre of his glory and the greatneſs of his Maſteſty (as it will appear unto us one day when the glorious appearing of the great God will be) then we ſhall ſee how unworthy all our ſervices were of ſuch a God as he is, and that will make us aſhamed if we have not been aſhamed heretofore; nothing will be more grievous and more confound the hearts of men than to be put to ſhame for their ſacrifices; Oh the miſerable perplexity that their hearts will then be put unto!

Uſe.

You will ſay then, *What are thoſe ſacrifices we ſhould tender up* Queſt.  
*unto God that we ſhall never be aſhamed of?* God will mak ſuperſtitious people aſhamed of their ſacrifices, and all carnal people ſhall one day be aſhamed of their ſacrifices, this will be a dreadful thing one day when it comes; Oh then what are thoſe ſacrifices the Saints of God ſhall never be aſhamed of?

Fiſt, If you would offer ſuch ſacrifices unto God as you Anſw. 1.  
 would never be aſhamed of, *Be ſure they be his own,* worſhip

God in his own way; It is not what you think wil please God what you think is brave and excellent, but look to the word, be sure it is his own.

2. Secondly, Let your hearts be acted by Divine Principles, let it come from faith, and whatsoever comes from you to be tendered up unto God, look to your principles; rest not in the action that is done but consider from what principles those services come you tender up unto God.
3. Thirdly, Let your ends be high in all your services, Oh take heed of base and low ends in all your sacrifices. It is too too much that men should have base and low ends in their outward affairs, they should have their hearts high upon the glory of the great God in their natural, in their civil actions, but when they come to their sacrifices and holy duties, then *sursum Corda*, then lift up your hearts indeed, be sure then your ends be high and holy.
4. Fourthly, Let your whole strength be taken up in those sacrifices so as to sanctifie the Name of God, Let the whole soul be carried unto God, for God is worthy of the whole, if you had ten thousand times more strength than you have God is worthy that it should be put forth in the services you tender unto him.
5. Fifthly, Offer up your selves as a sacrifice unto God do not content your selves to offer up a prayer unto God as a sacrifice, or alms or such duties only, but be sure together with these sacrifices to offer up your selves as a living sacrifice to God, as the Apostle speaks *Rom. 12. 1. I beseech you by the mercies of God that you offer up your bodies a living sacrifice unto God.* God cares for none of your sacrifices except you offer your selves to be a sacrifice unto him. That is a very observable place in *1 King. 8.* the latter end of it, there you shall find that *Solomon* offered two and twenty thousand Oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand Sheep, here was a great sacrifice to be offered at one time unto God, but mark, (though this sacrifice was great) what God saies unto him in the 9. chapter presently so soon as the sacrifice was done, verse 4. *If thou wilt walk before me as David thy father did to do according unto all*

that I command thee, and wilt keep my ſtatutes and my judgments &c. God puts it to an *If* for all this, for all theſe ſacrifices *If* thou thy ſelf in the conſtant obedience of thy life wilt be a conſtant ſacrifice, then will I do thus and thus, but verſe 6. *If thou at all turn from following me*, if notwithstanding all theſe ſacrifices thou at all turn from following of me, I will do thus and thus. Many of us think when we have been in a day of faſting and ſpent a whol day in it, and our hearts have been let out and we have been enlarged and have offered up a great ſacrifice to God, that we may take the more liberty afterward; No, though you offer twenty two thouſand Oxen and an hundred and twenty thouſand ſheep yet if after this at all thou ſhalt forſake me, all that thou haſt done ſhall be rejected. Therefore thoſe ſacrifices that are not joyned with offering up of our ſelves as a ſacrifice, are ſuch as God will make us aſhamed of; But if together with our ſacrifices we offer up our ſelves as a ſacrifice, you ſhall never be aſhamed of that ſacrifice. Therefore you that are poor people and weak parted, and have but little grace, yet if you have true grace, though you cannot offer up ſuch large prayers, your heart is not ſo enlarged perhaps as others are, and you look upon your ſacrifices as poor and mean and as unworthy to be tendered up unto the great God, but doſt thou then offer up thy ſelf unto God as a ſacrifice? It is true my parts are weak and my abilities are poor and mean, but Oh Lord what I am and what I can do I tender it unto thee, here Lord, take ſoul, body, life, eſtate, liberty and all I do enjoy, I tender it up all unto thee as a ſacrifice; I ſay then peace be unto thee, thoſe ſacrifices thou lookeſt upon as being aſhamed of them, God will not make thee aſhamed of them, but he accepts of thy poor, mean, and weak ſervices when together with them thou offer'eſt up thy ſelf as a ſacrifice unto him; whereas if thou didſt not tender up thy ſelf as a ſacrifice, though thy ſervices were ten thouſand times more glorious than they are, they would be all caſt back as dung in thy face.

Sixty, Be humbled after all your beſt ſacrifices, take no glory unto your ſelves, but be vile in your own eyes after you

6

7. have done the best duty that ever you have done in your life; when you perform any duty that seems to have any excellency in it, and perhaps others look upon it as having much excellency in it, if your hearts be puffed up with it, the glory of it is gone; and it is that which you must be ashamed of though now you be honored for it, and pride your selves in it.

Lastly, Tender up all in Christ, in the worthiness of his infinite sacrifice. Christ is that sacrifice that is pleasing unto God, and all sacrifices are pleasing unto God only thorough the merit and worthiness of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath tendered up himself unto God the Father as a Sacrifice to heal all our sacrifices and to take away all the shame of our sacrifices. *1 Pet. 2. 5. Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy Priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices, how? by Jesus Christ. Mark, you are as lively stones, and lively stones built up, not only stones lying here one and there another, but lively stones built up in a holy communion, that is the meaning, built up to offer sacrifices, and that spiritual sacrifices: But mark, though our sacrifices be never so spiritual, yet they cannot be acceptable to God but by Jesus Christ, by Jesus Christ that great Sacrifice they come to be acceptable unto God, that is the sacrifice the Saints shall glory in and bless God for to all eternity, and never shall be ashamed of their sacrifices when they are tendered up unto God thorough the merit of that sacrifice. And thus through Gods good hand of providence we are come to the end of this fourth Chapter.*



## C. H A P. V.

## Verſ. I.

Hear ye this, O Priests; and hearken ye house of Israel, and give ear Ob house of the King, for judgment is towards you, because ye have been a snare in Miſpah, and a net ſpread upon Tabor.

**I**N this Chapter we have the ſummoning of all ſorts unto judgment. A heavy charge laid and condemnation pronounced againſt Israel, and Judah too brought in as guilty and ſentence paſt upon her alſo; And at laſt the good effect that the judgments of God ſhould produce is ſhewed. That is the ſumme of the Chapter. The ſum of the Chapter

This Chapter is the beginning of another Sermon of *Hosea*. It ſeems to be preached (as ſome think) in the reign of *Pekah* ſon of *Remaliah* king of Israel, that you reade of in 2 *King*. 17. and eſpecially toward the end of his reign, which was the ſame time that *Ahaz* reigned in Judah, when that horrible confuſion was brought into Religion, much deſilement in the Worſhip of God, he having placed the Altar that he brought the faſhion of from *Damaſcus* in the houſe of God; therefore the Lord enveigheth by his Prophet not only againſt Israel, but againſt Judah here. Coherence  
The time

The ſummons to judgment you have in the firſt verſe. The accusation and condemnation of Israel by themſelves, to the end of the 5. verſe. The accusation of Judah, at the end of the Analyſis

the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> verses. Then Israel and Judah together, to the 15<sup>th</sup> verse. And at last the close of the Chapter shews the issue of all, what all shall come to.

Summons

In the summons observe these three several words.

*Hear ye. Hearken. Give ear.*

*Hear ye Priests.*

*Hearken ye house of Israel.*

*Give ear O house of the King.*

Obser.

When God cometh in waies of judgment he expects we should seriously mind what he is a doing. We should not only *Hear*, but *Hearken*, and *Give ear*: God will force audience then. We are bound to hearken and to give ear to Gods commanding Word; But if we refuse it, he will have us to hear and give ear to his threatning Word; and if that be refused, he will force us to hear and give ear to his condemning Word; for so it is here, *Hear ye, Hearken, Give ear*, for judgment is against you all.

1.

2

3

There are Three sorts named here.

*Priests.*

*People.*

*House of the King.*

All sorts are cited to judgment, for corruption was gone over all, and judgment cometh against them all. From thence the Note is, That

Obser.

*Generality in sins is no means to escape judgments.*

It is true, Generality of offences with men may be a means to escape punishment; One and all with men is a word of security. When Souldiers offend if there be multitudes of them in the same offence and they cry, One and al, there is no meddling then with any of them. But it is not so with God, God regards not multitudes and generality of all sorts, when all sorts are involved in the offence. Men think, I do but as others do, and I shall scape as well as others: With men it is somewhat, but it is nothing with God; though all sorts offend yet there is never a whit the more security thereby unto any. We have a notable Scripture for that, *Nab. i. 12. Though they be quiet, and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down when he shall*

ſhall paſſe thorow. Though they be many, yes thus ſhall they be cut down.

He begins here with the Priests, *Hear O ye Priests.*] They were the principal cause of all the evil; first of the evil of sin, and then of the evil of punishment, and therefore he beginneth with them. They are called Priests, not that they were true Priests, for they were not of the tribe of *Levi*, but they were so reputed to be. The Priests have usually been the causes of all the wickedness in, and judgments on a Nation. *Jer. 23. 15. Prophaness is gone throughout the Land, from the Prophet and the Priests.* Multitude of Scriptures are evident before us that layes the evil of Nations upon Priests. And hath it not been so with us? and is it not so at this day? There was never a more filthy sink of scandalous superstitious Priests in a Kingdom than of late amongst us, as hath begun and will yet further appear unto you. There hath been an accusation against our Parliament, that orthodox, grave, godly Divines have been put out of their livings; I suppose you begin to see what those grave, orthodox, godly Divines were that were put out, under evident and plain proofs it is made known to the world to the satisfaction of them, and you have but the beginning of it, you will have a great deale more afterward. *Hear ye Priests:*

Obſerv  
Priests.

Applic.

See the  
first Cen-  
tury of  
malignant  
Ministers  
ejected

*And hearken ye house of Israel*] that is the next. *The house of Israel*, by that is meant the common people. *Priests* first, the *house of Israel* next, and the *house of the King*, that is last. And the house of Israel is set between the Priests and the house of the King upon this ground, because by these two, by the corruption of the Priests and the house of the King all was swayed: the cause of the evil of the people came from them both, partly from the Priests and partly from the house of the King: It came both waies to the people and between them both the people were undone. "Let these two join in any "sinful way in a Kingdom, the Priests and the house of the "King, let them joyn and set up what they wil in worship, the "people will go that way they go. If but one of them be right there is a great deal of hope of much good, but wo to a people

Obſerv.

people when both of them are corrupt, when both Priests and the house of the King too are corrupt. If the house of the King should be corrupt, yet if the Priests and so the Ministers, if they kept up the truth and vigor and life of Religion, things would go reasonably well in a Kingdom, though Religion might be persecuted yet the life of it would not be taken away. Whatsoever Laws Magistrates did enact against the waies of God except Ministers be brought to comply those Laws will not be brought to prevail with the consciences of people, nor with their practices. *Jeroboam* and the other Princes saw it was in vain for them to think to prevail with the people except they could get the Priests to be for them, therefore it was the great design of *Jeroboam* to get the Priests of his side, which he easily did, for all preferment came by him, he raised whom he would, and then because that their means and preferment lay upon him they would joyn with him in what way he went.

Object, But mark, Might not the people excuse themselves and say, what should we do? On the one side authoritie enjoyns us, on the other side our Ministers teach us to do thus and thus, what shall we do? they might think to excuse themselves.

Answ. No, judgment is against you *Ob house of Israel*; notwithstanding the Priests and the house of the King have done thus and thus, yet you are not to be excused. A great many reasons may be given why the people may not be excused though they be commanded thus and thus. I remember *Arias Montanus* upon this Scripture, gives this reason why men are not to be excused though they be commanded by the King; for he laies down this for a rule, *That no King can make any Law but by the people, they cannot saith he make Laws by themselves alone, the people must consent to them some way or other*; therefore the people are involved in al the wicked Laws in a Kingdom: It is not enough therefore for you to say such and such Laws are made and we cannot help it; we are to know it is not meerly the wil of a King that is a Law to a Kingdom, but Laws enacted is, where people have their hands one way or other in them.

This answer he gives, and he quoteth an Heathen to shew that people must have their hand in the Laws that are made, especially some people, for some Kingdoms are otherwise governed than others; therefore there is no reason for people to say, *in the Scripture such Kingdoms did so and so*: We know in one Countrey the Kings authority reacheth so far, and in another so far; in one Countrey Kingdoms are by Election, in another by Inheritance; in one Countrey the female inherits, in another none but the male, therefore the power of Kings and their limits is not what hath been heretofore in such and such a place, but what is the constitution of that Kingdom of which he is King, for many are limited in their power in one Countrey more than in another; Therefore the people are not to be excused because of their evil especially in these times.

Not alike  
Absolute  
as som in  
Scripture.

Now this sheweth evidently that God would have every one examine what is taught him and what is commanded him by his superiours. It is cleer from hence; The people art here cited to judgment, and placed between the Priests and the Kings house, though the Priests taught them superstitious waies, though the Kings house commanded them, yet they must be judged, then I say it is cleer that God would have every one examine what is taught him and commanded him by his superiours, and himself to know the rule of his own actions. It is no answer for God, to say I am taught thus, or I am commanded thus, you must know the rule of your own actions your selves, for you your selves must give an account unto God.

But you may say, *Shall it be left to every one to judge of the truth of what is taught, and of the lawfulness of what is commanded? If every one shall judge of what he thinks in his conscience lawful, what order can there be?*

For answer unto that, Whatsoever the inconvenience may be, it appears evidently to be a truth, for we must answer unto God for our actions, therefore we must know the rule of our actions; therefore, First, let the inconveniency be what it wil, the truth is good. But secondly, I say this, that every one must judge

I  
2.

Note

so far as it concerns his own act, he cannot judge so far as it concerns the Magistrates act what is fit for the Magistrate to command, nor the Ministers act what is fit for him to teach, but he may and he ought to judge so far as it concerns his own act; what I am to do so far as I must answer before God, I must judge it so, but if I be taught and commanded by authority one thing and I judge another, I go upon mine own peril, that is, if I do not judge right I sin against God and incur punishment from God and I must run the hazard; but to judge that which must be the rule of my act, that is a certain truth belonging unto every man.

*Give ear ye house of the King.*] And there is put an *Ob* unto this besides the other, *Give ear Ob house of the King*, for though it comes in last yet that's the principal indeed, for what can superstitious and Idolatrous Priests do? what hurt? except they be countenanced by the house of the King; Give ear therefore, Oh house of the King.

Obfer,

*Oh house*] that is, the King himself with all his Countiers: Kings and Princes must have sin charged upon them and be made to know that they are under the threats of God as well as any.

*For judgment is against you.*] Mark it, he doth not put all this evil upon ill Counsellors that got into the house of the King, but he puts it directly upon the house of the King it self.

Note.

*Ill Princes may be as great a cause why there are ill Councillors, as ill Councillors why there are ill Princes.* Ill Counsellors usually see what the design of a Prince is, and what is suitable to his disposition, and they blow up, nourish and help that with their evil counsel. But were it that the design of Princes and their dispositions were right they might have Counsellors about them to further that which is right too. Certainly it is no excuse for Princes to cherish flatterers and wicked ones about them, & then to say they were advised to such a way; For if the teaching of the Priests, and the commands of Princes do not excuse people but they must see a rule for what they do, then Counsellors about Princes cannot excuse them, but they ought to see the rule for what they do too. It is the unhappiness of Princes to have none about them to charge them personally

with

with their ſins, I mean in the Name of God, to ſhew them the evil and the danger of their ſins. It was wont to be ſaid (as heretofore I have told you) *Da Ambroſios & plur. habebimus Theodoſios*. Let us have *Ambroſes* and we ſhall have *Theodoſius's*, becauſe of his freedom of ſpirit with that Emperor; And beſides to another Emperor, *Valentinian*, ſaith he, *Noli te extollere Imperator, ſi vis diutius imparare, eſto Deo ſubditus*. Do not lift up thy ſelf Oh Emperor, if you will be Emperor longer, if you will reign longer, be willing to be ſubject unto God. And we know with what freedom of ſpirit the Prophets in former times ſpoke even to Kings houſes. You know that of *Samuel*, 1. *Sam.* 12. *ult.* If you do wickedly you ſhall periſh both ye and your King; So *Elijah* to *Ahab*, Thou art he that troubleſt Iſrael: So *Eliſha* to *Jehoram*, 2 *King.* 3. 13, 14. What have I to do with thee? (and yet *Jehoram* came to the Prophet in an humble way) what have I to do with thee, Get thee to the Prophets of thy father, And were it not that I regard the preſence of *Jehoſaphat* the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor ſee thee. This he ſaid to a great King. Great liberty have others had in the Primitive times to ſpeak thus unto Princes; And a great cauſe of the evil of theſe latter daies hath been the flatteries of thoſe that have been at Court, therefore ſaith the Prophet here, Hear ye Oh houſe of the King. Kings are great indeed above other men, but what are they before the great God? *Pſal.* 76. 12. He ſhall cut off the ſpirit of Princes, he is terrible to the Kings of the earth. *Pſal.* 105. 12. When they were but few in number, yea very few and ſtrangers in the land, when they went from one Nation to another, from one Kingdom to another people, he ſuffered no man to do them wrong, yea, he reprov'd Kings for their ſakes; He reprov'd Kings for the ſake of his own people when they were but few in number and went wandring from one Nation to another, & ſaid, *Touch not mine anointed*, that is; touch not my Saints. He gave Kings warning that they ſhould take heed how they did ſo much as *Touch* his Church, touch his own people; Gods people are there called his Anointed, and it is ſaid unto Kings that they ſhould not

touch his anointed that were so few and wandered up and down from one Nation to another. Say thus even to the house of the King.

Expos. 2. But yet further, The house of the King is named last here, is named after the house of Israel, why so? Not that the house of Israel were more guilty than the house of the King, but because the house of the King could least endure reproof, that is one reason given of it, they could hardly bear reprehension, therefore in wisdom so far the Prophet would go, he would begin with the other and being in a way of reprehension with the other, then he comes in with the house of the King. "Though they are to be reprov'd for evil yet "some due respect ought to be given unto them.

Obfer.

Judgment <sup>1</sup> *Judgment is toward you* saith the Prophet. *Judicium* here is taken either actively or passively. Actively, *pro actu Judicij*, so *Junius*, it was their part to judg out of the Law, and so he would reade it thus, Judgment is yours, *Oh house of the King*, you ought to judg the people in righteousness. But I rather think that here it is to be taken passively, that is, that God calls you to judgment, to suffer judgment, judgment is toward you, or against you. And observe I beseech you the difference between the beginning of the fourth Chapter and the beginning of the fifth. In the fourth Chapter it was but a controversie, a strife that God had with them, *Hear the Word of the Lord, ye children of Israel, for the Lord hath a controversie with the land*: But here you have another word, now it is come to judgment; that which before was but a contending with them is now come to a judgment of them, to a passing of sentence upon them, judgment is against you, sentence is out upon you. The former was Gods pleading against them, and this now is Gods judging of them. "When God pleadeth a-

Note

Obferv.  
Gods  
pleadings

"gainst us (that is the Note from thence) let us not neglect his "pleas, for they will come to a sentence and then we are gone." If we neglect when he begins to plead his cause with us, if we neglect it because judgment is not upon us, it will proceed to a sentence. God hath laid his plea against many a man in his Word, and perhaps some of you see it and know

it.



it that God hath laid his plea againſt you; and God laies his plea againſt many a man in his conſcience, but he neglecting this plea of God laid againſt him in his Word and in his conſcience, he hath afterward received the ſentence of death in his ſoul which hath ſunk his heart into diſpair. Many a man hath had God ſpeaking againſt him in his word and in his conſcience I ſay, and there hath been Gods controverſie, God hath been laying his plea there, thou haſt gone on in thy ſin, and at length it may be there comes the ſentence of death upon thy ſoul, that thou doeſt as it were feel, ſom have ſaid it, that they have felt God paſſing a ſentence of death upon them, and ever after that ſpeech they have roared out through deſpair and ſo have died. There hath been ſuch works of God heretofore, yea and many times continued that thoſe that go againſt their conſciences and have had Gods plea againſt them often, they have as it were felt God paſſing a ſentence of death upon them in this world and that hath ſunk them into deſpair; it hath been a particular day of judgment unto them, they have heard as it were God ſpeaking from his Throne this ſentence upon them, thou art a dead man, a loſt man. Oh take heed of neglecting Gods pleas leſt they come to judgments.

The ſentence of condemnation felt

*Judgment is againſt you; why? what is the cauſe?*

*You have been a ſnare upon Miſpah and a net ſpread upon Tabor.*

Mark, God paſſeth not judgment but he gives the cauſe for it. Men are raſh and they will paſs judgment upon ſuch and ſuch that they know not: When you come ſometimes into a Tavern or Inn, or into a Shop you ſhall hear men railing upon ſuch and ſuch, Ask them, do you know them? No: What have they done? they know not neither, only there is a generall noiſe of them that ſuch men do thus and thus diſturb the peace of the Kingdom. But in this they deal not righteouſly. God he paſſeth not judgment but he gives a full and ſufficient cauſe why he doth it; *You have been a ſnare ſaith he on Miſpah and a net ſpread upon Tabor.*

Expoſi.  
Obſer.

There is much of the mind of God in theſe words. Some take:

take that first, *Mispah*, appellatively *pro speculatione*, you have been a snare upon the watch, for so נָדָב ( *Specular* ) from whence the word cometh signifies, and *Speculatio* they take to be for those for whom they should watch over, as *Congregatio pro Congregatis*, *Circumcisio pro Circumcisis*, so *Speculatio pro Custoditis*: As if God should charge them thus, You should have been Watch-men you Priests and you of the Kings house, but you have been a net to ensnare them, you should have been *Speculatores* but you have been *Venatores & Aucupes*, you have been fowlers and hunters of my people. Theodoret hath it *pro Speculatoribus*, that is thus, you spread a net for the watchmen, you superstitious Priests, you house of the King, and you people generally, you spread a net for your faithful Watchmen, if you have any Watchmen that are more watchful than others you seek to ensnare them what you can. So they carry it.

2 But though this doth hint at the meaning of the words, yet I think it cannot be taken from the word *Mispah*, therefore as the word *Tabor* is taken properly, not appellatively, so I think is the word *Mispah*. Therefore we are to remember that both *Mispah* and *Tabor* were the names of two mountains that were in the land of Israel. Indeed the first signifies a *Watch*, and the other, *Tabor*, signifies a high place, and because it was a famous & high mountain it is called *Tabor* by way of eminency.

*Mispah.* Now both these Mountains, *Mispah* and *Tabor* were very eminent among the people of Israel. *Mispah*, so *Judg. 20. 1.* The children of Israel were gathered together unto the Lord in *Mispah*, an eminent place. It was that mountain where *Laban* and *Jacob* met *Gen. 31. 49.* so some think it to be, and called *Mispah* by *Laban*, For (saith he) the Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent one from another. That for the mountain, *Mispah*.

*Tabor.* So *Tabor*, that was very ancient too, *Psal. 89. 12.* *Tabor* and *Hermon* are joyned together. *Hermon* was famous too, as *Cant. 4. 8.* Come with me from *Labanon* my spouse, look from the top of *Amna*, from the top of *Shenir* and *Hermon*: Therefore it is very ill turned in your meeter in the *Psalms*, (as there are a great ma-  
ny

ny ill-places in the meeter in the Pſalms, that are not only poor kind of rime, but are turned againſt the very ſenſe of the text, againſt the meaning, as may be ſhewed in many places, ſo in that one) in Pſal. 42. 6. *The little hill Hermon*; whereas the truth is, *Hermon* was an high and famous hill; A miſtake in the reading, for in the reading Pſalms it is, *I will remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Miſſer*, that ſignifies ſmal indeed; but they make it as if *Hermon* and *Miſſer* were all one: but the Pſalm is rather to be interpreted thus, *I wil remember thee O Jeruſalem where ever I am, in all quarters of the world, from Jordan, that was eaſtward from Jeruſalem, and Hermon, that was an high mountain in the North, and Miſſer, that is, of the South, becauſe the mountains of the South were ſmall*; As if he ſhould ſay, whether I be Eaſt or North or South from the Temple I will remember Jeruſalem where ever I am. So that the meaning of that Pſalm is not as if *Miſſer* and *Hermon* were one and the ſame, as if it ſhould be turned the little hil *Hermon*, for it was a high and famous hil joyned with *Tabor*, that famous mountain Pſalm 89. And *Tabor* was ſo famous, that it was a proverbial ſpeech among them to ſay, *As Tabor amongſt the mountains*. It was the mountain on which Chriſt was tranſ figured, a moſt brave ſtately mountain every way equal. *Joſephus* in his 4<sup>th</sup> book, cap. 21. of the wars of the Jews, ſaith it was 30. <sup>a</sup> *Stadiums* or Furlongs high, and on the top, twenty; Now a <sup>b</sup> *Stadium* is 125. paces as I remember, or 625. feet; and on the top it was ſo plain that there was not one place of it higher than another, but it lay ſo equal as if it had been made by the art of man; And a mountain that was very fertile and full of trees; a very pleaſant and delightful place.

Now God chargeth them, *that they had been a ſnare on Miſpah, and a net upon mount Tabor*. According to ſome theſe mountains are taken *ſenechdochically*, that is, for all high places, and theſe *Metonymically*, for all their ſuperſtition and Idolatry committed upon thoſe high places, and then the meaning is this, Your Idolatry upon theſe high places hath been a net and a ſnare to the people.

The common ſinging Pſalms, They are now much better done by Mr. Rowe, that learned a pious Member of the Houſe of Commons in Parliament, and by them Authorized for the Preſs.

pfal. 42. 6. illustrated.

<sup>a</sup> 3. mile and three quarters  
<sup>b</sup> Plin. lib. 2. cap. 23.

Expoſ. r.

Expof. 2. But I think rather the fenfe to be Metaphorical, thus, Thefe mountains were places very delightful, and places where was much hunting, and the Gentry of the kingdome took much delight in hunting in thefe mountains, and there they were wont to fpread their nets and fet their snares for fowls and beafts. Now faith God, *You have been a snare on Miffah and a net upon Tabor*, that is thus; *Miffah* and *Tabor* are two mountains where there is much hunting for fowl and beafts, and the truth is, you watchmen and other people that joyn with you, have been huntsmen that have laid snares for the fouls of my people as they lay snares on *Miffah* and *Tabor*; becaufe they were eminent places for hunting, therefore God chargeth them for laying snares for the fouls of his people, and hunting them and catching them in their waies of fuperftition and Idolatry. The Gofpel is called a Net in the Scripture, and the Minifters of the Gofpel are to fpread it, but the cords and twifts of that net are precious, they are the bleffed truths of the Gofpel, the mysteries of the Gofpel, and happy are thofe that are caught in that net: But the net of fuperftitious Priests and Governors it is made of other manner of ftuff, they have their net too that they fpread and catch the fouls of the people in. And the net that is here meant they had to catch the fouls of the people (for at the firft, *Jerobam* and the reft of the Princes would not go on in a violent way to force people to a falfe religion, but would feek by their cunning devices to catch the hearts of people in their love of falfe worfhip, and they would fpread their nets for people before they were aware, and) the threads and lines it was woven withal were thefe.

Note. Method of Princes & Priests to delude the people about the worfhip of God.

First, The plea of Authority. Doth not authority command you to do thus and thus?

Secondly, The Authority of the Priestly Office. Do not the Priests, the holy fathers do thus and thus? and have you more wit than they? more wit than all the Statesmen and the Kings house? and more wit than all your Teachers too?

Thirdly, We worfhip God, we do not alter our Religion,

we hope we worship Jehovah that you worship.

Fourthly, The things required of you are not very much; it is but a circumstance of place; you worship at *Jerusalem*, it is but worshipping at *Dan* and *Ethel* here before these two Images, you shall not worship the Images, but worship in this place.

Fifthly, We intend nothing but that which is for your good, all that we aim at is for your benefit, for that was *Jeroboams* pretence, *It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem*, to go twice a year so great and tedious and dangerous a journey, no faith he, I tender the good of my people more, therefore let them worship here.

Sixthly, Why should you be so curious and strict; The most, the ten Tribes do thus, there is but only *Judah* and *Benjamin* that go another way, the multitude go this way, and why should you when only a poor handful go another way desire to do as they do?

Seventhly, We have prospered a long time in this way. Hath not Israel prospered as much as Judah? hath not God been with us as much as with them? Judah pretends he worships God in the right way, we are sure God is with us.

Eighthly, They would raise reproaches upon the true worshipers of God, as in the 7. Chapter of this Propheſie, verſ. 3. *They make the King glad with their wickedness, and the Princes with their lyes.* That is, this was their cunning devise, to raise all the reproches that possibly they could against those that were true, forward, and zealous worshipers of God, especially against the Prophets and Ministers, and therefore in *Amos* you shall find (and he prophesied at the same time) that *Amaziah* said, *the Land could not bear his words*, they are a company of seditious men, that the Country could not bear their words, but they were even enough to set the people together by the ears, yea what are these men that oppose the Kings Laws but such and such? These were the snares that they set to catch the people, to make them out of love with the true worship of God. Thus they were a snare set upon *Misrah* and a net upon mount *Tabor*.

Cap. 7. 3.  
Opened

Applic.

Thus it hath been with us, how cunningly have men laid their nets amongst us to catch souls? Say they, it is but yeelding thus far, to this thing and the other thing; and authority enjoins it, if it were more it were no great matter, and other learned and godly men they do thus and they think thus; yea, *and why should you hinder your self of the good you may do?* It is but a matter of circumstance, it is but for decency and order, and there is much devotion this way, we may gain Papists in yeelding as far as we can unto them, there is none but a company of simple people against it, this is ancient, the Fathers of the Church have done thus, yea many Martyrs that have shed their blood did thus. Thus many have been caught as a bird in a snare, with these lines and twigs thus cunningly twisted together how have they caught souls? and so caught them that they could not tell how to get out, but being once in they were ensnared more and more; as a bird that is once caught in the net it beginneth to flutter a while but at length it is caught so much the faster; so men when they yeilded to one thing they could not tell where to stay but at last they have been so deep in and so far ensnared that they could not tell what to do; and the truth is, at length they have even given up their consciences to those things; as a bird that perhaps at first when the net is but stirred it is shie of it, but being once got in it is ensnared all over, so many men at first, being of tender consciences, have been shie of superstitious vanities, but with cunning arguments and devices they have been caught, and they thought they should never hear of them any more, but being once caught so as that they have power over them, they have come upon them with more violence than before, and so have been made to yeild so far that at the last their consciences have wholly been given up to those things; They have been vexed and troubled with their consciences at the first, but at length they have been resolved to trouble themselves no more but to yeild to whatsoever shall be enjoined. Oh how many have been thus ensnared! This was the plot of the adversary, if possibly they could they would break the consciences of men. Oh it was the most de-

villish

smile

villifh plot that ever was in the world that was lately among us. When they were together in their Taverns, or jocundly fitting together, then they were plotting & ſtudying what it was that ſuch and ſuch men did ſcruple moſt at, and oh ſaies one, this, no ſaies another not this but this will catch ſuch a one; Let him have it ſaid they. It may be the old ceremonies would catch ſome; others perhaps would break through the old, therefore there muſt be new ones deviſed; others again it may be would break through the new ones, Oh but the book of liberty on the Sabbath, that would catch them; and if they break that through, then the Oath of canonical obedience that would catch them. Thus they laid nets to break the conſciences of men, and they knew that if they could but once break their conſciences they might do with them what they would; certainly they ſaw that there was no way to make them to be their own, to be *filij Eccleſie* as they call'd them, but to crack their conſciences at firſt. Many men have found this to be true by experience, and we have ſeen it: For otherwiſe what is the reaſon when they have come with all the flatteries they could to ſome (that have ſtood out many yeers and perhaps God hath done good by their Miniſtry) to draw them but to any thing, and when they have but once prevail'd (they imagin'd that there was ſo much the more in it againſt their conſciences, they ſaw men look pale and trembled and were loth to yeild, but) when they had got them once, they concluded that certainly they did that which was againſt their conſciences, and now ſaid they, we have got them, and then they would heap all their injuncti- ons upon them one after another until they had broken their conſciences all to ſhivers. And as it is with ſome birds and beaſts that when they are caught they are preſently fatt'd up, ſo it was with ſome Miniſters and others, when they were once got in their nets, preſently they had livings and preferment and ſome got to be Biſhops Chaplains and the like; And as ſome other birds when they are caught they are preſently nipped in the head or their limbs are broken; ſo when they had caught ſome others, they would deal ruggely, ſeverely, ma-

1.  
2  
3  
4.

ſimile

Note

liciously with them, and would never leave until they had broke them all to pieces. These were our men that have been a snare upon *Misphab* and a net spread upon *Tabor*; But blessed be God that their snare is broken and our souls are escaped as a bird out of the hands of the Fowler, *Psal.* 124. 7. My brethren when so many have been caught in such nets and snares that were laid, do not you think you would have been all caught one after another? It is likely every one of you would have been caught in their superstitious waies, for see how they prevailed in a few years. But God looked from Heaven and pittied the souls of his people and heard their groans and sighs. Oh many a poor Minister hath gone home to his wife, and having no other way of maintainance he hath out of fear of loosing his living yeilded to their superstitious injunctions, do but you think how he hath wrung his hands and could not sleep that night but lay tossing upon his bed with a dismal conscience. Well, the Lord hath heard these cries and broken our snares and our souls are delivered. God forbid such a judgment should ever befall us again, as that God should bring these fowlers amongst us to ensnare our souls as they have done!

Expof. 3. But there is another interpretation of this text and it is somewhat futable to this and may well stand with this, and I think it is that which is intended by the holy Ghost here. *Misphab* and *Tabor* were two eminent mountains (I take them in their own proper sence, *Ion* have been a snare upon *Misphab* and a net spread upon *Tabor*, that they did spread snares and nets upon those very mountains) that did stand between Israel and Judah, between the two chief Cities, *Samarita* that belonged to the ten Tribes, and *Jerusalem* that appertained to Judah and *Benjamin*. Now *Jerobozm* and the other Princes his successors, they placed Watch-towers upon these two mountains, and there they set men to watch, to be as Spies to see who went from Israel to Judah. There were a company of precise people that would not be contented with that worship that was set up by authority, but they must have other manner of worship and they must now and then be stealing



ling to Jeruſalem at the times appointed: Now the Priests they counſelled thoſe that were in authority, ſay they, we ſhall never be quiet till we catch theſe men, they muſt be going to Jeruſalem, therefore let there be ſome device to apprehend them: then comes another and ſaith, moſt of them when they go they go by *Miſpah* and *Tabor*, and there are two convenient places, if you will ſet ſome watch-towers there and place men in them they may take every one of them. Now this counſel pleaſed the Princes very well, and upon it (as I find in *Arian Montanus*, who cites it out of the Jews histories) *Arias mon.* there were two Towers ſet upon theſe mountains and were intended to this very purpoſe. This God chargeth them withal, and judgment is againſt you for this. Oh you ſet ſnares upon *Miſpah*: They were convenient places for ſuch a buſineſs, and ſo they did catch poor people that ſought to worſhip God in his own way. Oh this is that which provokes God exceedingly and will bring fearful judgment upon a people when Magiſtrates and Miniſters will ſeek to catch poor ſouls that would worſhip God in his own right way. And hath it not been ſo in our late High-comiſſion Court? *Applic.* when there was but a poor Reader in a Countrey Town, that could do nothing elſe, and if there were any eminent Preacher neer hand, poor ſouls that were hungry after the bread of life would go to hear that Preacher, they would ſet men on purpoſe with pen and ink to take notice of the names of ſuch men, juſt as *Jeroboam* did here. The Lord hath a ſpecial eye upon poor ſouls that are oppreſt and are thus caught, to relieve them in due time; and bleſſed be his Name He hath done much for us this way, in relieving us and delivering us from theſe men, and the judgment of God is this day out againſt thoſe that have been theſe catchers. What is become of thoſe Proctors and Sumners and of all that rabble rout that were catchers and hunters of ſuch poor ſouls as were deſirous of worſhipping God in his own way?

## V E R. 2.

*And the revolvers are profound to make slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of them all.*

**T**HE Lord by his Prophet proceedeth in his charge against Israel for their Idolatry; And in the latter end of the 5. verſe, he pronounceth the ſentence againſt them.

1. The continuance of their charge. *The revolvers are profound to make ſlaughter.*

*The revolvers.*] The Apoſtates, thoſe who once worſhipped me according unto what I required in the way of true worſhip; But they are revolted. The brand of a Revolter is an ignominious brand; Eſpecially when God himſelf chargeth this upon any; Once you were thus and thus forward in the waies of God, but you are revolted, you are an apoſtates; there can be on blacker brand upon a people, upon a man than this is, he is an apoſtate, a revolter. We muſt underſtand this their revolting eſpecially in reference to their falling off from the true worſhip of God to their Idolatry: And ſo the next words.

*They are profound.*] *Profunda verunt*, they are grown very deep in this their way of Idolatry. At firſt they began but with a little, but by degrees they are grown into the very depth. When men begin in the waies of Idolatry they know not whether they ſhall ſink. They think perhaps at firſt to go but thus far and thus far, but before they are aware they are ſunk into the very depth.

*It is a dangerous thing to venture upon the beginnings of falſe worſhip, eſpecially when the tide is flowing in.* If a man ſtand upon the ſhore of the Sea when the tide is coming in, and thinks the water is but ſhallow now, I may venture to ſtand here, it is but a little depth here; The Sea ſtill comes in more and more, he thinks it is not much deeper than it was: but if he venture too long he may ſoon be ſwallowed up and ſunk into the very depth of the Sea. Thus it hath been with many; They have been deceived in their waies of ſuperſtition: They have

Obſer.  
beginings  
of falſe  
worſhip

ſimile

Applica.

have thought they might yeild thus far, and yeild thus far; but they little thought of the tide that was coming. It is true if the tide had been going out, it had not been ſo much danger. Therefore they are deceived in that their opinion of the firſt *Reformers*; they would yeild for peace ſake thus and thus far; but then the tide was rather going out; and yet it was not without danger that they yeilded ſo far as they did: But of late time, the tide was coming in; and then the yeilding but thus far and thus far, hath ſwallowed up many into the very depths of thoſe waies of ſuperſtition, they have even been choked and drowned by them. Firſt Reformers.  
late Innovations.

Secondly, *Profunda verunt radices in ſua malitia.* Their hearts are got very deep in theſe waies: (ſo I find ſome Interpreters carry it, and not improbably) *they are grown deep*, that is, they are deeply rooted in theſe waies, ſo that there is little hope ever to get off their hearts from them; They have continued in them a great while, and now they plead their forefathers, and cuſtom; ſo they are deeply rooted in theſe their waies of Idolatry. 2  
Calvin  
in loc.

“It is a dangerous thing for a people to be deeply rooted in ſuperſtitious waies; What a great deal of ſtir is there in dealing with them that are deeply rooted in falſe waies of worſhip? *By cuſtom in them they grow to be deeply rooted in them.* Obſer.

Thirdly, *Profunda verunt*, they are grown profound, that is, they have revolted from God exceeding much, deeply revolted. It noteth the greatneſs of their revolting. In *Eſa.* 31. 6. there is ſuch an expreſſion, *They have deeply revolted*, they have not only forſaken ſomewhat of my worſhip, but they have deeply, exceedingly, largely, very much revolted from me. So in the 9<sup>th</sup> of this Propheſie, verſe 9. *They have deeply corrupted themſelves*, They have exceedingly, very much corrupted themſelves. 3.

Fourthly, *Profunda verunt*, they are grown deep, that is (as ſome would have it) they grow deeper in their waies of Idolatry than God doth in the waies of his worſhip: As thus, They will puniſh more the breaking of any of their rules in their 4

Mercer.  
Rab. Jar-  
chi.

their invented worship, than God punisheth the breaking of his rules. So I find Mercer that learned Interpreter quoting Rabbi Jarachi as having this expression, *Qui non ascendit transgreditur, qui offendit occidetur*. He which ascends not (to the feast) transgresseth; but he that offendeth (so) shall be slain. God only accounteth him a transgressor that comes not up to the feast at the appointed time; but they say, whosoever doth not come shall be put to death. They will go further in the punishment of the breach of their superstitious laws, than God doth in the punishment of the breach of his holy Law. So they are grown deep. Yea they would seem to go further, to be more zealous and earnest for their waies of Idolatry than God himself is for his waies of holy worship.

Applic.

And have we not found this, that Revolters, superstitious Idolaters they have grown deep thus? that is, they will punish the breach of their superstitious waies more deeply than God punisheth the breach of His Law; they will stand more upon time, and will be more eager to have their Laws fulfilled abundantly than the true worshipers of God are eager to have the Law of God fulfilled.

But (though I think the holy Ghost hath a reference to divers of the things) the main and principal scope of the holy Ghost in this word I take to be this, according as you have it in your translations, *They are grown profound*; that is, They are very subtil in their waies of idolatry, they lay their snares deep.

Exposit.

We spake before of the snares of Idolaters; now here the holy Ghost chargeth them for being profound, that is, They are subtil, they lay their snares very deep: As fowlers and hunters (to follow the metaphor) they will go into low places and into ditches, that so they may deceive the fowls, and that the birds may not perceive them: So the Holy Ghost here follows this metaphor: they are content to go deep, they are deep in their plots, they will deny themselves in anything almost, and will be content to lie very low so be it they may further their own ends. You find it in many great Promoters of superstition and idolatry, they will crouch and seem to be very

very affable and courteous to gain people, and in many things deny themselves, and all to further their own ends. Thus they are *profound* in their subtilty; according to that expression we have in *Pſal. 10. 9, 10. He lieth in wait to catch the poor, he doth catch the poor when he draweth him into his net; he croucheth and humbleth himself that thee poor may fall.*

Obſer.

Pſal. 10.  
9, 10.  
opened

Uſe.

Oh it should teach us to be willing to deny our selves in our own ends: that we may promote the true worship of God; for Idolaters will crouch, and bow, and deny themselves in their ends for the promoting of their Idolatry. There are many depths, many subtilties in their waies; their parts are imploied to the utmost to maintain their superstition; And men that have strong parts and good wits, what a glosse are they able to put upon the worst things in the world! If there be any ability in any parts or strong wit that the Devil can assilt them withal he shall be imploied in putting of glosses upon their false waies of worship; and so they grow deep. The Scripture telleth us of the *depths* of Satan, *Rev. 2. 24. Satan in his instruments hath deep policies and doth go beyond many poor weak and simple people. And sometime we have in Scripture exprest, the devices of Satan, 2 Cor. 2. 11. τὰ κρυφὰ* the reasonings of Satan. And then *the methods of the Devil, Eph. 6. 11. τὰς μεθοδίας* the deep policies of the Devil; and in nothing more exercised than in the maintainance of the waies of false worship; There they appear with their gravity and profound learning (seeming profound learning) to countenance this their way of false worship. This was just the way of Idolaters at these times, they were grown profound in this their way.

Men o f  
parts.

&amp; gravity

First, *That the hearts of Apostates are the most deeply rooted in wickedness.*

Obſer.

No men are so deeply rooted in wickedness as Apostates are, *Therevolters are grown deep*, that is, are deeply rooted in this their way of wickedness, and amongst other wickedness, above all in the waies of superstition and Idolatry. Apostates if they grow superstitious and Idolatrous they are the most deeply rooted in those waies, yea and the most profound and

Applic  
Prelats  
of late.

subtil in them. Hence you might observe in your own experiences the practices of our Prelates, they would chuse to themselves Chaplains to be their Agents, such as had bin heretofore Puritans, and so falling off and apostatizing from that strictness that they seemed to profess in former times; they made account that these would be their choicest and best Agents of all men; they thought their fittest men were such as did arise out of the ashes of a Puritan, as they themselves were wont to express it; they knew that such men as those that were formerly seemingly strict in their practice, were best acquainted wherein the consciences of godly men were most tender, and that they knew their waies and what would pinch their consciences most; and therefore these were the fittest Agents for them.

Obs. 2. *Idolaters (especially Apostates) are profound and deep.*

Use 1. We had need therefore to beware of those that are superstitious when they come with the greatest shew of arguments: They are deeply rooted and can hardly be gotten off from their superstitious waies; we had need likewise be deeplie rooted in the truths of God or they certainlie will undermine us. The Scripture telleth us, that *the Spirit of God searcheth the deep things of God,* 1 Cor. 2. 10. *revealeth the mysterie of Christ;*

2 Those that have that Spirit of God that searcheth those deep things of God, they are the only men and women that are like to stand out against the deep policies of Idolaters. And the truth is, every godly man and woman though never so mean parted, yet they are more profound than the greatest Scholer in the world that is wicked and superstitious; for they have the Spirit of God that searcheth the deep things of God; and this it is that keeps their hearts from being taken with greatest profoundness of false worship.

Obs. 3. *Idolaters they are deep in their policies.*

Use. It should teach us then to labor to be wise in the worship of Christian God. When we would maintain God in his worship it should teach us to learn to seek to out-plot them; they are full of their plots, why should not the Spirit of God teach us wisdom as well as the spirit of Satan teacheth them? Why should

ſhould we not exerciſe our parts as ſtrongly in the true worſhip of God, as they theirs in the way of ſuperſtition and Idolatry? But we ſee it ordinarily otherwiſe, *That the men of the world are wiſer in their generation than the children of light*, they are deeper in waies of policie and ſo deceive ſuch as are ſimple. If you take them upon the firſt preſenting of things, the firſt ſhew of things, they will ſeem to come with ſuch colour of arguments as will certainly deceive you. Therefore you ſhould beg wiſdom of God that you might not be deceived through the ſubtilty of Satan through theſe men.

I find divers of the Ancients have other interpretations of theſe words; I will not ſpend further time in telling you what thoſe are, becauſe I think already we have had the meaning of the holy Ghoſt in theſe words; therefore we will paſs on. *They are profound,*

*To make ſlaughter.*] To make ſlaughter! what doth God intend by theſe words? By theſe he doth expreſs their way of ſuperſtition and falſe worſhip. He meaneth by their *making ſlaughter*, their ſacrifices unto their Idols, and ſo by the ſacrifices which was the principal part of their falſe worſhip he meaneth all their falſe worſhip; they were deep in all their falſe worſhip, naming the chief for the reſt. Expoſ. 1.

But why doth He call their Sacrifices, *making ſlaughter*.

It is in way of reproach. All their ſacrifices were no better than ſlaughter, their Temple was no better than a ſhambles, and their Priests no better than Butchers. God will not give them the honour as to ſay, they offered me ſacrifice; No, but it is, *to make ſlaughter*. As if God ſhould ſay, I look upon all your ſacrifices as no other than upon ſlaughter, your Temple no otherwiſe than upon a butchers ſhambles, and your Priests no otherwiſe than butchers. Thus contemptibly doth God ſpeak of the ſacrifices of thoſe that chuſe their own ſuperſtitious waies. *Iſa. 66. 3. He that killeth an Ox, is as if he ſlew a man; (ſaith God) he that ſacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dogs neck; he that offereth up an oblation, as if he offered Swines blood:* and yet there, God ſpeaks of the ſacrifices of Judah, not of Iſrael. Let the ſacrifices be for the matter of them, what Reaſ.

God requireth, and offered in the place that God hath appointed; yet when men make their sacrifices their own righteousness and think to put off God by them, saith God, I regard them no more than the cutting off of a dogs neck. But these sacrifices of Israel had a twofold error in them. First, they were not offered in the place that God would have them: Secondly, they rested upon them likewise; therefore God called these sacrifices no other than slaughter.

1  
2.  
Obfer.  
Will-  
worship.

From thence the note is, "That whatsoever worship is tendered up to God, if it be not his own worship, or if in that worship (though it be his own) we chuse our own waies, whatsoever shew of devotion there may be in it, God accounteth it a dispicable thing.

Expos. 2.

Or secondly, The word [*making slaughter*] God useth not only to shew the contempt He hath of all their sacrifices, but by that He doth secretly insinuate the cruelty of the Priests and of the Princes to those that would not yeild unto their Idolatries, their grievous persecution of them, even unto blood. They are profound (saith God) they are grown deep in their Idolatry, they are grown to the depth of malice, so as their hearts are enraged against those that will not do as they do, even unto blood; no matter what becomes of them, no matter if they were all hanged, a company of precise and scrupulous fools, that pretend conscience, and do nothing else but trouble the State, Doth not *Jeroboam* and the Council command these things? The Kingdom can never be well till it be rid of them.

*Though I have been a rebuker of them all.*] Though I have been an instructor, or corrector so the word may be turned as wel as a rebuker. And have been, or am, or will be, you may put it which way you will, it is not in the Text, neither have been, nor am, nor will, but, *Though I* a rebuker, Eruditor, Corrector of them all. As if God should say, they cannot plead ignorance, indeed were it that they never had any means, then they might have some pretence for what they do, but I have been an instructor and rebuker of them all.

This



This particule [I] hath reference either to the Prophet, or to God Himſelf.

1. The Prophet; and then, either

Actively,

or

Paſſively.

*I have been a rebuker*, or, *I have been rebuked*: So ſome תוכיח turn it.

For the firſt, *I the Prophet have been a rebuker*: From thence 1. Active. the note is,

*The Miniſters of God they muſt rebuke ſin. They muſt not Obſer. ſuffer ſin to go without rebuke.*

2 Tim. 4. 1, 2. *I charge thee before God and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt (ſaith Paul to Timothy.) And among other charges, this was one, That he ſhould rebuke the offenders. And Tit. 1. 13. Rebuke them ſharply, ἀποτίμας, cuttingly, ſo the word is. Tit. 2. 15. Rebuke with all authority.*

This is the work of the Miniſters of God, to rebuke with authority, to rebuke cuttingly, when there is cauſe for it.

And indeed, the ſpirits of ſinners are baſe and vile, and a Miniſter of God coming in the Name of God, is above them, let them be what they will be; And if the rebuke be adminiſtered in a gracious way, it will make the proudeſt ſinner to ſhake under it; Let them ſeem to be never ſo ſcornful outwardly, yet I ſay, let a Miniſter of God come in Gods Name, and carry the rebuke in a gracious way, and ſpeak as the Oracle of God, he may make the proudeſt and ſtouteſt ſinner to ſhake under his rebukes, for their ſpirits are vile. And thoſe that are under the charge of ſuch, though it ſeems to be a hard work and grievous for the preſent unto thoſe that are rebuked, yet they will bleſs them afterward, if God bleſs the rebuke; and others will curſe them that would not rebuke them in their evil waies.

2. If we refer this *Rebuker* unto God himſelf, *I have been a Rebuker*, that is, Not I the Prophet only, but *I the Lord* have been a rebuker of them all. From thence the Note is, That God doth rebuke people in his Word, in his Miniſters.

When

Obſerv. When the Miniſters of God rebuke in a way of God, God doth then rebuke ſinners. And if there be any means in the world to humble the heart of a ſinner, it is this, *To ſee that God rebukes him in his Word.* You may put theſe two notes together. *God rebukes in his Word:* and, *This is a great means of humbling the heart of a ſinner to ſee, that God rebukes him in his Word.* Thou comelt unto the Word, and findeſt thy ſelf rebuked for ſuch and ſuch evils that thou art conſcious unto thy ſelf of; know it was God rebuked thee that day, and He will call thee to account for thoſe rebukes He gave thee there. Thou cameſt perhaps to hear what the Miniſter would ſay, but thou foundeſt before thou wentſt that thou wert rebuked for ſuch and ſuch ſecret evils thou art conſcious to thy ſelf of; Know (I ſay) God rebuked thee at that time, and look to it, God will call thee to an account for His rebukes.

God rebukes not only by His Word, but ſometimes by His works too; When He doth appear againſt ſinners; when He ſuiteth His works ſo as He doth evidently ſhew that he ſets Himſelf againſt ſuch and ſuch ſinners, then (I ſay) God rebukes them for ſuch and ſuch evils, howſoever they will not ſee it. *Iſa. 26. 11, 12. Lord when thy hand is lifted up they will not ſee, but they ſhall ſee.* God liſteth up his hand to rebuke wicked and carnal men, and evidently ſets himſelf againſt them, and they will not ſee, but they ſhall ſee.

Obſerv. Again further; Hence note the ſtubborneſs of mens hearts, eſpecially of Idolaters; they were profound to make ſlaughter in their waies of ſuperſtition; though I was a rebuker of them all; they cared not for My rebukes, they regarded not My words, their hearts were ſtubborn and ſtout againſt them.

Mercer. *Verbi contemptus, Idolatriæ comes,* ſaith Mercer upon the place, The contempt of Gods Word, is the companion of Idolatry. You ſhall find by comimon experience how your ſuperſtitious and falſe worſhipers ſlight the Word of God; they are above it, they ſpeak jeeringly of the Scripture and of warrants from Gods Word; Oh you muſt do nothing but you muſt have Scripture for it: They cry up Fathers and antiquity, and ſuch and ſuch Writers, but for the Word of God they uſually con-  
 Thus

the ſpirit  
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ters and  
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To hn-  
man wri-  
ters.

Thus it was here, they regarded not what God ſaid in his Word. Idolaters are very ſtout againſt the Word of God and contemn it. There are no commands no rebukes of God in his Word, but they ſtand out againſt them; Poor vile worms that they are! who are they that they ſhould dare to ſtand out againſt the rebukes of the infinite holy God? Know, howſoever thy ſpirit ſwells againſt this Word of God, it will certainly caſt thee. The Pſalmiſt in *Pſal.* 76. 6. ſaith, *At thy rebukes O God, the Chariots and Horſ-men are caſt into a dead ſleep;* And ſo *Pſal.* 80. 16. *They periſh at the rebuke of thy countenance;* And *Pſal.* 104. 7. *At thy rebuke they fled,* And *Pſal.* 18. 15. *The foundations of the world were diſcovered at thy rebukes.* The rebukes of God they have a great deal of power in them, and Heaven & Earth cannot ſtand before the rebukes of God, how then can that ſtubborn heart of thine ſtand out againſt them?

Let us not be troubled my brethren, nor diſcouraged at the ſtoutneſs of Idolaters. They have been alwaies ſtubborn and ſtout againſt the rebukes of God in his Word, and therefore let us not think it much though they ſtand it out now againſt the evident truth of God and againſt the works of God that apparantly make againſt them. *Revel.* 16. 9. *They were tormented with the wrath of God, but repented not to give Him glory.* Many men are ready to think that their cauſe is good becauſe their ſpirits are ſo ſtout againſt all that appear againſt them, and ſlight them. Let not us have higher thoughts of them becauſe of this, for it hath alwaies bin the courſe of Idolaters to ſtand out ſtoutly againſt all the rebukes of God in His Word and Works, becauſe the Lord hath an intent to deſtroy them.

Obſerve, *Sin after rebukes is very ſinful.*

It is too much to ſtand out againſt Gods commands; but to ſtand out againſt any intimation of Gods diſpleaſure, is a greater evil. God expects that the heart of finners ſhould melt before him upon any expreſſion of his diſpleaſure: And it was the commendation of J O S I A H, That when the L A W was read, his heart melted; And indeed an ingenious ſpirit is ſoon rebuked. But when the heart of a ſinner is got above all rebukes then it hardneth exceedingly

ceedingly and then it treasureth up wrath against the day of wrath. We our selves cannot bear it in others to stand out against our rebukes, we cannot bear it in a child or in a servant; if we rebuke a child or a servant, and they care not for it, and their spirits rise against it, how do we hate such, how do our spirits rise up against them? Nay if we rebuke a dog and the dog cares not for it, we cannot bear it. How shall the Infinite God bear our slighting of his rebukes.

Use

Oh let us charge this sin upon our spirits! How often hath God rebuked me in his Word and in his Works, and yet the Lord knows this wretched and stubborn heart of mine hath stood out against it. Certainly this standing out against rebukes will lie heavy upon thy conscience one day. Nothing will make sin more heavy upon thy conscience than this, that I have sinned and that in my sin I have stood out against the rebukes of God: As in *Pro. 5. 12, 13.* *At the last, when thy flesh and thy body is consumed, thou shalt mourn and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof?* The words are spoken of a gallant, a brave young gallant, that blustereth it out in the world, and carries all before him and cares for nothing that is said; but when the hand of God is upon him and his flesh and body is consumed, then he falls a lamenting his condition, Oh how have I despised reproof, and have not enclined mine ear to them that instructed me? This is the aggravation of sin indeed.

And that we may humble our souls for our standing out against Gods rebukes, ad but this consideration to it, That God hath such rebukes as will force us to yeild unto him in spite of our hearts. If we stand out against His rebukes in his Word and lesser chastisements, against his loving rebukes; let us know that God hath furious rebukes; so they are called in *Ezek. 5: 15.* and *25. 17.* When thou comest to the Word, or when thy parents, or thy governors, or thy friend rebukes thee for thy sins, God rebukes thee in them, and these are loving rebukes; but thou that art a child or a servant, or any wicked and ungodly man, thou rejectest those rebukes; Know, God hath furious rebukes for thee one day, yea rebukes with

with flames of fire, ſo they are called *Eſa.* 66. 15.

*I have been a rebuker of them all.*] This (if you apply it to the Prophet, for he muſt not be excluded, he is meant here as well as God) ſhews the Prophets impartiality. And from thence the Note is, That

“Prophets rebukes muſt not be like cobwebs to take ſmall Obſer. Prophets rebukes.  
 “flies and to let the great ones go thorough, they muſt be im-  
 “partial rebukes. Oh how many Prophets have ſharpned their rebukes againſt thoſe that have been moſt conſcientious, and have ſadned their hearts even out of their Pulpits; but they let thoſe that are looſe go quiet away, nay not only quiet but rejoicing. When the hearts of the Saints have been ſadned, they have ſharpned their rebukes againſt theſe; but the looſer of the pariſh, or many times the great ones have gone away rejoicing. Thus if you take the words actively, *I have been a rebuker of them all.*

But if you take the words paſſively (as ſome do) that is 2. Paſſive.  
 thus; *They have rebuked the Prophet;* as if he ſhould ſay, they have been profound in their Idolatrous waies, and I have been faithful in preaching to them, and what hath been my recompence? All of them have rebuked me. All of them, not only their Priests have rebuked me, cryed out againſt me, not only their chief and great men have rebuked me; they indeed (their Priests and their Magiſtrates) would bitterly inveigh againſt me for pleading againſt their Idolatry; But all the people have done it too, *I have been a rebuke to all the people,* they have all been bitter againſt me, and ſharpned their very tongues againſt me; Oh ſay they, here is one that likes not our way of worſhip, he muſt have another kind of Religion, he tells us that we muſt all go up to Jeruſalem and worſhip there, and nothing will ſerve turn but that. Thus they ſcorned him and rebuked him and even flew in his very face. From thence the Note is this.

*It is a hard thing for a few men to ſtand out againſt a State or multitude in matters of Religion, in matters of the worſhip of God.* Obſer. Oppoſition of a multitude

If there be but ſome few unto whom God hath ſhewn another way, and the generality go a different way; Certainly

those few are like to meet with hard measure, and like to be a rebuke, not only to Ministers, but generally unto all the people; they must expect to be under the rebukes of all sorts. Thus it was with the Prophet and with all that went his way, he was a rebuke unto them all.

## V E R. 3.

*I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me &c.*

**I** know Ephraim.] This is, *Notitia judicialis, non approbationis.* A knowledge to judge, not a knowledge of approbation.

Exposit. *I know Ephraim*, that is, I know all his shifts, I know all his evasions, all his cunning devices, all his plots, all his pretences, all his base ends. These may be hid from men, but I know them, they are not hid from me. Mark, first, *I know Ephraim*, and then, *I know Israel*.

Ephraim First, *Ephraim*. By *Ephraim* (as you have heard heretofore) we are to understand, the Princes, the great ones amongst them, because *Jeroboam* was of the Tribe of Ephraim. I know Ephraim, that is, I know the politick ends of all the great ones amongst them: They bear men in hand that they desire to worship Me, and they say, "Oh God forbid that they should change Religion, and they cry out of all men that should raise up such suspicions of them amongst their good people. But *I know Ephraim* saith he, I know what his aim is, I know what his thoughts are, and what his counsels are, and what was plotted at such a time, and what his Chamber-counsels with such and such Priests were, I know what correspondence he hath with such and such that corrupt my worship, and all that retain to him and all that favor him, I know them all, I know all their devices and depths. I know what hath been working these many yeers; I know how he seems as if he would serve me, but I know that that he doth is meerly to serve his own ends and no further. I know the poor people they are deluded by his fair and solemn protestations, they think he means nothing but well, and there are

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none

none but a company of precise people that are jealous of him, but I know what they intend and what their waies are whatsoever colour they put upon them. Ephraim, that is, the great ones, the Princes, they perswade the people that *Jeroboam* and his successors aim at nothing else but to reform things for the best, but I know that things are far otherwise, I know Ephraim.

*Israel is not hid from me.*] That is, the people, they pretend Israel that they do but as they are taught, and they do but submit unto authority, they could be glad indeed if things were better, but some things must be yielded unto for peace-sake. "It is true, these Prophets and some others are good honest men, and they would have us to do otherwise, but things are not clear yet, we cannot see but we may do this and this in case of necessity; that way they would have us go may bring us a great deal of trouble; Indeed what they say, seems to be like that which is in the Scripture, but then these and these inconveniences will follow; we should be glad if things were better reformed according to the Word, but for peace-sake we must be contented to yeild to the judgment of such and such learned and wise men; and though we yeild to these and these things yet our hearts are right for God. But saith God, *Israel is not hid from me.*

*Israel.* That is, The base, cowardly, temporizing, revolting, superstitious spirits of the people, they are not hid from me, their being loth to come under my government, their love to their ease and estates, the lothness of their carnal hearts to venture and suffer any thing for my Truth and Ordinances. *Israel* in these his distempers of heart is not hid from me; all these things are plain before Me, he may blind men and baffle his own conscience, but he cannot hide it from me saith God.

From whence the observations are these.

First, *That Gods eye is upon the secrets of mens hearts, upon their* Obl. 1.  
*aims, and plots, and all their waies.*

Certainly therefore Hypocrites must needs be Atheists; Use, 1.  
they that think to put off God with outward shews must needs

deny God, as if God did not see the secret turnings and windings, and plottings, and contrivances, and aims, and ends of their hearts.

Use 2. And then, O the patience of the infinite God, that notwithstanding he sees what villany there is in the world, coloured over with Religious protestations and professions, yet he bears with them. I know saith he, I know what all their ends are, what they aim at, and what they would have if once they get the day; yet I see that they colour and cover all these vile ends of theirs with such protestations of Religion and of setting up the profession of it. Oh the infinite patience of God that can bear with men that colour such vile aims and ends with protestations and professions of Religion in such a sacred way as they seem to do! Here is the patience of God that we must admire at.

Patience  
of God.

Use 3. Again, God knows all the hearts and secret aims of men; Let us pray unto God to make our own hearts known to our selves. He knows them, and except we be upright in that, to be willing to know our own hearts, and unfeignedly to desire God that he would shew us our own hearts, we possibly after many duties performed may come to perish for some secret sin that we do not know our selves. I say, it is possible for a man or woman to go on a long time in the profession of Religion and to make conscience of all known duties, yet to perish at last for some sin that he doth not know in himself.

A hard  
saying.

You will say, *This is a hard thing, what shall become of us then?*

Caution.

To mollifie this therefore a little, take this along with it, that is, Except thou hast a heart unfainedly willing to know thy own heart, willing to search into thine own heart, and earnest with God that He who knows thy heart would make thy heart known to thy self: If indeed thy heart be thus upright that thou canst appeal unto God and say, Lord I know I have a vile and false and hypocritical heart, and there may be much evil lie secretly in my heart that I have not known all this while, and such evil as I may justly perish in it; but good Lord make it known to me, let me know the worst of

my



my ſelf, let me know the evil that is in me, and my purpoſe is to reſiſt it; If thou haſt ſuch an heart, thou haſt no cauſe to think that thou ſhalt periſh for any evil that thou doſt not know by thy ſelf. But if thou haſt any ſecret evil in thy ſelf, and thou doſt not in the uprightneſs of thy heart unfeignedly deſire to know it that ſo thou maieſt forſake it and get thy ſelf rid of it, and canſt not appeal unto God that thou art willing to have it made known unto thee, thy condition may be dangerous notwithstanding all the duties thou performeſt.

But further, This that the Prophet ſaith [*I know Ephraim*] is brought in to be a means to humble Ephraim, to humble Iſrael. From thence the Note is, That

*Gods eye upon our hearts and waies, is a ſpecial means to humble us.* Obſer.

No more powerful means in the world to humble the heart than to behold God looking upon our hearts and waies. The diſcovery of our evil to others may be ſome means to humble us. O how would it abaſe men if God ſhould diſcover to all their friends and acquaintance all that evil that is in their hearts. And hereafter at the great day of judgment when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall come to be diſcloſed, how will the wicked and ungodly be abaſed before men and Angels! We reade of the adulterer in *Job*, 24. 17. that the morning is unto them even as the ſhadow of death, and if any one know them they are then in the terrors of the ſhadow of death. Wicked men (eſpecially adulterers, for it is ſpoken of them) they hate the light, and the morning is unto them as the ſhadow of death, and if they come once to be diſcovered they are terrified as with the ſhadow of death. Now I argue thus, if the knowledg that men have of our ſecret wicked waies is ſo terrible unto a guilty conſcience, what is it then when this guilty conſcience ſhall have real apprehenſions of the infinite God? He hath ſeen thee when thou haſt been ſuch a wretch in ſuch an Inn, in ſuch a Tavern, in ſuch a ſecret place. He hath ſeen what thou haſt ſaid and plotted, yea what thou haſt thought and plotted. Look upon God thus ſeeing thee and

try if it will not humble thine heart. Oh labor to humble thy heart by this, How shie was I to know such a truth, how glad was I when I got such a thing out of my conscience, such a thing that would have put me upon that which I was loth to do? and what ever I pretended, love to my self, to my ease, to my estate, made me decline such a truth of God; and God saw all this. When we feel such base workings of our hearts, such plottings and contrivings of them for our own selves and for our carnal ends and aims, let us cast our eye upon God and consider that his eye is upon us. Let us conceive as if we heard the voyce of God from Heaven saying unto us, "I know what you are plotting, I know what your aims are, I know the base workings of your spirits. Did we but apprehend God thus speaking from Heaven unto us, as here He speaks by the Prophet, *I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me*, it would be a special means to humble our hearts for evil present, and to prevent evil for the future.

*For now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled.*

[Now] There is somewhat in this word, it is a great Emphasis: Even still Ephraim goes on in wickedness; he hath gone on a great while, and even now when I am coming against him, even now he continueth in his wickedness. From thence the Note is:

Oblerv. *God will deal with men according to their present waies.*

In what He finds them for the present, He will deal with them for that especially. Not but that when he finds them in evil for the present, He will call them to an account for all things that are past too; but He points Himself at them as they are in their present waies.

Use. I note this the rather, for this end, to shew unto sinners this useful lesson. "Whatsoever thou wast before, though thou hast continued a long time in thy wickedness, yet if thou hast but now a repenting heart to return unto God, there might be hope and help for thee. Oh consider this thou wretched sinner. As if God should say here, *Ephraim hath continued*

continued wicked a long time, but if he had Now a heart to return unto me, it ſhould be well with him, but Even now, to this very moment *Ephraim committeth whoredom*. So ſay I unto the vileſt ſinner in this place, whatſoever thou haſt been, here is ſalvation if now at this inſtant thou haſt a heart to turn to God; thou canſt not tell whether God will ever give thee another Now; God gives thee [a Now] now, if thou return now unto Him and repent and belevee thou mayeſt be ſaved: But if God come upon thee after this *Exerciſe* and find thee continuing in thy ſinful waies, and ſay, Even Now, yet for all this this ſinner continueth in his ſin, this wil be a heavy thing indeed. So here he cometh upon Ephraim, Now Oh Ephraim! He makes an exclamation againſt him; O *Ephraim* after all the means that hath been uſed to recall thee, yet ſtil, O Ephraim thou continueſt in thy Idolatry.

A Now,

And, *Ephraim*, *Thou committeſt whoredoms*, Thou doeſt it, thy ſin is greater in this continuing, for thou carrieſt the people with thee, and little hope there is of reformation till the great ones reforme; If Ephraim commit whoredom, Iſrael muſt needs be defiled, ſo it follows.

[*Iſrael is defiled.*] There is a Twofold defilement of the people of Iſrael.

First, *Defiled morally*; that is, by their wicked works: as here, by their murders, and thefts, and adulteries, that was before in Chap. 4.

Defilement.  
1. Moral.

Secondly, *Iſrael is defiled*: that is, They defile My Worſhip and that defileth them. They have defiled My Worſhip and by defiling My Worſhip they come to be defiled. And that I take to be eſpecially meant here. *Iſrael is defiled*, that is, among other waies of defilement, they mingle with Heathen, and they bring them in to defile my Worſhip. In *Iſa.* 47.6. God threatneth to defile His Sanctuary, and to pollute His Inheritance: That is, when He ſuffereth by His juſt judgment, Idolaters and Heathens to come into His Sanctuary, to mingle with His Inheritance.

2. Spiritual.

And then Iſrael is defiled another way; that is, Iſrael both mingleth his own inventions with my Worſhip; & Iſrael doth bring

bring in or suffer the Heathen to come in to my worship and so my worship is defiled and they are defiled by defiling my worship. From whence the Note is, That

Obs. *Defiled worship, exceedingly defiles the souls of people.*

Defiled  
worshid

Nothing defileth the souls of men more than defiled worship. And among other defilements in worship, the mixing with wicked and ungodly men in waies of worship, the mixing with such as God would not have come into the waies of his worship.

Object.

But you will say, *Doth the mixing of wicked and ungodly men defile the worship of God, or defile others in it? Is the Sacrament of the Lords supper the worse if there be wicked men partake and mix in that worship? Am I the worse for it, or is the Sacrament the worse, is that worship defiled? How may we refer this defilement of Israel to our defilement at this time? Is there any Church in the world but hath wicked ones in it? And will you say that they are defiled and that the worship is defiled because there are wicked ones amongst them? Then we can go no where in the world but we must be defiled, and the worship must be defiled?*

Many men think they have a good argument of this, to say, all Churches are mixed, there is a mixture in the best Churches, therefore if mixtures make the Communion defiled, then all are defiled. It comes fully in my way to speak a word or two of this, and it shall be but a word or two.

Answ, r.

First, I know none living on the earth hold any otherwise but that the best Church in the world may have wicked men creep in amongst them, and be amongst them. Who knows the hearts of men when they come in? and therefore the best Churches may have wicked men amongst them. This (I say) all men do hold; therefore this Objection, *Will not there be wicked men in the best Church?* can have no strength in it, for there is no man denies it, and therefore they that make it fight with a shadow.

But secondly, I lay this, for another position, which I think all men whatsoever wil grant also, That the Sacrament is not defiled to the receivers meerly for the presence of wicked

ked men there. I verily beleve every one will grant this; I know none in the world for my part, denies this to be a truth, namely, that the Sacrament is not defiled to the right receivers of it, meerly because wicked men are present there. No man affirms the contrary to this, but all that I know of, that are the strictest in the way of Church order and discipline will grant this to be a truth, that the Sacrament is not defiled to true receivers meerly because wicked men are there.

But what then, you will say? *How shall we distinguish mixture of communion, or mixture of worship?* Quest.

Not meerly because wicked men are there. But first, then a Congregation is defiled if they do not use the power that Christ hath given unto them. As he hath given a power unto every Church (let the Church-state be what it will) to cast out all the scandalous persons that are amongst them. Now if this Church shall (under what pretence soever, as saying they have no power, or that the power is taken from them or the like) neglect the duty of it, viz to cast out those that are unworthy then the Church cometh to be defiled, and their communion to be defiled. So that their communion is not defiled because the wicked are there, but because they neglect their duties of casting out the wicked from thence. For let a man be wicked, let him be a hypocrite, it is not the duty of the Church to cast out that hypocrite until he discover himself; but if that hypocrite discover himself, if then the Church perform not her duty as it ought in casting him out, then it cometh to be defiled. And the example of the incestious Corinth, in 2 Cor. 5. is a plain place for it; *A little leaven* (saith the Apostle) *leaveneth the whol lump*. What is that lump there? It is the Church communion, and the leaven there is the incestious person; and the Apostle gives order to cast him out; now saith he, while this leaven continues, if you do not do your dutie to cast out this scandalous person, your *whol lump*, your whol communion will come to be defiled. So Churches come to be defiled.

Again further, Not only Churches come to be defiled; but particular  
T t  
secondly, persons.

Ans. 1

when, and how, a Church, and the communion of it, is defiled by the presence of wicked men. 2 Cor. 5. opened & applied.

2. How

particular persons.

secondly, particular persons and communicants come to be defiled in this if they neglect the duty that belongs unto them as Christians. That is thus: Christ requires this, *If thy brother offend thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church.* Now if thou hast done this thy duty to all scandalous persons in the Congregation, then the sin be upon the Church, thou maist receive the Sacrament with comfort though wicked men be admitted there. So that though the communion be defiled, that is, defiled to those that are guilty, to those that have neglected their duty (wheresoever the power lies in a Church, whosoever in that Church neglects their duty of casting out those that offend, they defile the communion so farr as in them lieth, and if any of you that are particular members neglect your duties, so far as in you lieth the communion is defiled by you :) but if you do your duty once, then, though wicked men may be there, you may receive the Sacrament with comfort; For though the communion may be defiled in respect of others that have neglected their duty, yet it is not defiled in respect of you that have done your duty. Now then, to conclude this with that place in *Psal. 119. 1. Blessed is the man that is undefiled in the way.* Blessed are those men that in their way, in the course of their lives keep themselves from defilement, and especially keep themselves from defilement in the waies of Gods worship. Blessed is he whose heart is cleansed from secret filth, that by the vain carnal plots reasonings and cunning fetches of wicked men he doth not defile himself in his way.

Again, A further Note from hence is this :

*A defiled Nation, is neer unto ruin.*

Obfer.  
A defiled  
Nation  
near to  
ruin.

Israel is defiled (He speaks of Israel that is ready to fall, for so it follows verse 5. *Israel and Ephraim shall fall,* and here just before he tels us, that Israel is defiled.) When cloathes are filthy and nasty and wil not be purged, are not worth the cleansing, we usually cast them upon the dunghil; so when there is defilement and filth amongst a people and they will not be purged,

single

purged, and are grown even rotten in their filthiness, the Lord calleth them upon the dunghil. While God is indeed purging of a Nation (I beseech you observe it) there is all that while hope of that Nation. As for example, though a piece of cloath be very foul, yet if you see the servants of the house washing that cloath, you will say, surely this piece of cloath is not intended for the dunghil: It is foul indeed and it is noisom, but you see there is care taken and cost bestowed upon it for the purging of it, and that is an argument that there is an intention for the preserving of it. So while the Lord is taking care and bestowing cost to purge a Nation, there is much hope that the Lord intends to save that Nation. And we may comfortably hope that this is Gods intention toward us. God knows we have been a defiled people, and have defiled our selves; never a one of us but may lay his hand upon his heart and say, I have been defiled and so may deserve to be cast upon the dunghil. But behold, the Lord is bestowing cost upon us, and He is cleansing and purging of us, and therefore we may hope that the Lord will not cast us off.

While a Nation is purging there is hope. simile

Use. England.

But no mervail that the Lord letteth us and our brethren lie abroad in frosty nights. Many complain of much hardship, our brethren many of them are sent from their houses where they have had their beds and fire, and now are fain to lie in the fields in the cold. No marvail I say, this Nation hath been defiled. When cloathes are much defiled, it is not enough to wash them and rince them, but you lay them abroad in frosty nights. Yea there are some defilements that cannot be taken away but by fire, and if the Lord will not only wash us and rince us and lay us abroad, but put us into the fire for to cleanse us at last, blessed be his Name. *Israel is defiled.*

Frosty-nights

Fire

## V E R. 4.

*They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God.*

**H**ERE lies the evil. Though we be defiled, if God be about to cleanse us there is hope; but if the words that follow in this 4<sup>th</sup> verse, be applied unto us, then we are a lost people indeed. *Israel is defiled indeed, but Israel may be brought back again and regained to the true worship of God; Oh no faith God, Israel is not only defiled, but he will not frame his doings to turn unto his God.*

*He will not frame his doings.*] The word is very elegant, you have not such an expression (that I know of) in all the Scripture besides. Some read it, <sup>a</sup> *Non dabunt cogitationes*, he will not give himself to think of such a thing, of turning unto the Lord. And <sup>b</sup> others they turn it thus, <sup>\*</sup> *Non dabunt operam*, they will not do their endeavors to turn unto the Lord. And others, <sup>c</sup> *Non adhibent actiones*, they do not apply any action of theirs any way to turn to the Lord. And <sup>d</sup> others, *Non permittunt opera, & facta sua*; their custom in their waies of sin will not suffer them to turn to the Lord. And <sup>e</sup> others thus, *κο ἐδωκαν τὰ διαβόλια εὐρωγ*, they give not their counsels, their studies to turn to the Lord. These several translations I find of the word. And by all these together we may come to have further light to know the meaning of the Spirit of God in these words; For the words are somewhat strange, therefore we had need of several expressions to find out the sense of them.

*They will not frame their doings.*] They will not give their mind to turn to the Lord, they will not put forth themselves into any posture that way. It is true, we can do nothing without the Lord, but yet the sin lies in our wills rather than in our power, therefore the will is charged by God. They cannot turn unto God of themselves, *but yet they may do somewhat, they may bend their thoughts upon it, they may think of it, they may attend upon the means.* But saith the holy Ghost, they will do nothing tending that way, they will not so much as set themselves

אל יהנו  
מעלליהם  
לשוב אל  
אלהיהם  
• Hierom &  
vulg.  
b Mercer.  
\* Non dabunt  
operā. Castell.  
c Tremel.  
d Drusius: non  
finunt, non per-  
mittunt.  
Pagnin, Non  
permitterent ope-  
ra sua.  
e The Septuag.  
Non dant stu-  
dium.  
Calv. Non  
adjicient stu-  
dia sua.  
Expof. 1.

Though no ability to act but frō God, yet sin lies in our wills, rather than in our power.



ſelves into any kind of poſture of turning unto me. This is to ſhew what little hope of good there was in them for time to come. They are far enough from turning unto Me ſaith God, there is not ſo much as any inclination in them of turning unto Me, they are fully bent another way; though they cannot do it of themſelves, yet they will not ſo much as give their minds to think of what may be a means to do it. *Israel will not frame his doings to turn unto his God.*

As thus, Firſt, *He will not ſo much as ſet his heart to think of any thing that will bring him unto God.* Not ſo much as to think thus, Are my waies right or not right? What if it ſhould prove that my waies are not right, what ſhall become of me then? This were one degree of a peoples or a particular ſouls turning unto God; if a man did but thus frame his doings to turn unto God; if he had but ſuch thoughts as theſe, Lord, what am I doing? What is my way? Am I right or no? what if it ſhould prove that my way were not right, what would become of me? This were ſomewhat. But ſaith God, they are far enough from any ſuch thoughts to make any ſtop in their ſinful courſe, they run on violently and heedleſly, and will not ſo much as frame their thoughts and ſtudies to turn unto Me.

But Secondly, Though a man cannot turn unto God, yet through the common works of Gods Spirit he may do this, *he may be willing to hear what is ſaid for the waies of God, he may conſider whether there is ſtrength in what is ſaid or no:* But ſaith he, they are carried on with prejudice againſt the waies of God let what will be ſaid, they will not frame themſelves to hear any thing that is ſaid for Gods waies and againſt theirs.

Thirdly, *They will not ſet themſelves before God, to wait upon Him in the uſe of means for His Grace to turn unto Him.* It is true, we are poor, weak, and ignorant creatures, but if we would wait upon God to know His mind, if we would ſet our faces that way, it may be God will reveal further of his mind unto us. In *Jer. 50. 5.* When God intendeth good unto a people, it is promiſed, that *they ſhall aſk the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward.* A true repenting people and a repenting ſoul, will

What a natural man may do toward conversion, by the light of nature, of the Scripture, of the Miniſtry, and common works of the Spirit.

1. Conſider his waies.

2. Willing to hear.

3. Wait in the uſe of means.

will be enquiring after the waies of God with his face standing thitherward. But saith God, they will not do so much as do this, they will not set themselves to enquire after the mind and wayes of God with their faces thitherward.

4. Apply the rule,

Fourthly, *They will not apply the rule of the word unto their actions*; but whatsoever they see will make for their own ends, that they will follow: but to take the rule and apply it unto their actions and waies, they reject that, they will not frame their doings so far.

5. Use the light and power they have in outward acts,

Fifthly, *What light they have they will not use that, so as to do the outward acts that that light doth direct to do, and what they have power to do*; As, not to break off gross offences, such things as they cannot possibly but see to be evil. As a people though they cannot fully turn unto God presently, yet there are some things that are so gross that they cannot possibly but see they are evil: saith God, they will not so much as break off from that; though they have power to reform that which they are convinced to be evil, but saith he, they will not improve that light which they have, what should they have more light for?

6. Joyn with the work or not oppose. But *Rom. 8. 7.* it is said, *The carnal minde is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.*

Sixtly, *They will not joyn with the work of God*; When he is in his way toward them, when he himself is about to frame them, when he hath them in his hand they will oppose Gods work, they will not joyn with it to frame themselves to turn unto God. Therefore in *2 Chron. 30. 8.* *Hezekiah* exhorteth the Priests and the people, that they should not be stiffnecked, but yeild themselves unto the Lord; mark, the yeilding of themselves unto the Lord, is contrary to stiffneckedness. But now this people are stiffnecked, they will not yeild themselves unto the Lord, though the Lord by his gracious works toward them be a framing of them to turn them unto himself, they oppose Gods work, they riggle and keep a stir and stand out against it: Just as when you have a child that you would fain frame to such a gesture, and you take him and put him into such a way; but now he is so far from doing of it, that he riggles up and down and will not suffer you to frame him;

simile

why

why ſaith God, I have been a framing of them my ſelf, I have not only ſhewn them what they ſhould do, but my works have been ſo toward them, that I have been framing them, but they are ſtiffnecked, they will not be framed, they will not joyn with my work in framing of them, they will break out in their wicked waies even at that very time when I am framing of them to turn them unto my ſelf; According unto that expreſſion you have in *Hof. 7. 1.* *When I would have healed Iſrael, then the wickedneſſ of Samaria was diſcovered,* that is, when I was about to turn them unto me, then, even at that time they break out in their violence and wickedneſſ.

*Hof. 7. 1.*  
opened.

Seventhly, Whatſoever means is uſed to turn them unto God, *they will ſtick to their old cuſtoms,* to their former waies, to what they have received from their forefathers, to what they have been brought up in, thoſe they will keep to; but to frame themſelves to turn unto the Lord, that they will not.

7. Not  
adhere to  
things re-  
ceived.

Laſtly, *What advantage they can have againſt the wraith of God, that they will take and improve to the uttermoſt.* Thoſe people that are againſt framing of themſelves to turn unto the Lord when God is about to turn the, they diſcover it in this thing; if at that time there be any diſadvantage that their corrupt hearts can poſſibly take againſt the waies of God, they will take that and improve it to the uttermoſt they can; juſt as a child that you would frame to ſuch a way, if it be an unto-ward child, he will take any advantage to give you the ſlip and to run from you; ſo it is with people that have no heart to turn unto the Lord, if they have any advantage in the world, they will take it, to harden their hearts againſt Gods waies. There is no preparation of their hearts, what then ſhall I do with them ſaith God? if their hearts were in any preparation it were ſomewhat, but they are not. We read in *2 Chron. 20.* that the high places were not taken away be-  
cauſe the people had not prepared their hearts to turn unto the Lord. It is all one with this expreſſion in the text: the people were not in a frame, in a teachable, in a convertible diſpoſition. The Lord grant that this Scripture may not be

8. Not  
take ad-  
vantage  
againſt  
the waies  
of God.

ſimile

*2 Chron.*  
*20. 33.*

parallel'd

Applic. to  
England,

true

true of us at this day, that the reason why there remaineth so much evil in Gods worship, is, because the people have not prepared their hearts, they do not frame their doings to turn unto the Lord, they do not seem to be in any posture that way.

It was a charge upon *Rehoboam*, in 2 *Chron.* 12. 14. *That he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord:* But you

Quest.

Answ.

we ought  
to prepare  
our hearts  
see *Ams.*  
*ca. conf.*  
*lib. 2. c. 4.*

will say, what power had he to turn unto the Lord, he was a wicked man? Yea but this wicked man though he had no saving grace, yet he is charged for doing evil in that he did not prepare his heart to seek the Lord. God therefore expects that people, though they are not able to turn unto him thoroughly, yet they should be in a posture that way; And as a people in general, so every soul in particular.

Some that are not yet turned to the Lord, yet are in a way of turning, they are in a readiness to receive what God shall reveal. This is a happy condition. If God shall see a Nation (though it be not fully reformed) ready to receive what he shall reveal, Oh this is a happy thing. As the Scripture speaks, that *the regions were white unto the harvest*, that is, there was a preparation in the hearts of people to receive the Gospel; if God shall see such a frame of heart in a people; it is true this people are not fully reformed, but their hearts are prepared, they are ready to embrace what the mind of God is when it shall be revealed unto them, Oh that this might be said of this people, they are willing to entertain what God shall speak, they are listening to it!

Joh. 4. 35.  
opened,

God is about to bring us from a way of superstition, both the Works and the Word of God tend that way; but there are multitudes of people that will not *frame* their doings to turn unto the Lord, their spirits are perverie, they are full of prejudice, froward, and they hang off, and then we know they cannot be convinced. The Apostle *Peter* bids the Saints in *Act.* 2. 40. save themselves from that untoward generation. Oh let not this charge be upon us, that we are an untoward generation, that God is framing of us for good; but we will not *frame* our doings to turn unto the Lord: As we see a workman when he hath a piece of timber that is knotty and will

will not work in his hand, he caſts it into the fire; or as clay ſimile 1.  
 that is not well tempered it will not work in the hand of the  
 workman, he many times caſteth it away in an anger, it will 2.  
 not work in my hand, what ſhall I do with it? The Lord is  
 hewing of us by his Prophets, and ſeeking to frame this Na-  
 tion to his will, Oh let us work in Gods hand, let us joyn  
 with the work of God, and yeild our ſelves to the work of  
 God, that the Lord may not caſt us into the fire.

If we will not frame our doings to turn unto the Lord, he  
 may break us, break that frame that we raiſe in our own ima-  
 ginations: perhaps we are framing to our ſelves a ſtrange  
 kind of Common-wealth, to enjoy our eaſe and honors and  
 proſperity, and ſo we build Caſtles in the air. Oh but let us State-de-  
 rather frame our hearts to turn unto the Lord. If we will ſigns.  
 not frame God may put us into the fire again. A workman-  
 you know puts the Iron into the fire becauſe it might be fra- ſimile  
 med to ſuch a work as he would have it, but ſtill the iron is  
 hard and it will not frame to his hand, then he puts it into  
 the fire again and then falleth a knocking again: So the  
 Lord hath begun to put us into the fire that we may frame our  
 doings to turn unto him, and if the fire we have been in will  
 not bring our hearts to a framable diſpoſition, the Lord may  
 put us into the fire again and again. And let not us com-  
 plain of the heat of Gods fire, but rather let us complain of  
 the unframablenes of our own hearts, that we do not frame  
 our doings ſo as to turn unto the Lord.

But yet through Gods mercy we cannot ſay but that there Parliam.  
 are many in Parliament, many in the Aſſembly, many in the Aſſembly  
 City, and many in the Country that are framing themſelves City,  
 to turn unto the Lord; and ſo far we are gone; Let us take Country.  
 notice of Gods goodneſs therefore. As.

Fiſt, It is one argument of a people framing themſelves, Notes of  
 that they have abolithed what is ſinful. It was a great plea Framing.  
 among us, fiſt let us know what we ſhall have, and then we abolith  
 will caſt out this that we have. This was a plea fomented by what is  
 the Antichriſtian party; but certainly it was the way of God; ſinful.  
 and we have cauſe to bleſs God for it that put it into the heart

The Co-  
venant. of the Parliament and of the Kingdom, to be willing to put  
down and to cast out (and that by a solemn *Oath*, by lifting  
up hands unto the most High God) whatsoever was  
naught.

Assembly And further, In that the Parliament hath called an Assembly  
(such as I beleve never yet was in this Nation, nor scarce in a-  
ny other Nation) men of more gravity, and judgment, and  
2. Take holiness, such as they could possibly pick out and whom  
advise. they thought might best direct them in the waies of God, such  
they have chosen to help them to know what is the right way  
of God; and they do profess that whatsoever shall be revealed  
to be the way of God; they will walk in it. That is a good  
frame of heart.

3. Humi- And then, That the Assembly hath begun with a solemn  
liation. day of humiliation, to humble themselves before God that so  
the Lord might guide them in chusing a right way to direct  
those that had called them together for their assistance. There  
was never such a work in *England* before that was begun  
with such a day of humiliation. Did your Convocation e-  
ver keep such a day unto God to beg of him directions in the  
work.

Peoples Let not people run away with thoughts of discontent, or  
discontent. lay any kind of slanders and clunnies upon them, because of  
some failings in particulars: for you must know when God  
God looks looks upon Kingdoms and States, he doth not so much look  
not at par- at particulars as at the publick work; Now that there is so  
ticular fail- much done in a publick way, that there is so much framable-  
ings of a ness, though there be much failing in particulars, yet we have  
Seate, but cause to bless God. It is true, those that would fain have a  
at the pub- perfect Reformation they woul fain have men throughly  
lick work. frame themselves presently, and set up all presently without  
any more ado, and banish all presently. I suppose this com-  
eth from a good intention, from love unto Christ and his  
Short Ordinances: but we must know it is not so easie to reform a  
spirits; whol Nation that hath been so corrupted and defiled; there-  
fore though there be not so perfect a Reformation at present,  
yet let us bless God for what is done, that there is so much  
framing

framing of the doings of the Nation to turn unto the Lord, and not murmur and repine becauſe all is not done that we deſire.

And though perhaps they may never bring the work thoroughly to the pitch we deſire, yet I make no queſtion but what the Parliament and Aſſembly hath done, will be enough to lay a foundation for another generation, if they bring it not to perfection themſelves. Oh that the Lord would yet further frame our hearts and doings to turn unto him!

Hath God at any time put into your heart a framable diſpoſition to turn unto the Lord? Hath God begun to make you think of your waies? Hath he begun to ſtir fear in your hearts concerning your eternal eitate? Hath he wrought in you ſome deſires to know him, to attend upon him in the uſe of means? Make much of this framable diſpoſition, for it is very much pleaſing unto God; God complains where it is not, therefore he like it where it is, and improve it: O happy had it been with many had they improved that framable diſpoſition that God hath wrought in them. Cannot you remember when ſometimes you came to the word what a melting frame of ſpirit had you? and in ſuch an affliction you were as iron put into the fire (and you know then it is in a framable diſpoſition to be brought into any faſhion) and hath it not been ſo with you? But what is become of this diſpoſition? Is it not worſe with you now than before? Have you not loſt it? The time was when the word wrought upon you, and you have had good deſires and diſpoſitions, and you have thought, Oh now I hope God will turn me unto himſelf; Now I hope I ſhall never be at ſuch a paſs again as I have been; and thou beganneſt to abandon ſuch and ſuch a corruption. This was a good frame, and now if you had gone alone and ſought God, and Oh that the Lord would perfect this work and put it on, and ſo improved this framable diſpoſition, it had been well with you; but you have fallen upon other buſineſs, and gone into company, and it may be upon the next temptation you have bin overcome & your hearts

*Though no perfection, yet a foundation for poſterity*

*Applic. 2 to partic. perſons. I. Our ſelves*

*ſimile*

Iron is  
harder af-  
ter quen-  
ching.

have been hardned, and iron you know, when it hath been once in the fire and is grown cold, is more unframable than before: so it is with many, after they have had some workings by the Word and after some melting by affliction, they have been more unframable than they were before.

And let us make much of it likewise in others. Is there any friend, or child, or kinsman, or acquaintance of yours brought into this framable disposition? doth the Lord begin to melt them, to soften their hearts? Is the Lord by such a Sermon or by such an affliction beginning to work upon them? Oh let me put it on as much as I can. The Devil doth so, when he see us in a framable disposition to sin, he setteth tempters on work to improve it; and we know it was the way of Idolaters, when they saw *England* in a framable disposition to Idolatry, what abundance were sent amongst us to improve it. Oh the mercy of God toward *England*, that when we were framing our doings to return to Idolatry, the Lord cometh and putteth the frame of *England* more from thence than before it was! Oh let not us lose this framableness; though it is not so much as we desire, yet let not us lose what it is. *England* would be in a lamentable condition if it should lose what it hath got from God already.

Yet further, *They will not frame their doings.*] The Note from hence is, That

Obser.

*Apostates seldom have any inclination to turn unto God.*

No meltings of spirit, no yeildings, but their hearts are hardned, and they depart further and further from God (for so he speaks of Israel as an apostatizing people.) I dare almost challenge you all; when did you ever know a notorious Apostate turn unto God? very rarely: (I will not say it is impossible) but especially for Apostates that are men of parts and have gone far from God, if they have but proceeded so far as to turn to be persecutors of the truth, or contemners of it, (as these Israelites here were) when did you ever know any of them to turn unto God. *They will not frame their doings.*



To turn unto their God ] Their God: 1. By profeſſion. 2. Their God who hath ſhewed much mercy to them, and hath done them much good. 3. Their God who is yet willing to be their God. They will not return unto Him.

This is the aggravation of their ſin, that they will not turn to ſuch a God. What, not turn unto Him whom they profeſs to be theirs, whom they flatter with their mouths, and they ſay that all their good and happineſs is in Him? Not to Him that hath done ſo much good as He hath done to them all their daies? Not to Him who is yet willing to be reconciled unto them? O this is a fore and bitter evil indeed that they will not turn unto this God.

But yet there is a further thing observable here, [Their God] that is this; That

*True repentance, it is not only to leave evil and to do good, but* Obſerv.  
*to turn unto God as our God.* True re-  
pentance  
to turn to  
as our  
God.

To turn unto God as a God in covenant with us; as a God in whom is our portion and happineſs: as a God willing to be reconciled. Here indeed is the very formality of repentance. A man may by the terrors of the Law turn from the practice of a ſin, not to live wickedly ſo as he hath don heretofore; he may by the ſtrength of natural conſcience and ſelf ends, ſet upon good duties, but here is no true repentance. True repentance is this, When we look upon God as a God tending Himſelf unto us in the way of a covenant in Chriſt, and ſo we turn unto Him. In Jer. 3. 22. *Return ye back ſliding Iſrael* (ſaith the Lord) *and I will heal your back ſliding.* Now mark the answer of true penitents; *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.* Here is true repentance. When God ſhall call upon a ſinner, O wretched vile ſinner, return, O return unto the Lord, for He is willing to be your God in an everlaſting covenant, He manifeſteth His grace toward you in His Son, and offereth mercy there, yea He is willing to heal all your back ſlidings; He is willing to be your portion, He is willing to be the happineſs of your ſouls: When a ſinner ſhall answer unto this call of God, Behold we come unto Thee, for Thou art the Lord our God; True indeed, we have ſought after vanity, but here

Jer. 3. 22.  
explained.

is not our happiness and our portion; Our good, our happiness is in Thee; *We come unto Thee the Lord our God.* It follows.

*For the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of her.*

Here is the reason why they turn not unto the Lord, *The spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of her.*

Expos. 1. First, That evil unclean spirit that did possess them. So I find divers do take the words. And then the Note is, That

Obser. The danger of forsaking the truth. *It is Gods just judgement to give men over to the Devil to be blinded and hardened, when they shall forsake Him and His Truth.*

Do not excuse thy sin by saying it is the Devil that tempts thee, for this may prove to be the aggravation of thy sin, that by the just judgment of God thou art now given up to be under the power of the Devil and to be acted by him. As in *Eph. 2. 2.* the scripture speaks of the miserable estate that men are in by nature, *Dead in sin, the children of wrath,* and amongst other aggravations of their misery this is not the least, *they walk according to the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* The word translated *working*, there, *εργαζομενος*, signifies the greatest activity that can be; the *spirit*, that is, the unclean spirit, the prince of the power of the air that now worketh in those children of disobedience. This is an aggravation of their misery and not any excuse unto them for their sin. Thou hast rejected the good Spirit, the holy Spirit of God, and now the spirit of whoredome, an unclean vile spirit hath possessed thee.

Satans temptation may be an aggravation of our sin.

Expos. 2. But rather thus, *The spirit of whoredoms*: A violent inclination of spirit unto uncleanness, to spiritual and bodily uncleanness, that they have got by custom. We have had this phrase before, in Chap. 4. 11. *The spirit of fornication*; that *impetus* of spirit, that violent inclination of spirit. So then, saith the Prophet, they will not turn unto the Lord, for there is a violent inclination of spirit, an impetus with which they are carried on in the waies of wickedness, but there is little hope

hope of turning them unto God. *The ſpirit of whoredoms*, that is, that efficacy that there is in that wicked diſpoſition of their hearts that carries them on ſo violently. In *2 Theſ. 2. 11.* the Scripture ſaith, that becauſe men love not the truth the Lord gives them up unto the efficacy of error; God (ſaith he) *for this cauſe ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions that they ſhould believe a lye*; ſo it is in your tranſlations, but the words, *ἐνέργεια πλάνης*, ſignifie the greateſt active efficacy of errors, to carry on with the greateſt ſtrength unto error that poſſibly may be. We find ſometimes men that are carried on to erroneous opinions, and come to ſpeak with them about them, and you ſhall perceive ſuch an *impetus* of ſpirit, ſuch an efficacy of the error in them, that it doth ſo hurry on their hearts, that they cannot, with any calmneſs, with any quietneſs of ſpirit hearken unto any thing that may take them off from their error. That's a ſpirit of error, God gives them up to the efficacy, the ſpirit, the activity, the power of error, to believe a lye.

*Is in the miſt of them*] That is, it is come into them and ſit- teth aſa King and ruler in their hearts. An evil ſpirit may beſet the godly, may compaſs them about, but it getteth not into the miſt of them, they keep it out from the throne, it doth not come to reign over them. The coming into the miſt of them, noteth the full poſſeſſion that this unclean ſpirit, that this *Impetus* and ſtrong inclination of ſpirit hath over them. And therefore, you find in *Prov. 8. 20.* that it is ſaid of *Wiſdom*, *I lead in the way of righteouſneſs, in the miſt of the paths of judgment.* [*In the miſt of the paths*] that is, wiſdom doth not only bring men to the verge of Gods waies, to be a little taken with the outſide of them; but brings them into the miſt of the paths of judgment; that is, they come wholly into them, ſo as they are even poſſeſt of them. So here; the ſpirit of uncleanneſs *is in the miſt of her*. So in the *1. Sam. 4. 3.* you have the ſame word, *Let us fetch the Ark unto us* (ſay they there) *that when it cometh among us it may ſave us*; the words in the Hebrew are, *that the Ark may come in, in the miſt of us*, and there have the full operation to do us good and ſave us. They depended much upon the Ark, and yet it failed them. By the

2 Theſſ.  
2. 11.

Note

Expoſit.  
Difference  
of poſſeſſion  
and poſſeſ-  
ſion as Sa-  
tan in re-  
ſpect of ſin.

Pro. 8. 20  
opened.

יבא ארץ

way

A good  
cause may  
be lost by  
too much  
depending  
on it.

way then, we may depend too much upon a good cause, the cause may be good, and yet depending upon the goodness of the cause and neglecting our own persons in reforming our lives we may fail as they did here: (But that by the way.)

*The spirit is come into the midst of them.* Many men receive an evil spirit quickly into the midst of them, when God knows the good Spirit of the Lord standeth knocking at the door of their hearts, and can have no entertainment so much as into the outward room. It follows.

Exposit.

*And they have not known the Lord.*] That is, they know not My greatness, My holiness, they know not what a jealous God I am. Idolaters have low and mean apprehensions of God. The right knowledg of God will put the heart upon seeking after the right manner of the worship of God: but when men know not God, see not God in his glory and greatness and excellency, they think to put off God with any kind of worship. Here is the reason that men do so stick to their own waies, to will worship, to their own fancies and conceits, because they know not the Lord, neither do they understand the glory and holiness of God, nor what a jealous God he is. When once the soul cometh to know what God is, such a soul dares not tender up unto God any worship but His own.

Now from the connection of these words, *The spirit of whoredom is in the midst of her, and they have not known the Lord,* the special Note is this, which indeed is very observable.

Obser.  
strong in-  
clinations  
blind the  
mind.

*When men have an Impetus of spirit (that is, a strong bent and inclination of spirit) in any evil way, it is that which blinds their minds.*

*The spirit of whoredoms is in her;* and then follows, *they have not known the Lord:* Whatsoever is said then against their way they cannot be convinced of it. And men do not consider how they come to be blinded. We find it in ordinary experience, when men are stirred in passion, they have a spirit to such and such a thing that they have a mind to, their spirit is strongly set, and they must have it, and I will, and I will, and I will have it; Come then and say any thing to them and they understand nothing, they are blinded: When their spi-

rit is up, when there is an *Impetus*, a strong inclination of spirit to any thing, say what you will they do not understand you. So it is true in other affections (of love) when the heart is set upon a thing, to love by an *Impetus*, a strong bent of spirit, though the love be falsely placed, come and say what you will against their way, they do not understand it, their minds are blinded, they do not know any thing. So it is true of fear, of sorrow, any affection, when it is set with a strong bent and inclination to the object of it, it doth much blind the mind. Some have a spirit of sluggishness and they love their ease; a spirit of covetousness and they must have their estates; a spirit of ambition and they must have their honor and respect; a spirit of pride and self-love & they must not yeild themselves as ignorant and mistaken by no means; therefore they cannot see the truths, the waies of God. But now let God humble these men that have such a spirit of pride, self-love, covetousness and the like, let the edge of their spirits be taken off, let God come and but mortifie this their lust in them, and then they come to see that which they could never see before; and that with far less ado; then a little hint of any truth prevails with their hearts; whereas before all the means of conviction could not do it.

A little  
hint of  
Truth  
prevails  
with a  
subdued  
heart.

Oh my brethren! when we come to examin truths let us look to our spirits, *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, him will the Lord teach in his way that he should chuse.* When a man humbling his soule before the Lord, and being jealous of his own spirit, examineth a truth; and crieth unto God to subdue what is evil in him, and then cometh with a teachable heart to find out the truth; suppose that yet he cannot find it; let such a man walk according to his light, whereunto he hath attained, and he may have comfort, God in due time will shew him more. But that is the thing that is evil in Gods eyes, and in the eyes of the Saints, when men are hindered from seeing a truth, by a spirit of opposition to it. There is no gracious heart can take it ill, if he see one that hath a spirit subject unto God, a spirit wherein the fear of God appeareth, so that he desireth unfeignedly to know what

Use.

the mind of God is; suppose this man for the present I cannot make him understand what I would, he is not of my mind; yet so long as his spirit is thus under God, I have no cause to be provoked against him, but in all love and meekness and gentleness to deal with such an one, and expect that God in due time will reveal himself unto him. But now when any one cometh and will make profession that they desire to know the truths of God and what his mind is? but when it appeareth that there is a spirit of opposition, pride, a vain glorious a vain spirit; Oh this is it (I say) which is grievous, is tedious in the eyes of God and of his Saints. It follows.

And the Pride of Israel doth resist to his face.

**M**ark another connexion here. As there is a connexion of a spirit of whoredom and not knowing God, so there is a connection of not knowing God and of the pride of Israel. They know not the Lord, and the pride of Israel doth testify to his face. From whence the Note is this, That

*Ignorance and Pride useth to go together.*

There is no man so conceited of their knowledge as many ignorant men are: For the truth is, where there is knowledge there a man sees that he knows but little, and he is able to discover his own ignorance; but an ignorant man is not able to discover his own ignorance, and therefore usually he is proud. You shall have many men and women too, that will pretend such abundance of knowledge, and their hearts are puffed up, because they have got some expressions more than others have, as if they were somebody, & had some manifestations of things to them more than others have; yet come and examin things at the bottom, & the truth is they are ignorant of the very principles of Religion. *1 Tim. 6. 4. He is proud, knowing nothing saith the text,* and yet he speaks of those that are full of vain questions and tanglings about matters of Religion, that will come with such objections and curiosities of questions, yet the holy Ghost saith he is proud and knows nothing.

*1 Tim. 6. 4*  
applied.

A double  
connexio  
of the  
Text. 1st  
Obser.  
Ignorance  
and pride  
companions

thing. And certainly the man that is there ſpoken of is a man as much conceited of his knowledg as you can conceive a man to be, as appears plainly in the text.

But now wisdom and humility, they likewise go together too. *Prov. 11. 2. With the lowly is wisdom.* If the heart be from the contrary. Use from the contrary. *with the lowly there is wisdom,* the Lord delighteth to reveal himself to the humble.

*The pride of Israel doth resist to his face.]* The Seventy they read the words otherwise than you have them in your books. *The injury and the wrong that Israel hath done unto God, shall be brought down,* shall be humbled: for I suppose their meaning in that translation is this, that whereas Israel by his wicked waies hath wronged God, hath been injurious unto God, he shall be humbled for it, he shall be brought down and made to know what it is for him to wrong God so as he hath done. And indeed those that do corrupt Gods worship they are the greatest wrongers of God in the world, they do the greatest injury unto God that can be. π περιπαθῆτε. τοι ἡ ὕψους, τὸ ἰσχυρῶς.

But we may safely keep unto that which is translated in your books, as more suitable to the Original than that of the Seventy, and then the Note is this, That Obfer.

*Idolaters are proud men, and Idolatry is a proud sin.*

For that is the scope of the Prophet here, chiefly to rebuke them for their false worship; though he speaks of other sins yet that is the main; *O the pride of Israel doth resist to his face;* Israel they will have their own way of worship and forsake God, O proud hearts that they have! *Idolatry is a proud sin.* In all disobedience against God there is much pride: pride is not only in cloaths and in fine things, but in disobedience against God, there is the pride of the heart: And as in all sin there is pride, so in a more peculiar manner in the sin of Idolatry. The English reading.

First, Idolaters in their way, they look upon the true worship of God as a mean thing, as a thing below them, beneath them. Oh their way of worship is the pompous, brave, and gallant way; but for the true worship of God that is poor, Obl. Idolaters proud men.

low and mean. All your superstitious and Idolatrous people look thus upon the simplicity of the waies and worship of God.

2. They put more on the creature than God hath put. Places.

Secondly, And then there is pride in it in this, That a wretched worm should dare to presume to put more upon a creature than God hath ever done, to put more upon places than God and nature hath ever done. God hath made them thus and thus, but I will put them higher than God hath done, I will put an excellency, a spiritual excellency, a divine excellency upon them; for so Idolaters take upon themselves to do, and this is horrible pride.

3. They prescribe God in worship.

Thirdly, It is pride, because they presume to prescribe God which way he shall be worshipped. The worship of God is the dearest thing he hath in the world; and for any creature to take upon him to prescribe which way he shall be worshipped, this is the most notorious pride in the world.

4. Honor their own because theirs.

Lastly, Herein appeareth the pride of Idolatry, that it honors what is a mans own because it is his own, rather than what is Gods. Do not you see it apparantly in all superstitious Idolatrous people? As in that one thing of daies. God hath set one day apart for the honoring of himself and for the celebrating both of the birth, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ and of the whol work of our redemption. How is that day slighted, neglected, made nothing of!

Lords. day.

Holy daies.

But what a horrible wickedness is it accounted not to keep that which man setteth apart by himself, that day which is a mans own! Men will set apart a day for the honor of Christ, and Oh Christ will be quite forgotten if that day be forgotten; and Christ is much dishonored if that day be not regarded. I appeal unto you, Who sets it apart? whose is it? Is it Gods or is it yours? Gods? Certainly if there were such a thing so acceptable unto God as men take it to be, we should have some little hint, somewhat in the book of God of such a thing. We have the story of all the Acts of the Apostles, what they did in several places, and there is not the least mention of any such thing, of their honoring Christ; by setting a day apart



apart for the celebration of his nativity: We have the Epistles unto ſeveral Churches upon ſeveral occaſions, and we find no notice that they ever took of any ſuch thing in any Church they eſtabliſhed. Surely therefore it is mens own, there is nothing in Gods Word for it how highly ſoever it is honored. But we have enough in Scripture for Gods own day, the Lords day, and it is appointed by God himſelf to be a day of thankſgiving for the birth, reſurrection, and aſcenſion of Chriſt, and for the whol work of our redemption altogether; But man, he out of his pride will have another day and ſo ſet his poſt by Gods poſt; he thinks it is not honor enough unto Chriſt to put the celebration of his birth, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, all together in one day; no, he thinks it is more for the honor of Chriſt to have ſeveral daies, one for his birth, another for his reſurrection & another for his aſcenſion; whereas God hath put all into one, and would have his Son to be honored by the obſervation of that one day.

*The pride of Iſrael doth teſtifie to his face.*

*Teſtifie.*] In the Original it is, answereth to his face, When any thing is returned ſuitable to its work, that is ſaid to answer that work: that is thus; when the ground brings forth Corn for the husbandman, then it answereth unto the ſeed and labor of the husbandman. Gen. 30. 33. *My righteousneſſe ſhall answer for me ſaith Jacob to Laban,* I ſhall have that which is ſuitable to my righteousneſſe. So here, *the pride of Iſrael answereth to his face* (ſo you may reade it) that is, the fruit of ענה Expof. 1. their pride ſhall be (in the puniſhment of it) fully answerable unto the ſinfulneſſe of it: ſo I find many turn it. Mic. 1. 2. *Let the Lord be witneſſe againſt you,* (teſtifie againſt you, it is the ſame word) or answer you according unto your ſins, in the way of puniſhment; that's the meaning. When the Lord bringeth judgments ſuitable unto, and full up to mens ſins, thoſe judgments do answer to mens ſins; yea and they witneſſe againſt them, they witneſſe to the faces of thoſe men the guilt of thoſe ſins.

Well, but we will rather take it (and ſo it is to be I think) according to what you reade in your books, *The pride of Iſrael doth*

Expof. 2. *doth teftifie to his face*: that is, the pride that doth appear in Israel doth fully teftifie that horrible wickedness, stoutness, obftinacy that is in Israel, it teftifies it to his face. Israel is a stout and an obftinate finner, and his heart is very wicked, vile, and abominable againft God; How do you prove that? His pride that manifefteth it felt outwardly doth teftifie this his inward wickedness. It is true, you cannot fee the heart; but pride doth use to difcover it felf; pride in the heart feldome lies there long fecret; for that is a fin that muft be above-board; pride muft vent it felf; it is the glory of that fin to vent it felf; Now that coming and venting it felf, what doth it but witness to the face of the finner what vileness and wickedness is in his heart? You could not fee the vileness & wickedness that was in his heart before; but now here this fin [Pride] that is sent out (and pride is a foolish fin it cannot keep in) and that coming forth it is a loud witness against him of that filth, vileness, stoutness, and obftinacie that there is in the heart of this finner.

There is a fecret pride, and a witnessing pride. *Ift. 3. 9.*  
 Ifa. 3. 9. *The frow of their countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their fin like Sodom*; they manifeft it outwardly in their very countenance: It is taken from harlots, some harlots that are at first departed from their husbands; they keep things very fecretly, and you fhall perceive them very demure in their countenance, but at length they come to be bold and impudent in their filthiness, and you may perceive adultery in their very countenance; and they witness apparantly in their words and countenances what the wickedness of their hearts is. As that fin of adultery, fo almost all fins are witnessed where pride is difcovered. No fin difgraceth men more than pride, and that is the curse of God upon this fin; pride seeks for the greatest honor to a man, and there is nothing that doth more dishonor him; Why? because pride doth teftifie that there is a woful deal of evil in that mans heart. As I will instance a litle.

Pride dif-  
covers  
much fin  
within.

A man that differs in judgment from his brethren in divers things; he differeth and he pretendeth this, he cannot see the truth

truth of God which he would fain see; he cannot do as his brother for his conscience bindeth him otherwise. But you will say, every man pleads conscience, how shall we know whether it be the stoutness of his heart or the tenderness of his conscience? Thus, If this man behaveth himself humbly, and the rather humbly in all other things because he cannot see what his brother doth in such and such particulars, and so is in danger to be an offence to his brother, and therefore his soul is humbled: This is a good witness that it is meek conscience and not stoutness that makes him differ. But now if his behavior be high and proud when he differeth from his brother, he doth not take it to be an affliction to him that he cannot see what his brother \* doth, but censurcth him and thinks that it is either through his weakness, or through his wilfulness, that he will not see, and so carries himself high and proudly before his brother, this witnesseth to his face that it is stubbornness and singularity. Thus his pride testifies to his face the inward wickedness of his heart.

And as in a Church, this is a principle and maxim, That though a man be guilty of many and great sins, yet he is not to be cast out but upon obstinacy. You will say how shall we know that, for obstinacy is in a mans heart? I know many observe such and such rules for it, as, if you do not reform when such and such learned men tell you what they would do &c. But we have another rule: if after an offence and admonition there be a proud behaviour of any one in a Congregation, if he carries himself proudly; this his proud behavior witnesseth to his face that it is not out of tenderness or scruple of conscience that he yeildeth not to what his brethren would have him, but through the stoutness of his heart. His pride testifieth to his face.

O the pride of mens hearts witnesseth much against them. I remember I have read in *Fetia* a story of a Synod, an Assembly of Divine that were in *England*, in the time of *Austin* that was then Bishop of *Canterbury*; And they assembling together they go to a holy man, an *Anchorite*, to advise with him whether they should yeild to what *Austin* did impose upon them?

(who

How to discern differing from others out of pride or conscience

\* or that his brother doth not see what he doth.

This passage must be understood, 1 Of lesser differences, 2 Not absolutely nor alwaies, but in things where in one is not clear; for if he be, he cannot but think it is at least weakness in that particular (though in others hee may judge him stronger than himself) that he doth not see the same with him.

1 (who was then the Arch Bishop) This holy man answereth them, If he be a man of God yeeld unto him, if not stand out against him. They reply, A man of God? How shall we know that, whether he be a man of God or no? He answers,

2 If he be humble; for Jesus Christ saith, *Learn of me, for I am meeke and humble in heart*: if he be an humble man, he is a man of God saith he, and then learn of him. But how

3 shall we know that say they? He answers, You shall perceive it by his behaviour; when he i-come to the place of assembly, let him be there before you, if you perceive him to behave himself churlishly, imperiously, proudly, not so much as to rise to you, to give no respect to you, then take it for granted that he is a proud man and reject what he imposeth; but if he behave himself meekly, humbly, and lowly to you, then regard what he saith. So when they came to the Assembly, *Austin* he sitteth in his chair in a proud imperious way and would not stir to any of them: upon that they rejected whatsoever he said, for according to the counsel of that holy man, his pride did witness to his face that he had a vile and a wicked heart and did not come unto them in the Name of Christ.

**Humility** Oh it is much that is to be regarded that comes from those that are humble and lowly. Humility doth witness to the face of a man that he doth know much of the mind of Christ; and pride witnesseth to the face of a man that he is not acquainted with the mind of Christ.

**Expof. 2.** The word here translated [*Pride*] I find by a learned Interpreter, *Livellius*, that because in it self it signifies *Excellency*, he thinks it to meant of God, who sweareth by the *Excellency of Jacob*, *Amos*. 8. 5. and so he carries it thus, That God who is the *Excellency of Israel* in whom Israel should glory, it is He that doth witness against them. And I find some inclinable to this. But the other I conceive rather to be the scope of the Holy Ghost, taking the word as it is translated for *Pride*, and the *testifying to his face*, for an open witnessing, apparantly witnessing, so as it may easily be seen. It follows.

*Therefore ſhall Iſrael and Ephraim fall in their iniquity.*

*Ephraim*, is the Princes of Iſrael, they were proud becauſe of the honor they had: And Iſrael, the People, they were proud becauſe they had great men to bear them out, and they could plead Authority for what they did. But they ſhall both fall, both *Ephraim* and *Iſrael*. The Note is, That

*The fruit of ſin is caſting down.*

Obſer.

It is rather here ſaid, *They ſhall fall*, than *that they ſhall be puniſhed*, in reference unto what went before; for before, he ſpeaks of the pride of Iſrael, and from thence a further Note is, That

*Pride goes before a fall.*

Obſer.

God will caſt down the proud, and certainly when thoſe that are proud fall they muſt needs fall very low becauſe a proud man liſteth up himſelf ſo high, and you know according to the height a thing falls from ſo is the fall of it: now a proud man liſts up himſelf on high, ſo high indeed as he liſts himſelf up above God, therefore he muſt needs fall down very low: And upon that I remember *Bernard* hath this Note, Here is the reaſon (ſaith he) why a proud man can have no grace from God; why? God is the fountain of grace, and it is a rule in nature that the ſtream that cometh from a fountain, it aſcendeth no higher than the top of the fountain is. (You may find it in all *Aqueducts*, according to the height of the fountain ſo high may the ſtream be carried, but it will go no higher.) Now ſaith he, God being the fountain of all grace, ſurely grace cannot riſe higher than God himſelf; but a proud man liſteth himſelf above God, therefore he is above grace, grace cannot reach him.

Pride before a fall.

Proud men fall low.

Bernards witty ſpeech

1. A proud man goes from God, as if he could live without him: for that is the pride of mens hearts, when they have outward proſperity they go from God as if they could live without him.

Pride goes from God.

2. He goeth againſt God, as if he were able to reſiſt him.

2. againſt him.

3. beyond him. 3. He goeth beyond God, as if he made himself the end of all his actions.

4. above him. 4. Helifteth up himself above God, as if there were more excellency in him than in God. Helifteth up his will above God, and that two waies :

1. Saith he, My will shall be followed rather than Gods.

2. Whereas God is contented to have his will only in just and good things; saith a proud man, I will have my will

But it is just because God wills it. whether it be just, whether it be good or no. Come and deal with a proud man and say, do you well in this? Is this fit? I will have my will saith he. This is more than God chal-

lengeth unto himself. God will have his will in nothing; but in that which is good and just; thou wilt have thy will whether it be just or no: thus thou goest beyond God and listest up thy self above him, therefore surely thou shalt fall.

Applic.

I need not shew you any example of the falling of proud men. This our age manifesteth it cleerly enough. How hath God cast dirt upon proud superstitious men? You know what a height of pride they were grown to two or three yeers since; and now two Kingdoms if not three have listed up rheir hands to the most high God to extirpate them. Their pride did testifie to their faces, and no mervail that they are fallen; and the Lord cast them so far down as they may never be able to rise up in their pride again!

*Ephraim and Israel shall fall in their iniquity.*

Expof. 1. *In their iniquity.*] The Hebrew [Ba] signifies *for*, as well as *in*: *fall for their iniquity*, as well as *in their iniquity*. But to keep to the word, *They shall fall in their iniquity*. Surely they fall hard who fall in their iniquity, they fall so as to break their bones, yea oft times their necks.

Use.

My brethren, these are falling times, let us labor to remove our iniquities beforehand, and then if we fall we shall fall soft and not hard. If we fall in our iniquities we shall fall hard; but if our iniquities be removed by faith and repentance, though we should fall in these times, yet we shall fall into the bosom of our Father and into the arms of Jesus Christ. How much better is it seeing that men are like to fall,

to take ſuch a courſe before their fall cometh, that when they do fall they may fall ſoft, fall into the boſom of their Father and into the arms of Jeſus Chriſt, and not fall in their iniquity; And if we fall thus, if our fall be not in our iniquity, but in the cauſe of God, and rather for our grace than for our iniquity, then we may be of more uſe in our fall than we were in our ſtanding. As it is with the Corn, the Corn that falls into the ground doth fructifie, and is of more uſe when it is fallen than it was when it was in the granary; And ſo many godly men, many young ones that are fallen within theſe two or three yeers, (but God knows it hath not been in or for their iniquity, but in the Cauſe of God and in the exerciſe of their graces) *they are fallen*, but they are fallen into the arms of God, and into the boſom of Chriſt, and they are as fruitful in their fall as they were in their ſtanding, for no queſtion but there is much fruit to be reaped from their falls, and God hath a plentiful harveſt for *England* that will come out of their falls.

ſimile

Young men fallen in this war.

*Judah alſo ſhall fall with them.*] Mark, firſt *Ephraim* ſhall fall and then *Judah*, for indeed *Ephraim* was firſt in ſin; the ten Tribes they firſt forſake the true worſhip of God and they brought in *Judah* together with them, and the text ſaith, that *Judah ſhall fall with them*. This is here mentioned to aggravate *Ephraim's* ſin and the judgment of it, thus. Oh this ſhall lie heavy upon *Ephraim* one day, that not only he hath ruined himſelf, but he hath ruined *Judah* too, he hath brought *Judah* into his ſin and involved him in plagues together with himſelf. From hence the Note is, That

*It is a great aggravation for any one to ſhink what miſery he bringeth others into.* Obl. r

If God do but enlighten any ones conſcience; it may be Gods hand is upon thee for thy ſin: This is grievous: Oh but together with the ſin have not I by my counſel, by my example, by my countenance brought others into ſin? and I have brought them into miſery as well as my ſelf: It may be there be many in hell at this time that I have holpen thither. It is true Gods hand is upon me, I am falling, and whither I ſhall

fall I know not; I see hell open and I may fall into it; how ever I am afraid of this that there are some fallen into hell already of whose sin I was the cause; and is it possible that I should be preserved out of it? must I not follow them and fall thither too when they are already fallen thither through my wickedness? You therefore that have been Company-keepers and ringleaders to wickedness, and many of your companions are dead and gone, without any manifestation of repentance; you had need to be thoroughly humbled.

Obser. 2. Further, It is no plea you see for any one to say, *I will follow the example of others.* If you will follow the example of others you must perish with others. Judah followeth the example of Ephraim and Judah must fall with Ephraim.

Obs. 3. And further, If Gods people (even Gods people I say) if they comply with wicked men, & defile themselves with their pollutions, they must except to fall with them in outward judgments. Judah was the only people God had upon the earth, and as Israel is a type of the Apostate Church, so is Judah a type of the true Church, yet it seems that Judah though the true Church and the only people of God that did preserve the worship of God in the greatest intirenes that was in the world, yet I say Judah, they did very much comply with Israel, and complying with Israel in false worship they must fall with them. *Come out from amongst them my people, lest being partakers of their sins you be partakers of their plagues too.* And this I make no question is the reason why so many of Gods servants fall at this day, they have complied with the times and defiled themselves; though we cannot say so of every one of them that fall in this Cause, yet it is to be feared in many: And it may be (though we dare not determin of Gods waies, for the thoughts of Gods waies in mercy, are higher than our thoughts, higher than the Heavens are above the Earth, yet we have cause to fear) that many if not most of this generation shall fall before God bringeth forth this glorious work of his in saving Zion.

Ufe why so many fall in these times.

Chap. 1. 7. and chap. 5. 5. there that God though he threatned Israel, yet he saith, *I will reconcile*

*base*



have mercy upon Judah; but here he ſaith, Ephraim ſhall fall and Judah alſo ſhall fall with him: Now for the reconciling of that we are to know that, though Judah fall with Iſrael, yet there ſhall be a great deal of difference in their falling. Iſrael, the ten Tribes ſhall fall, be brought into captivity, ſo as never to return again, I mean never to return from their captivity in that way as Judah did; Judah was to return again after ſeventy years; ſo Judah fell with them, but they fell not as they fell. Though the Saints therefore may be ſcourged with rods, yea with ſcorpions as they are at this day, as well as wicked men, yet the Lord doth not, he will not, take his loving kindneſs from them.

Obſerv.

There is yet one particular more to be obſerved, and it is from the Hebrew particle *Gam*, Judah [*alſo*] ſhall fall with them; and I make no queſtion but the Spirit of God holds forth this Note from it, *viz.* That

*The falling of the Saints together with wicked men it is of ſpecial*

Obſerv

*conſideration.* There is much in it; ſome ſpecial matter to be conſidered of in the falling of Gods people together with the wicked. Indeed it is that which in theſe daies puts us to a ſtand; we admire at the waies of God, his judgments are paſt finding out; we muſt adore them in what we do not underſtand; That the hand of God ſhould be ſtretched out againſt wicked ones, againſt ſuch as have corrupted his worſhip by their own ſuperſtitious waies, it is no marvel; but that ſo many of his dear Saints, ſo precious in his eyes, in all Countries about, ſhould ſuffer ſuch hard things and fall together with the wicked; we are at a ſtand, and we know not what it meaneth. What, Judah fall alſo with Iſrael, when God had no other people upon the face of the earth, ſurely there is ſome great matter in it; It is I ſay of ſpecial conſideration: And indeed there are many things that God would have us to obſerve in the fall of his people together with wicked men.

First, He would have us take ſerious notice how holy a God He is. He ſpared not His own Son, and He ſpareth not His deareſt Ones. He will give the dearly beloved of His ſoul in-

Reasons  
1. Gods  
holineſs.

to the hands of His enemies. God had but one Son that never sinned against Him; but He hath not one Son that never was afflicted by Him. And therefore we have no cause to wonder that the godly sometimes suffer, for His own Sonne did.

2. None presume on former services.

Secondly, God would have us take into deep consideration this meditation, That none must bear themselves upon any former services they do for God. When Israel forsook God, Judah did cleave unto Gods true worship, and in that God was much honored: But Judah must not bear himself upon that, Oh I have done service for God, when others did forsake Him I did cleave unto Him; and so think to take more liberty afterward: No saith God, though Judah hath much honored Me and cleave to My worship when Israel the ten Tribes forsook Me, yet if Judah shall afterwards comply with Israel, Judah shall likewise fall. None must bear themselves upon former services. It is usual with men that if they have been useful in some things; they begin to presume, and to beheady and take liberty to themselves to do what is not convenient; thinking that because they have done some service, they must not now be contradicted in any thing they do. Thus we find it many times among men; and upon this boldness many amongst us have fallen. How many have there

Use

Servants to the Publick

been that in the beginning of this Parliament and in the beginning of these Wars, have done good service for the Common-wealth; and afterwards begin to be high, and malipert and proud, and they must have what they will and none must contradict them but every body must submit unto them; and so through their pride though they have done good service yet afterward they fall? Let every one take heed of this both in regard of God and also in regrd of man: you that have been most forward in the publick Cause, never think to presume because of what you have done, but walk humbly now, and be serviceable still, for otherwise you may fall notwithstanding your services as Judah did.

3. God not engaged to any if they transgress

Again, Another thing that God would have us take into consideration is, That he tieth himself unto no people, if they offend,

offend, be they what they will be, God can be without them.

*Judah alſo ſhall fall*: By that God declareth that there is no men though never ſo uſeful; but he can be without them. Perhaps you may think, if you deſert the Cauſe where will there be any to ſtand up in your room? Take heed, though you may think you are the moſt uſeful man either in the Miniſtry, or in the City, know that God can be without you, and you may fall as well as other men. Uſe

Laſtly, God would have us take notice of this, That if His own people fall with the wicked, what then may wicked men expect? If ſuch things be done to the green trees, what ſhall be done to the dry? *If judgment begin at the houſe of God, where ſhall the wicked and ungodly appear?* It follows. 4. Admonition to the wicked

## V E R. 6.

*They ſhall go with their ſtocks and their herds to ſeek the Lord.*

**S**Hall they fall? No they have a way to prevent it, they will paſſifie God with the multitude of their ſacrifices, their ſtocks and their herds, they are content to ſpend thoſe all in ſacrifices unto God, and ſhall this people fall? They will make God amend with theſe, they will make up their ſins with theſe, with the multitude of their ſacrifices. There is much to be obſerved from every word here; the difficulty for interpretation is not much, and the Observations I ſhall paſſe briefly. Expof. I.

*They ſhall go*] *Ibunt huc & illuc, modo ad hunc, modo ad illum montem,* as Interpreters render it, They ſhall run up and down from one place to another, from one ſacrifice to another, in a kind of hurrying of their ſpirits. And from that word there may be this noted; That

*Thoſe who depend upon duties, are in a hurry and diſtraction of ſpirit, when they do not prevail with their duties in that they deſire.* Obſ. danger of dependence on duties.

They often change their duties, but they do not change their hearts. Many think, Well, I have done thus and thus, yea but if I ſhall ad to what I have done and do thus and thus, then

then I shall prevail: whereas those that do their duties in obedience unto God, and go out of themselves and depend for their acceptance upon a higher sacrifice, upon Jesus Christ; these go on with much sweetness and quietness of spirit, though for the present they see not the thing performed which they aim at in their duties: their spirits are not in a hurry and in a distraction, so as the spirits of others that depend upon their duties are. This is to be noted from the clause; *They shall go; Cursitando*, running up and down.

with their  
flocks.

*They shall go with their, [flocks and herds.]* He meaneth, with their sacrifices, but he gives them not the name of sacrifices, but only their *flocks and herds*, for they are not worthy of that name. From hence the Note is.

Obf.

*God contemneth the services of hypocrites, of superstitious and Idolatrous apostates.*

Their.

*Their flocks and their herds.]* Mark, They make use of their own, according to their own mind, in their own waies, to worship me as they list, and therefore God doth not call them His, doth not own them as His, but he calls them *their flocks and their herds*; What they do saith God, what they offer, it is their own, their flocks and their herds, I will not own them. From thence the Note is this, That

Obf.

*It is a sad thing that what we tender up unto God, God will not own as His.*

When in our sacrifices (that are typified by those legal sacrifices) in our prayers, there we seem to tender up unto God our parts, our abilities, our inventions, our expressions, our wits, our memories, and the strength of our bodies: But now when we have done all, saith God, All these parts and all that is come from you all this while in your prayers, I do not own them, these are none of mine, they are all your own. This is a sad thing.

There is no such way to put an excellency upon any thing we have, upon our parts, and abilities, and estates, as this, To tender them up first unto God, and if God shall please to own them, then to receive them again out of Gods hands; we shall then

then receive them with abundance of ſweetneſs and excellency. But here, he calleth them, *Their ſtocks and their herds*, though they were tendered unto God in ſacrifice, yet He will not ſay, they are His, but their own. Thus it is with all Hypocrites and formal and ſuperſtitious perſons in what they tender unto God. Self is the principle of what you do and therefore all your ſervices remain your own, you ſerve your ſelf rather than God in them.

Herein lies the ſweetneſs and true comfort of a mans eſtate, and of his credit, and parts, or of whatſoever he hath, when he ſhall conſecrate and devote them unto God ſo as they remain no longer his own. This is a ſacrifice that God is well pleaſed with. Theſe are my parts ſaith God, this is my eſtate, here I give them back to you again: And when a man ſhall take what he hath as having firſt conſecrated and devoted it unto God and taking it out of Gods hand again, Oh this addeth a ſweetneſs and a bleſſing to his eſtate. All we have is Gods as He is the firſt cauſe of all; but mark, God rejoyceth as well, if not more in a ſecond right that He hath to what we have (namely by our tendring up all unto Him in a gracious manner) than He doth in the firſt right of being the cauſe of all. I beſeech you obſerve it, God hath a twofold right to the eſtates, parts, and abilities of His people. Firſt, He hath a right to them as He is the cauſe of them; I gave them to you therefore they are mine. But Secondly, There is a ſecond right that God ſeemeth more to rejoyce in, and that is this, When His ſervants by an exerciſe of grace, ſhall tender them up again and give them back again unto Him; Now ſaith God, they are mine by a ſecond right; and this ſecond right unto them, they being tendered up unto me in a holy way, is the right that I rejoyce in; and this will be moſt comfortable unto you. Oh my brethren, let us not deprive God of this ſecond right to all we have or are or can do; for this will not at all weaken our right of our own to what we have, we may enjoy our eſtates and parts and abilities; but this will ſtrengthen, and ſweeten, and bleſs them abundantly.

*They shall go with their flocks and their herds.] Another Note is this, That*

Obs. Superstitious abundant in services.

*Superstitious and Idolatrous people they are abundant in their services.*

Holydays

They are content to go with all their flocks and their herds to seek after God; thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of oyl, any thing to offer up unto God, but mark, it is in this, their own way of worship; and whatsoever is mens own that they will be abundant in their worship, but what is Gods that they will be scant enough in; as might be again instanced in in regard of setting of daies apart for God.

Reason.

Natural conscience telleth us that when we have to do with God in our services, that great things are futable to a great God. Your Papists, in times of straights, they have a kind of praying that they appoint for fourty hours together; but it is in their own way, they will be abundant enough in that. Many of you think much to spend a quarter of an hour in a morning or in an evening in seeking God in your families; when superstitious and Idolatrous people are abundant in those services, in seeking God in their own way.

Papists.

Family Duties

But observe it, though superstitious and Idolatrous people be abundant in their services, to their Idols, yet they are not infinite in their services to them. But the Saints of God if their spirits be right, they are enlarged to a kind of infiniteness in Gods service. As thus, still they would know more of Gods mind, they would do more, and are never satisfied with what they do. There is no Idolatrous and superstitious person, but there are some limits that he puts himself to, and he thinks that when that task is over, when the fourty hours is over, the work is done: But now here is the difference between a natural work and a spiritual; A natural work is al-

supernatural works unlimited.

waies a limited work; but a spiritual work hath alwaies an infiniteness in it; Thus, though I am not able to do what is actually infinite, yet my heart is infinite in this, that it is never satisfied, but it would fain have more, and if I were able to do ten thousand times more than I do, yet my heart would be as eager to do more as it was at first, I should not think I am

any

any neerer to the end of my journey than I was at the first day; for I am to deal with an infinite God, therefore let my services be never so great and many, yet still, Oh that I could rise higher, Oh that I could do more. Here is the supernatural work of grace which doth go beyond all Idolatry in the world.

Again observe, *Superstitious and Idolatrous people they will spare no cost in Gods service in their own way.* Obs. Superstitious spare no cost in worship.

They will go with their flocks and with their herds, bestow all their estates upon the service of their Idols. How shameful is this for us to be so sparing and scant in the true service of God? Never men had more large opportunities to honor God with their estates than at this present we have. And certainly men should rather rejoyce that they have an opportunity to serve God with their estates, than murmur that the service of God is so chargable to them as it is. Although some men think themselves wise in appearing little in what may be chargable unto them, yet they lose the chief comfort in and blessing upon what they do, in withdrawing themselves from such a service as God requireth at that time.

Use,

*They shall go with their flocks and their herds and seek the Lord.*  
From whence the Note is, That

*There is a time when vile and wicked men shall see need of God.* Obs. Wicked men shall need God

Though wicked men when they have all about them suitable to their carnal desires, they slight and neglect God, yet there is a time when they shall be brought into such a condition as they shall see their need of him. Oh let us remember this in the midst of our prosperity! We find by experience that God doth bring men to times wherein they see need of Him, Oh therefore now the love of God, now the mercy of God and pardon of our sins, and peace with God, how precious should it be in our eyes! It is good to make God our friend whom we are sure one day we shall have need of. We all conclude that it is a point of wisdom to make such a man our friend of whom we can certainly say, we shall one day have need of him: Oh let us be sure to make God our friend, for

certainly one day we shall have need of Him. Blessed are those souls who have an interest in that God whom all the world shall see one day they have need of.

Further, *They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord*; Thence this Note likewise,

Obf. All  
pretend to  
seek God.

*The most superstitious and Idolatrous and false worshipers, they will pretend to seek God as well as any.*

Whatsoever they do, Oh they do it for the honor of God, and for the service of God, and out of respect unto Him; and why should not we do this and this, we have good aims and good intentions, do we not seek to honor God in what we do? When those Idolaters of Israel set up the Calf, they proclaimed a day unto Jehovah, a day for the honoring of God, they pretended that what they did was out of respect unto God and to honor Him. The worst men and the most superstitious will yet pretend the honoring of God. So it is again in

Use

Christ-  
masse.

regard of those daies that men have set apart for God, and it is that which hath setled men in the superstitious observation of them, that it is for the honor of Christ; what (say they) shall we not honor the birth of our blessed Savior? what a profaness, what a disrespect is this unto Jesus Christ? well let others do what they will, for our parts we will do it, for hereby we shall do honor unto our blessed Savior. So the

Images

Holydays  
& Images  
have the  
same  
ground.

Papists for the adoration of Images, say they, What not regard not to reverence the Image, the Picture, of our blessed Savior, and of the holy Saints? And the truth is if it be duly weighed, there is the same reason of Images of Christ and the Saints, and of daies set apart for the honor of Christ by mans invention; and there is as fair a pretence of honoring Christ by setting up His Image before me to put me in mind of Him; as of honoring of Him by keeping a day of mine own appointment. There is (I say) the same reason of both, and whatsoever argument any man shall bring me against the one, I dare undertake to make it good to be against the other. As

Emile

now, is not natural reason as strong to set up the picture of the King to honor him (and you do it for that end) is not this as much as to keep a day once a yeer to remember him? So the

reason



reaſon may be as ſtrong to honor Chriſt by way of picture, as to honor Him by obſerving any day ſet apart for that end by the inventions of men.

We are (my brethren) to take heed of men that are pretenders to the honor of God. Theſe here will ſeek the Lord though in a falſe and ſuperſtitious way. But thoſe that are pretend- Admoni- tion.  
 ers to the honor of God they prevail much with weak ſpirits and with ſuch as are moſt conſcientious: As your greateſt Hereticks that have ever been in the Church, have been great pretend- Admoni- tion.  
 ers to godlineſs; and many there are at this day that out of pretence to honor Chriſt have leavened the hearts of people with dangerous errors, and eſpecially leavened young converts; for your young converts aſſoon as ever God is pleaſed to work upon them, to convert them firſt unto himſelf, Oh they love Jeſus Chriſt, their hearts are taken with Chriſt and inflamed with love unto him, and they honor free grace that hath pardoned the ſins of their youth of which they have ſuch freſh ſenſe: Now falſe teachers they take advantage of this, and therefore if they ſhall bring any thing unto them that hath the Name of Chriſt, and the Goſpel, and free grace, they know they will greedily drink it in; and many dangerous errors that are ſweetened with ſuch pretences are ſtrongly maintained. By this means their leaders attain their own ends, and they ſee it not.

Again, *Superſtitious and Idolatrous men in time of their afflictions and ſtraights, then above all they are abundant in their ſervices.* Obſerv.

*They will go with their ſlocks and their herds, when they are in extremity; O then God ſhal have any thing from them. Self-love drives men far and enlarges them much. Men in a ſtorm are content to caſt out much of that which is precious to them. Iſa. 29. 16. They poured out prayer when thy chaſtening was upon them. They are ſtraigned in prayer before, it commeth out by drops before, but when thy chaſtening is upon them, then they powre it out. And this is the baſeneſs of our hearts, that we can find enlargment for God only then when it is ſutable to our own ends. Thoſe whoſe hearts are more enlarged in adverſity than in the enjoyment of mercies, had need to examine their hearts.* Self-love. ſinful. Iſa. 26. 16 opened.  
 Further

Further, *Superstitious formal professors, think to make God amends for former and present evils of their hearts and lives, with outward performances.*

Obfer.

If they bring their flocks and their herds, much sacrifice, they think that will do it. But let us learn to take heed of this; take heed of this vanity, to think to make God amends for former or present sins by any sacrifice thou performest to Him thus. Some of you perhaps that are negligent in the duties of your relations, you are wicked in your waies; servants, children, stubborn, stout against parents and governors, and wives neglecting their duties to their husbands, and so they theirs to their wives; and you think though you take liberty in those things, yet if you pray much, and hear much, and speak of good things, and be forward in the profession of Religion, that will make amends for the neglect of your duties.

Applic.

Oh take heed of that for ever you that are forward in your profession, and abundant in the performance of holy duties: take heed of this deceit of your hearts, to think to put off God with these things, & that that shall make up the neglect of your duties: Other kind of people are accused for injustice and uncleans & much wickedness, & yet they think to put off all this, by going with their flocks and their herds. Here is their sinfulness, they rest in the bare duties. But the Saints they have a further sacrifice to offer to God, to be a sweet savour in His nostrils. They have first the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that these sacrifices typified. And then they have their souls and bodies which they tender up to God as a reasonable sacrifice.

Saints.

But mark, *They shall go thus with their flocks and their herds, but they shall not find him.* Observe from hence,

Obf. God found no where if not in duties.

First, *If God be to be found any where he is to be found in his Ordinances; in the performance of holy duties.*

The Tabernacle a type of the Ordinances of the Gospel.

These sacrifices they were materially good, but yet they should not find God in them. *Exod. 29. 42, 43.* When the Lord appointed the Tabernacle to be erected (a type of the Ordinances we now enjoy) saith he, *There will I meet with thee, and there will I meet with thee again the second time.* If God be

to be found any whereit is in the performance of holy duties.

But ſecondly, *The end of all holy duties we perform unto God, is ſhould be to find God in them.*

It ſhould be ſo. They pretended that end here. When either God is coming unto us in mercy, or when we are drawing near unto God in duty, we muſt be reſtleſs till we find him; Eſpecially in the latter. Many men and women (I beſeech you obſerve this one thing) perform duties, but they do not look at finding God in them. They do not examin after the duties are done, Have I met with God in this or that duty? Have I met with God this day in the word? I have been in my cloſet and there I have prayed, have I found God in prayer? Found God? what is that? You ſhould never be quiet in the performance of holy duties till you meet with God one of theſe two waies. Either that you find God coming to you in the communication of himſelf and the ſweetneſs of his love and mercy to you; Or at leaſt till you find your hearts got neerer unto him. And either of theſe waies we find God.

Thirdly, *God will not be alwaies found when he is ſought.*

*They ſhall go with their ſtocks and their herds, but ſhall not find me.* As thus. Men are never like to meet with God.

First, *When they ſeek him in any ſuperſtitious way.* Theſe kind of formal ſuperſtitious worſhipers of God, they did much, they ſpent much time in Gods worſhip, I appeal to their own conſciences, and unto all men that knew their lives, did any thing of God appear in them? It may be manifeſted in their frothy, vain, and carnal converſations, that they never met with God in thoſe worſhipings. When God is ſought and not in his own way, he will not be found.

And then ſecondly, *When we ſeek our ſelves rather than God,* then he will not be found.

And thirdly, *When we do not ſeek God as a God;* that is, when we tender him only external ſervices and not ſoul-ſervices alſo; when we ſeek him not with the uprightneſs of our hearts, when we ſeek him not with our whol heart, when we ſeek him not with thoſe high and reverent apprehenſions of him, when we have not that fear of his Name as is ſutable to ſuch

Obſ. 2.  
End of  
duties to  
find God  
in them.

Obſ. 3.  
God will  
not be al-  
waies  
found.

1. when  
ſuperſti-  
tiously  
ſought.

2. when  
our ſelves  
chiefly.  
3. when  
not as God

an infinite God as the Lord is, then God will not be found.

4. when  
too late. And then lastly, *When we seek him too late.* There may be a seeking of God too late. *Seek Him while He may be found.* Oh then we had need lose no opportunity of seeking God, for He will not be alwaies found. And this is just with God; for God often seeks unto us when we will not be found, and therefore it is just that He should not be found when we seek Him.

And then it follows, *He hath withdrawn Himself from them.*

Exposit. When the Saints of God seek Him in a holy way, He is presently found. *Ma. 58. 9. They shall cry and he shall say, here I am:* Perhaps they do not take notice of God, he is many times with us and standeth by us, He is present and we do not know that he is there; But now that we may know that he is there, he makes that promise, that when we seek him as we ought to seek him, he will say; *here I am.*

777 *He hath withdrawn himself.* The word that is here translated [*withdrawn himself*] may as well be translated, *Divisit se;* or *Eripuit se;* He hath divided himself, yea snatched himself from them; that's the propriety of the word; they go to seek him and cry after him, God snatcheth himself from them, as one that refuseth their friendship, he turns his back upon them. This noteth, *That God hath no delight in the services of superstitious and formal professors.* But to the humble and contrite heart, he delighteth to be with them. The flocks and the herds of the wicked are rejected and God withdraweth himself from them; but small things from the Saints are accepted. As you shall observe in *1 Sam 7. 9.* when holy *Samuel* there did but offer a sucking lamb for a burnt offering unto the Lord, presently followed that the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel. Here are herds and flocks and yet God withdraweth himself; but *Samuel* there offers but a poor sucking lamb, and presently the Lord thundereth with a great thunder upon their adversaries.

Obs. 1.  
God de-  
lights not  
in formal  
professors

ries. So you have it *Revel. 8. 4.* after the the Incenſe with the prayers of the Saints were offered up there followed voices, and thundrings, and lightnings, and an earthquake. Great things are done by ſmal ſervices of the Saints, when done in uprightneſs, but the greateſt ſervices of Hypocrites and formal Profeſſors God regardeth not but withdraweth himſelf from them. Rev. 8. 4.  
opened.

And then obſerve, It is a heavy and ſad condition when God withdraws himſelf from his creature ſeeking him, yea ſeeking him and that in a time of diſtreſs. As in *1 Sam. 28. 5.* when *Saul* was ſeeking God, and God was departed from him, mark what *Saul* ſaith, *I am ſorely diſtreſſed, for God is departed from me.* And in the 9. Chapter of this Propheſie, verſ. 12. *Wo unto them when I depart from them* ſaith God. Oh that is a ſad condition. It is a ſign, Obſ. 2.

Fiſt, of a diſhonor that God puts upon a people (as I ſhewed you more largely when I ſpoke of the rejecting of their ſacrifices.) *What greater diſhonor can it be unto a people, than for God to take more pleaſure in their howlings under his wrath than he doth in their cryings unto him for mercy?* And yet to ſuch a condition may a people, a particular ſoul be brought into, I ſay that God may take more pleaſure in your howlings under his wrath than in your cryings unto him, and that in your Temples, if you do not reform as well as cry unto him: and for that you have that evident place in *Amos, 8. 3.* *In that day ſaith the Lord, ſhall the ſongs of the Temple be howlings;* Amos. 8. 3  
opened. As if he ſhould ſay, the ſongs of the Temple were loud, but I will take more pleaſure in their howlings than in their ſongs. And that place is very famous, *Eſa. 29. 1.* *Wo to Ariel the City where David dwelt &c.* and verſ. 2. *Yet I will diſtreſs Ariel, and there ſhall be heavineſs and ſorrow, and it ſhall be unto me as Ariel.* The Text ſeemeth to be obſcure at the fiſt reading, therefore the meaning is this. By *Ariel*, is meant *Jeruſalem*, the City where *David* dwelt, the place where the ſacrifices were offered unto God; And *Ariel* ſignifies an Altar of God, Gods Altar that did devour the ſacrifices like a Lion: Iſa. 29. 1.  
opened. Now ſaith God, *Thou ſhalt be to me as Ariel,* thou *Jeruſalem* Ariel.

where my famous Altar was, where so many famous sacrifices were offered, thou shalt be to me as *Ariel*, that is, you indeed offer many sacrifices unto me, and you continue still in your hypocrisie, in your wicked lives, know saith God, I will make that City as an Altar upon which your blood shall be offered, and I will take as much pleasure in the sacrifice of your blood offered upon this Altar, as in all the sacrifices that were offered upon the Altar from whence the City had its name, your name shall be *Ariel*, that is, your City shall be stained with your blood as the Altar was with the blood of the sacrifices. God rejecteth and casteth out the services of such as are superstitious and ungodly.

2 And certainly my brethren, when God withdraweth himself no creature can help us; they will say, how can we help for God will not?

3. And some great judgment must be expected when God withdraweth himself; As when a poor Petitioner goes to the Prince with a Petition, and the Prince turns his back upon him; surely thinks he now some evil is nigh me.

4. And no protection from any evil can be expected when God withdraweth himself.

5 And then conscience flies in thy face and terrifies thee, Oh the blessed God is gone, and mercy is gone, and Christ is gone, and that for such and such sins of mine, and such and such lusts of mine that lay so neer my heart. Oh how terrible will it be to conscience when God shall appear to withdraw himself!

6 And this withdrawing of God is but a forerunner of Gods eternal withdrawing himself from the soul, and from the body too.

The Saints had rather have Gods presence though angry, than God withdrawing himself from them. When God withdrawing himself but a little, Oh they could never be at quiet, till God returned again, *O cast me not from thy presence saith David.*

Applic. My brethren, when we perceive God withdrawing himself in any degree from us, Oh let us stir up our selves and

cry mightily, as the Church doth, *Jer. 14. 9. O leave us not,* Jer. 14. 9. opened.  
 the Church gives a *ſtrike* as it were, ſhe ſaw that God was going, as God is ſaid, firſt to go to the threshold; God goes by degrees from a people, and *Jeremiah* a holy Prophet, he ſaw God going from them; Carnal hearts they do not perceive how God withdraweth himſelf from a people by degrees, but thoſe that are acquainted with the mind of God and ſearch into the word, they are able to diſcern God withdrawing himſelf from a people, and they cry, Lord leave us not, if thou be gone all is gone.

*Yea, but doth not God withdraw himſelf from his Saints? how then is this a judgment peculiar upon Idolaters and wicked ſuperſtitious perſons?* Queſt.

The answer is this, It is true, God withdraweth himſelf Anſw.  
 ſometimes from his Saints, but his withdrawing himſelf from them is not like unto his withdrawing himſelf from the wicked. As

Firſt, Though God withdraw himſelf from the Saints, yet they retain good thoughts of him in his abſence; whereas the wicked pine, and vex, and fret againſt him. A husband may be gone abroad about his buſineſs from his wife a great while; yea but if ſhe be a faithful wife, ſhe ſtill retains good thoughts of him as of her husband and loveth him ſtill. But another, when her husband is gon and hath withdrawn himſelf, ſhe beginneth to have hard thoughts of him. So wicked men doupon Gods withdrawing of himſelf, in judgments and afflictions, they begin to have hard thoughts of God, and to ſay, I this is to ſerve God & to walk in his waies, what good have we got by all that we have done? But now you ſhall obſerve in the *Cant.* when Chriſt had withdrawn himſelf from the Church, ſhe ſtill calls him *her King*, and *her Beloved*, ſtill gives him honorable titles. I.

Secondly, Though God withdraweth himſelf from his people, yet ſo, as he draweth their hearts after him to cry more earneſtly. As a mother wil withdraw her ſelf from her child, ſhe gets behind the door and hides her ſelf, but to this end, that the child may be more earneſt to come into her

arms, that the child may cry after her to come to her, and the mother loves it. So the Lord loveth to hear his children cry after him to come to him. The Lord shall hear none of our cries in Heaven, for there we shall alwaies be with him; but here he somtimes withdraweth from us that he may hear us cry after him.

3 Thirdly, God though he withdraw Himself from His Saints, yet so as He leaveth some light behind Him that they may see which way he is gone and so follow him. As when a Torch or Candle is taken out of a room, yet you may see some glimmering light which way they went; so when God withdraweth Himself He useth to leave some glimering light that his people may see which way to follow him.

4 Fourthly, God withdraweth Himself from His People, yet so as his bowels yern toward them. *Jer. 31. 20. Is Ephraim my dear son, &c. I thought of him and my bowels yerned saith God, or my bowels were troubled.* He hath an eye toward them for much good in all his withdrawings.

5. Fifthly, When God is withdrawn from the Saints, nothing will satisfie them till God come again. When God withdraws Himself from others, they will seek after vanities to make up the want of Gods presence; As an Adultres in her husbands absence will seek other loves. But the Saints say, if God be gone I will enjoy nothing else, at least I will be satisfised in nothing else until I have Gods presence again.

6 Sixthly, Though God withdraw himself from the Saints, yet he doth not utterly forsake them, as *David* praies, *Psalm, 119. 8. I will keep thy precepts, O forsake me not utterly.* It seems that then God had somewhat withdrawn himself from *David*, yet mark, his heart was toward God, *I will keep thy precepts, thou hast forsaken me in some degree, yet I will keep thy precepts still, O forsake me not utterly.* If thou canst say thus, Indeed God hath withdrawn himself from my soul, yet though I have not that comfort in him that my soul desires, I will keep his precepts as long as I live, I will do what I can to honor him: Thou mayest pray with comfort, Lord do not utterly forsake me.



As thoſe that are godly may depart from God, but yet as Saints departing from God. in *Pſalm, 18. 21. I have not wickedly departed from my God; they do not depart from God as other men do. So God may depart from the godly, but yet not ſo as he departs from the wicked.*

Let us take heed of withdrawing from God, of withdrawing our ſouls from any way of truth. If we in proſperity withdraw from God, and think we can live without him, he will make us know in adverſity that he can be bleſſed without us too. It is uſual for men in proſperity to rub out with God well enough, but when thou comest into adverſity, the Lord will make thee know, though thou perieſt as dross and dung from the earth, yet he will remain a bleſſed God without thee to all eternity. God hath no need of us. If thou thinkest thou canst do well enough without him, he will shew that he can do well enough without thee. And thus much for this Sixth Verſe. Admonit.

## VER. 7.

*They have dealt treacherouſly againſt the Lord; for they have begotten ſtrange children: now ſhall a month devour them with their portions.*

**I**N the words before, the Lord threatneth to withdraw himſelf from Iſrael. When he ſhall be ſeeking of him with his flocks and herds, he ſhall not find him. A dreadful ſentence, that the God of mercy ſhall withdraw Himſelf in a time of mercy from his creature that ſeeks unto Him for mercy.

But what is the cauſe of all? Why will God withdraw Himſelf from them though they ſeek Him with their flocks and their herds?

There is reaſon enough for it, *They have dealt treacherouſly againſt the Lord.* Conexio.

The word that is here tranſlated, *Dealing treacherouſly*, ſignifies *Perſide agere*, to deal perſideouſly, they have been perſideous. 1717 ſignificat. of the word.

And

2 And it signifies likewise, *Decipere*, they deal deceitfully,  
 And it signifies especially that fraudulent dealing that there  
 3 is in breaking of covenants (that's the propriety of the word)  
 and it is often applied unto men breaking of covenant with  
 their wives, as in *Mal.* 2. 14, 15.

4 And I find *Luther* translate it, *they have contemned the Lord*,  
 (and so according to some it is divers times translated, *Sper-*  
*no*, to contemn God) And from thence *Luther* hath this note.  
 What (saith he) do they seek the Lord with their flocks and  
 herds and yet despise God, how can this stand together? They  
 seem as if they would honor God exceeding much, yet here  
 they are charged for contemning and despising God? He an-  
 swereth it to this effect. Whatsoever men pretend (saith he)  
 in honoring of God, yet if they do not obey and keep to his  
 word, and that especially in the way of His Worship, these  
 are guilty of contemning and despising God. We may be  
 plentiful in outward services, and yet in the mean time our  
 hearts despise God, despise the Authority and Majesty of  
 God.

English  
 translat.

But the word ordinarily is used according to that we tran-  
 slate it here, *they have been treacherous*, they have been false  
 with me.

And mark the connexion: They come to seek Me with  
 their flocks and their herds, but I have *withdrawn My self from*  
 them, for they have *dealt treacherously*. Hence the Note is  
 briefly this, That

Obser.

*When ungodly men come to seek God, then God remembreth  
 all their wickedness that they have formerly been guilty of,  
 and looks into the wickedness of their hearts as it is for the  
 present.*

*They have dealt treacherously* ] As if God should say, Here  
 comes a company of wretches, base, false-hearted hypocrites,  
 treacherous, perfidious, ungodly wretches to seek Me  
 with their flocks and herds. Are they like to be heard?  
 are they like to be regarded in all their services? No, they  
 are base, perfidious wretches, they have vile, wicked, and  
 cursed hearts.

Oh conſider this you that have not yet done away your ſins in the blood of Chriſt, and made up your peace with God: The guilt of your ſin is yet upon you, and the filthineſs of it yet doth ſtick: you will come to God in prayer, and ſeek Him, and cry unto Him for mercy: Know that all the wickedneſs that ever you committed in all your lives, is freſh in the preſence of God; God looks upon all as if it were now preſent. Here cometh ſaith God, a filthy old whoremaſter, an unclean wretch, he cometh now to pray unto me: and here comes an old drunkard, a wicked ſcorner and blaſphemer. When thou comelt to ſeek God, then all thy wickedneſs is remembered before him; and upon this, God juſtly doth caſt thy ſervices back again in thy face. Thus it is here. Oh learn therefore to cleanſe thy heart in the blood of Chriſt by faith in Him and by repentance, and then though thou haſt been vile heretofore, when thou comelt to ſeek the face of God, thy ſins ſhall not be remembered before Him. That for the connection.

But for the words *Theſelves*, and firſt in that proper ſignification of them. [*They have dealt treacherouſly* ;] the meaning is, they make a great deal of ſhew of Religion, but it is only for their own ends, and under that ſhew of Religion they do that which diſhonoreth me, they betray my glory. Here is treacherous dealing indeed, treachery againſt the God of Heaven; theſe are treacherous ſpirits, to make profeſſion of Religion, to make *proteſtations*, to make any uſe they can of Religion, ſo far as it will ſute with their own turns, but when it will ſerve their turns no longer, to caſt it off; yea if it prove croſs to them, to perſecute it. This is treachery againſt God in a high degree.

Again, *Treacherous*, in that they break their Covenant with God: that is the ſpecial treachery here intended, they have broken that Covenant in which they were engaged. They did give up themſelves to be the Lords, O but they have baſely forſaken the Lord and dealt treacherouſly with him. So that this treachery relateth either to the Oath of allegiance unto God as our King, or to the Covenant that we make with him

Uſe of Admonit.

Proſop-  
pæia.

Expof. r.

2

Treache-  
ry againſt  
God, as  
our { King  
Huf-  
band.

him as our *Husband*. And from thence Note, That

Obf. *The fins of fuch as are engaged unto God in Covenant, are fins of treachery. They are fins of a more deep dye than other mens fins are.*

Other mens fins are transgressions againſt God, they are difobedience to the will of God; yea but they are not fo properly treachery: but the fins of thoſe that are engaged unto God in Covenant have another ſtamp put upon them than the fins of other men, their fins are treachery againſt God.

Treachery the greateſt fin. And we know there is nothing accounted more vile amongſt men than treachery; It is the higheſt expreſſion of our indignation againſt a man that can be, to ſay, ſuch a man, take heed of him, he is a treacherous man. Certainly the fins of thoſe that have engaged themſelves unto God, go nearer to the heart of God than any mens fins do elſe; they are more diſhonorable to him, they provoke the eyes of His glory more than any fins whatſoever.

Uſe O let us then look back to what we have done ever ſince we entred into Covenant with God; ever ſince our firſt Covenant, when we firſt gave up our names to Him, And let us charge our ſouls with this aggravation of our fins, Oh my ſoul what haſt thou done? Thou haſt not only treſpaſſed and difobeyed as others have done, but thou haſt been treacherous againſt the Lord. Let us keep our ſelves from ſin and awe our hearts and ſtrike fear upon our ſpirits with this meditation, what, ſhall I that have ſo deeply engaged my ſelf unto God now forſake Him and deal treacherouſly with Him?

Take we heed of this evil of dealing treacherouſly with God, not only in regard of the particular Covenants between God and our own ſouls; but in a more ſpecial manner, let us take heed of breaking our publick Covenants. *England* hath been guilty of great fins againſt God, but *England* was never ſo engaged unto God as it hath been of late; We never entred into ſuch ſolemn Covenants with God as we have done of late, therefore if we keep not our Covenants with God now, *Englands* fins will prove to be greater than they

they were before, they will prove to be *treacherous ſins*. Do not account your entering into covenant with God any at time to be a ſlight matter; do not dally, do not trifle with Him: When you come to the Sacrament there you renew your Covenants; Perhaps in your cloſets in the day of your affliction you renew your Covenants; but eſpecially when you come in a ſolemn way to joyn with the people of God, to bind your ſelves in a Covenant with God to amend your lives, and to enquire after the true worſhip of God, and to conform your ſelves according to his Word; Oh now take heed what you do; now to walk as formerly you have done, Oh this is a treachery againſt the God of Heaven. Certainly God expects much from us after ſuch a Covenant as we have lately entred into, the moſt ſolemn Covenant one of them that ever was taken; for people to come and liſt up their hands to the moſt high God as they have done; And a *National Covenant*, and therefore more to be regarded than a private: yea an uniting Covenant, that uniteth two Nations if not three together; And a Covenant that is more for the Kingdom of Chriſt, and more *directly* againſt the Kingdom of Antichriſt, againſt the *Antichriſtian party* than ever yet was taken ſince the world began. Antichriſt quickly did ariſe and there hath bin much oppoſition of him; but for two Nations ſo ſolemnly to liſt up their hands to the moſt high God to oppoſe all Antichriſtian government, it is that, w<sup>ch</sup> if it be kept as carefully as it was made ſolemnly, is the greateſt honor that ever yet Chriſt had in regard of his government here upon earth. And we had need look to it, becauſe it is ſuch a mighty work as ſhould take our hearts, that ever we ſhould live to ſee that God ſhould bring about ſuch a ſtrange thing in our generation. I appeal unto you, was it poſſible four yeers ſince for any man in the world, yea for an Angel to conjecture ſuch a thing as this, that two Nations ſhall joyn together, the Representative body of the Kingdom, and Aſſembly of Divines, in one day ſhould be liſting up their hands to the moſt high God, to do what lies in them to extirpate Prelacy; that is, government by Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Archdeacons, Deans, &c.

&c. Now the more miraculous the work of God is in bringing this strange thing about, the more bonds lie upon us, to keep that Covenant with God. Oh therefore let us not now ad treachery unto all our former apoltacy, our sins now will prove sins of treachery.

Object.

But if it be such an aggravation of our sins, to be Covenanters with God, if we neglect our engagement, then we were better (perhaps some will say) never to enter into Covenant; for it seems if we had not taken the Covenant there would not have been such an aggravation of our sins.

Answer, I.

The answer to that is this, None but a carnal heart is sorry for his engagement unto God, neither because of afflictions that are in the waies of God, nor because the bonds of obedience unto God are stronger, nor because the danger of breaking them is greater. Perhaps when thou art engaged to God and his waies, thou meetest with many afflictions that are in those waies, take heed of repenting of thy engagement because of those afflictions. Perhaps thou feest thy self so strongly bound that thy conscience will fly in thy face if thou doest go but a little awry more than before; Oh take heed of recenting from thy engagement notwithstanding that. For one whose heart is gracious, certainly will never repent of his engagement though there be more danger of his sin now than before; why? because he *hateth his sin*: Now let there be never so much danger to keep me from that which I *hate*, I will never be sorry for that; as for instance, suppose there be a deep gulf, that if I fall into it, wil destroy me, I tremble to come neer it, well there is a fence to keep me off from that gulf full of shap iron pikes, so that if I should but try to get over it, they will gore and prick me; shall I be sorry that the fence is so full of sharp things that will gore and prick me if I endeavor to get over, when the fence is but ~~set~~ there to keep me from destroying my self? So a gracious heart will never be sorry that it is engaged in the waies of God, and that if it should break the engagement there would be an aggravation of his sin, for why? this my engagement is but as a fence full of pricks to keep me from that which I would be loth to come

simile

come

come to, which would deſtroy me. And thoſe that begin to think their engagement to God and his waies, to be a hard thing and could wiſh more liberty, theſe kind of men will certainly deal treacherouſly with God, yea their hearts are even already departing from God. Take heed of this it is a great degree of Apoſtacy (remember it my brethren it is an argument of marvellous uſe) it is I ſay a great degree of apoſtacy for any man to begin to be ſorry that he is ſo deeply engaged to God and His waies. All that are the Saints of God, when they are engaged, they bleſs God that ever they were engaged.

The firſt degree of apoſtacy.

Again, *They have dealt treacherouſly againſt the Lord.*] *Againſt Jehovah.* This is the vileneſs of mans heart. Though God be never ſo gracious, ſo merciful, ſo faithful; Though He be never ſo bleſſed, ſo glorious in himſelf and worthy of all honor, yet ſo vile is mans heart that it will deal treacherouſly with God Himſelf. To deal treacherouſly but with a friend, with a fellow creature is an evil; but to deal treacherouſly with the infinite and bleſſed God is a far greater evil. When others therefore deal treacherouſly with you, and you are vexed at them, and you go to your friends and complain, was ever any dealt ſo with as I am? Oh conſider how treacherouſly God is dealt withal in the world. Thou thinkeſt none was ever ſo dealt with, ever ſo wronged, as thou art; God is more wronged, more contradicted, more treacherouſly dealt withal than ever any was. And how many are there that think it a diſhonor to them to be ſuſpected to deal treacherouſly, and will often ſay, what, deal treacherouſly with my friend, I were not worthy to live if I ſhould; yet theſe men deal treacherouſly with God every day.

Uſe.

Thus much for this charge, *For they have dealt treacherouſly againſt the Lord.* Next he ſhews wherein.

*They have begotten ſtrange children.*

Expoſ.

That is a further aggravation, that they have not only ſinned themſelves, but they have ſought to propagate their ſin and

their wickedness: For it might otherwise be said, It is true, Israel hath sinned very grievous against the Lord, but may there not be hope of another generation coming on? No, for they bring up their children in the same way of superstition, Idolatry and wickedness that they themselves walk in. That is the meaning, *They have begotten strange children*; they should beget children unto God, but they beget them unto Idols, and so this wickedness, this treachery against God is propagated from one generation to another, there is a succession of it; as are the old so are the young.

When any draw others to evil waies, they are said in Scripture to make them children of the Devil, to beget them as children of the Devil. *Mat. 23. 15. Ye compass Sea and Land to make one Profelyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of the Devil than your selves, you beget him to the Devil.* So parents, first by way of natural generation they beget children to themselves, and then by educating their children in waies of wickedness they beget them the second time to the Devil. And they are called *strange children*, because God will not own them, they are none of mine saith God, they are strangers from me, I will have nothing to do with them.

Real.

The words being thus opened, the Notes are these.

Obier.

First, *Parents, have by God committed to them the charge of their children.*

That is implied here, That is, it is their duty to look to beget their children unto God, and to take heed that their children be not begotten to the Devil: For *Ephraim* here, the ten Tribes are charged, that whereas they should have brought forth their children for God, and so they should belong to Gods Inheritance and God should have owned them, now they beget them to their Idols, and they are strange children. God certainly doth not give you children to beget them for the Devil and for Hell. It should be a sad thing to parents to think here is a child coming from my loyns, conceived in my womb, and what shall an enemy unto God come out of my loyns? shall a firebrand of Hell be conceived in my womb?



womb? Certainly it ſhould go to the heart of a parent to ſee his child to be eſtranged from God, though he were not the cauſe of it: But much more when a parent ſhall come to be convinced, this child is thus wicked and ungodly, and as he hath received the ſeeds of his corruption from me at the firſt, ſo thoſe ſeeds were nourished up by my example, and encouragement, I have led him to ſuch wickedneſs. Wo to ſuch parents, and ſuch children may even curſe the time that they were born of ſuch parents, and rather wiſh they had been of the generation of Dragons, and off-ſpring of Vipers, than begotten of ſuch parents. God when he gives you children, expects that you ſhould labour that there may be a ſucceſſion of godlineſs in the world, that not only you ſhould be godly, but that you ſhould bring up your children to be ſo too. *Pſal. 78. 5.* He eſtabliſhed a teſtimony in Jacob, and appointed a Law in Iſrael, which he commanded our fathers; that they ſhould make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which ſhould be born; who ſhould ariſe and declare them to their children. This is the way of God, He commandeth you to make known His Statutes and Laws to your children, that the generation to come might know them, and not that you ſhould bring up your children in waies of wickedneſs and ſuperſtition. I have read of the *Romans*, that it was wont to be their way to ſue ſuch parents as were not careful of the education of their children. Roman  
Cuſtom. The educating of children amiſs bid bear an Action amongſt the heathen *Romans*. Therefore *Cicero* inveighing againſt *Verres* hath this expreſſion, *Quod filium tuum &c.* You have not only done thus and thus your ſelf ſaith he, but you have educated your ſon amongſt thoſe that were intemperate in riotouſneſs, in feaſting, in drinking amongſt wantons and unclean perſons, and by this means ſaith he, you have not only wronged your child, but the Common-wealth. Thus he laid his action againſt him. Now how might Heathens ſhanie us in this thing, they account thoſe men to deſerve puniſhment not only from God but from men that are not careful of the education of their children? There is a great deal  
of:

of reason for it, and it were very good now that there might be a Law ena<sup>d</sup>ed to that purpose, upon this ground, because the Common-wealth hath a part in the children as well as the parent, and the parent not being careful to bring up the child in the fear of God, he wrongs the Common-wealth as well as the child, therefore to be punished by the Common-wealth.

The second is this. That

Obser. 2. *Children usually are as their parents are, and as their education is.*

The parents they were Idolaters, they were ungodly and strangers from God, their children are so too. In many families we see that the father is an enemy unto God, and the son an enemy unto God, and his son is an enemy unto God, and his son after him is an enemy unto God, and so there goes a line and a succession of wickedness and profaness and enmity unto God. It is usually so.

Use for those that are well educated. Therefore let those children that are born of, and brought up under godly parents, bless God that they were not born and brought up by wicked parents. It may be if thou hadst been born and brought up of Papists, thou wouldst have been a Papist thy self. If thou hadst been born of one that is a stranger to God, of a Malignant, of a contemner of God, thou wouldst have been so too.

2. to those that are born of wicked parents. And seeing this is ordinary for children to be as their parents, Oh then what a mercy is it for any child that is born of wicked parents, yet that God should work His grace in him. This is not any ordinary mercy. There are some that are born of godly parents that do bless God that they are kept from wickedness that way: but there are some that are born of wicked parents, and so brought up by them in the family; yet so gracious is God unto them, that in a more than ordinary way, He goes further in mercy to them and works grace in their hearts notwithstanding. This is His extraordinary mercy, a mercy that thou art to admire at unto all eternity, that notwithstanding thy birth and education, yet God should reveal himself unto thee.

But how vile are they that being born of good parents, are wicked ! It is ordinary for ſuch as are born of wicked parents and have wicked education, for them to be wicked, to be ſtrange children ; but for thoſe that have godly parents, and godly education, for them to be wicked and ſtrange children, this noteth a notorious height of wickedneſs.

The third Note is this, That

*It is a dangerous thing for children to follow the Example of Obſer. their parents in wickedneſs.*

It is from hence that they are called ſtrange children, they are ſtrangers to God. It is not enough for them to plead, I did as my father or as my mother taught me. No, if thy parents be wicked and ſuperſtitious, and they bring thee up in wickedneſs and ſuperſtition, and ſo thou art wicked and ſuperſtitious thy ſelf, know that notwithstanding this excuſe, God looks upon thee as a ſtrange child, thou haſt no part nor portion in God, thou art an Alien, thou art eſtranged from God.

Children therefore had need to examin their parents waies and actions : And above all, the children of ſuperſtitious people, for there is nothing more natural in ſucceſſion, in a line, than Idolatry and ſuperſtition. Never plead thus then, we do but as our forefathers have done. That place we have in *Peter*, one would think ſhould be a Scripture for ever to ſtop the mouth of that plea, 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *We are not redeemed by gold and ſilver, nor ſuch kind of things, from our vain converſation, received by tradition from our fathers, but by the blood of Jeſus Chriſt that immaculate Lamb.* Mark the text ; that the being redeemed, from our vain converſation received by tradition from our fathers, is ſo great a mercy that it coſt the blood of Jeſus Chriſt. If God accounteth it ſuch a mercy as that He is willing to lay down the blood of His Son to purchaſe that mercy for a poor creature, ſhall not this creature prize this mercy ? And yet you think it rather to be a mercy to go on in theſe waies that you have received by tradition from your fathers, and you think it a great plea becauſe you have this by tradition from your fathers : Mark what you do, I ſay thoſe

Uſe.

1 Pet. 1.  
18. appli-  
ed.

men:

men or women, whether young or old, that shall plead for any superstitious way upon this ground, because they had it from their forefathers, they do in effect say, we look upon the blood of Jesus Christ as a common, as a worthless thing. He shed His blood to redeem thee from that which thou thinkest is worth nothing to be redeemed from. Thou thinkest it a good thing to go the way of the traditions of thy fathers; and Christ saith, I account it so great an evil, that rather than any that doth belong to Me shall go on in that way, I will lay down My blood, My life to deliver him from it.

The fourth Note is this, That

Obfer.

*When the succeeding generation is wicked, there is little hope of such a people, of such an Nation*

simile

I have withdrawn my self saith God, I have done with them, and after ward he telleth us, that they shal be desolate, and this is the reason, *they have begot strange children*: The children, the generation that is coming after they are idolaters too, they go as their fathers did, and what hope is there of them? When in a Vineyard or an Orchard not only the old trees are rotten, but the young trees, they likewise come to be corrupted and blasted by them, then there is little hope of any great cost to be bestowed about it, but it is likely to be digged up for the beasts to be let in upon it.

Use.

Much care is to be had therefore of the succeeding generation. And there is no better argument whereby we may come to divine (as we may say) what God intendeth to do with a Nation, than this; look how the children are, how the yong ones are that are coming up in that Nation, and by that you may come to divine what God intendeth to do with the next. We have much cause to bless God for His mercy toward us herein, in that He hath in a great measure (we hope) taken away that sign of His dreadful wrath upon us in this particular. I say in a great measure; though the truth is, we have a great many of the young generation extream rude, abundance of Apprentises and others that are fit, prepared, and ready to make riots and tumults to maintain their Fathers, their Masters old superstitions; and if ever there be any flux in

The way to divine what shal become of a Nation.

in a Kingdom about ſuch things (as ſeldom ſuperſtition and idolatry can be baniſhed from a Kingdom but ſome ſtirrs will be) uſually they are begun by the young ones, What, if you take away their Holy-daies from them, you take away their lives. I make no queſtion but ſo far as is fit, times of recreation will be allowed them, and there is good reaſon for it; though ſuch kind of ſuperſtitious daies be taken from them. But becauſe they find liberty in thoſe daies, and their maſters and many of their parents ſtick to the old waies of ſuperſtition, therefore many young ones they do accordingly, and had almoſt rather loſe their lives than loſe them, and being heady and naught they wil ſoon be brought to raiſe tumults and make ſeditious for them. But though there are many that are very vile that way, and ſuch as they are, are the ſaddeſt Omen of Gods diſpleaſure againſt a Nation; yet on the other ſide we ſhould wrong the grace of God if we ſhould not obſerve His goodneſſe towards us in the workings of His Spirit upon Young ones. Yea many whoſe parents have been ſuperſtitious, wicked and ungodly, and their maſters have bin ſo too, yet we find that the Lord hath delivered a great number of the young generation from thoſe old ſuperſtitious, and they are not willing to ſully themſelves with ſuch vanities as their parents and maſters before them did; they do begin to know the Lord, and to enquire after God; And bleſſed are you of the Lord, you are our hope, that God intendeth good unto us, and that He will not let out the wild beaſts to devour us, but will rebuke them for your ſakes. And although perhaps many of theſe gracious young ones may periſh, yea many have been ſlain already in this Cauſe, yet let not others that remain behind be diſcouraged at it, for it is an argument that there is ſome great and ſpecial mercy that God intendeth for us, in that He is willing to venture ſuch precious ones for the procuring of that mercy. We may well reaſon ſo, that if ſo much precious young blood that might have lived to ſerve God, be ſhed in this Cauſe, if God come to grant unto *England* mercy, He wil grant ſuch mercy as wil be worth aktheir blood; and that mercy muſt needs be great

ſtirrs upon the putting down of ſuperſtition. they are begun by young ones uſually.

Young ones the hope of a Nation.

that shall be worth all the blood of those that are so precious, which might have lived to serve God so many years here in this world.

And seeing God makes use of them, it is because the mercy that is to come for the next generation is so precious, that indeed such as have defiled themselves with superstitious vanities are like to have no share in it; and as they are not like to live to see it, so God will not make use of them to prepare that mercy for the next generation: But because God hath a love unto the young generation that are godly, therefore He hath reserved much mercy for many of them that are like to see and enjoy it; and others of them that are not like to see it, yet he will be so gracious to them as he will employ them in making way for that mercy: And whether it is better to be made instrumental for the glory of God and the good of another generation, or to live to see the fruit of this, it is hard to determine. Certainly those that in one generation are made so instrumental, as to lay the groundwork of mercy for another generation, they are as happy as that other generation that comes to reap the fruit of their labour: and sufferings; and those that do come to reap the fruit of their labors shall bless God for them, and when they enjoy the good and liberty of the Gospel, they shall say, Oh blessed be God that stirred up such a generation of young ones to shed their blood, and now we reap the fruit of it, and blessed be God for them; they will bless you to all generations. Therefore let there be no discouragement to godly young ones though it pleaseth God to cut off many by death in this Cause, for God hath some excellent end in it beyond all our reaches. Thus much for these words; Only one Note more, and that is this, That

Obf.

*God takes it exceeding ill at mens hands, that they should corrupt young ones.*

This Note is as full in the words as any other. God takes it exceeding ill, it is a part of treachery against God for any to be a means to corrupt young ones. Take heed what you do in corrupting of young ones. Those young people that  
are

are coming on and beginning to enquire after godlineſs, take heed what you do; that you hinder them not; Eſpecially parents and governors; Oh let your conſciences ſlie in your faces when you begin to curb them for their forwardneſs: Many times your conſciences cannot but miſgive you when you think, I have been wicked and naught moſt part of my daies, I ſpent God knows many of my yeers in vanity and profaneſs, here are young ones that begin betime to enquire after God, and yet wretch that I am my heart riſeth againſt them.

And as theſe people that hinder young ones are to be rebuked, ſo ſuch as ſeek to corrupt them by falſe opinions. Certainly it is that by which God is much provoked at this day; and as on the one ſide there is hope of mercy in regard ſo many young ones begin to enquire after God, ſo I know no ſuch dreadful argument of Gods diſpleaſure againſt this Nation as this, That aſſoon as young ones begin to come to know Jeſus Chriſt, there are pretently corrupt errors infuſed into them, and that under the notion of honoring Chriſt and free grace and the Goſpel ſo much the more; whereas indeed they do no other than infuſe principles of libertiniſme and looſneſs and ſuch as will even eat out the heart of godlineſs. Certainly the Lord hath a quarrel againſt ſuch as corrupt young ones by their falſe principles: for there are none ſo ready to drink in falſe principles as young ones, eſpecially young converts, who begin to enquire after the waies of God: and theſe men that are their corrupters, they have this advantage, they come not to them to perſwade them to profaneſs, but they come to them with ſeeming pretences of giving honor unto Chriſt and of magnifying free grace, and in the mean time ſow ſeeds in them that will eat out the power of godlineſs. Oh to corrupt children and young ones and when they begin to enquire after God and to know him, for you to do that which may eſtrange them from God, this is that which God will have a quarrel againſt you for! And it is a greater argument of Gods diſpleaſure againſt us, that it is ſo common and frequent at this day, than any one I know; A com-  
mon evil.

there is not any one argument (that I know) that is a greater discouraging argument to us of Gods displeasure, than this thing. But so much for those words, *They have begotten strange children.* It follows.

*Now shall a month devour them with their portions.*

Expol.

*A month*] I find Interpreters have a great deal of do about this expression. Many think that God aims at one special month, and they tell us of one month in the year which answereth to our *July*, that there were many grievous things to befall the Jews in that month in former times, and in latter times too, as if that were a more Ominous month than any other. I will not spend time to speak further of that.

But there is certainly somewhat else in this expression. I find an expression paralel to this in *Zech. 11. 8.* the holy Ghost there speaks of three Shepherds that God will cut off in one month; these Idol Shepherds, saith he, *My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me, I will cut them off in one month.* There is the most exact description of your superstitious Idol Shepherds, even such as we have at this day amongst us in many places, saith God, *My soul loathed them, and their soul abhorred me.* Who do more hate the power of godliness than those kind of men, and against whom is the soul of God more than against those kind of men? *And I will destroy them in a month* saith God. Wherefore by this *Month* I take the meaning of the holy Ghost to be in these two things.

First, It seems to have some reference to the way of the Jews in those times, they were wont to have their daies of reckoning with their workmen and with their debtors, usually at the beginning or ending of every month, and this expression seems to allude that way of theirs; *A month shall devour them*, that is, the time of their month shall come when I will reckon with them, and when that fixed time shall come of my reckoning, they shall be undone, they shall be devoured and destroyed.

So.



So that it noteth,

First, *That God hath a ſet time to reckon with ſinners.* - Though Obſ. 1  
He be patient for a long time, yet He hath a month, a  
ſet time that He appointeth, and He will not go beyond  
that time.

Secondly, *When God cometh to reckon with wicked men, that is* Obſ. 2:  
*the time of their deſtruction.* The time of their reckoning  
will be the time of their deſtruction.

Secondly, *A month ſhall devour them* ] I find yet many In- Expoſ. 2:  
terpreters go this way, that is, *a little ſhort time ſhall devour*  
*them*, it ſhall not be long, it ſhall not be an hundred and  
twenty yeers, as it was when He threatned the old world, but  
it ſhall be very ſpeedy; As if God ſhould ſay, when once I  
begin with them, a month ſhall make an end of the work.  
And indeed what will a month do when God letteth the  
ſword come upon a Nation? (for that (the ſword) was the  
judgment here threatned.) As in many parts of *England*, what  
a great deal of havock have the enemy made in a month?  
How many that were rich and had great eſtates, yet before a  
month went about, into what a miſerable condition were  
they brought? ſo that God ſeemeth to have reference to the  
*Aſſyrians* that were let out upon them, let them but once come  
ſaith He, and they will not be long about the work, a months  
time ſhall devour them.

*Luther*, hath another Note, and ſo ſome agree with him, Expoſ. 3:  
by the month, he thinketh is here meant, their Solemnities Luther  
and new Moons, and ſo it hath reference to their ſuperſtition  
and Idolatry. But that I think to be too far from the mean-  
ing: I rather conceive that by a month is meant the ſhort  
time of their deſtruction when once the adverſary cometh in  
upon them.

*And their portions.* ] I find the Seventy translate it, *Cleros*, קָלוֹס  
their lots. And it may be turned, *their lots*, upon this ground, קָלוֹס  
because in the diviſion of the land of *Canaan*, that which they תּוֹס הַלְּהֹוֹת  
had for their eſtates, was given unto the ten Tribes at firſt by דוֹרוֹת  
*Lot*. Well ſaith God, I did give you your eſtates by ſuch a  
ſpecial providence of nine, by lot; but though I did in ano-  
ther

ther way measure out your estates than I do measure out the estates of any men upon the earth, yet a month shall devour your Lot, all that you had in that way of my special providence it shall now be devoured. From thence then the Note is this, and of exceeding use to us, That

Obfer.

*The more special the providence of God is toward us, in bringing any mercy to us, the more grievous is it after, if God be provoked in his judgment to come and take that away from us.*

That mercy that I had by a special hand of Gods providence, that I can relate Gods providence how it wrought about from this passage to the other passage, how strangely the Lord did work about His ends, to bestow such a mercy and such a mercy upon me; Well, thou canst speak of Gods providence and bless His Name, thou dost well in it, but take then heed thou dost not abuse that mercy that thou enjoyest by the special hand of Gods providence; take heed of provoking God to come and devour that mercy. So it is threatened here, *a month shall devour their portion*, their estates that they had by special lot it shall now come to be destroyed because of their sin.

Expos. 2. But then secondly, Take it according as we translate it in your books, and so likewise it is futable to the Original, *A month shall devour their portion*, that is, all their portion that they have here in their outward estates, all their riches, all their outward comforts, what ever they have, that which they account to be their portion, a month, a little time shall destroy it. And from thence there are these two Notes.

Obf. 1.  
Carnalists  
portion  
outward.

First, *That all the portion of a carnal heart, it is the enjoyment of a few outward things in the world.*

Here is his portion, he hath his portion in this world. And then,

Obf. 2.  
poor con-  
dition of  
the world  
lyrich.

Secondly, Here we may see the poor condition of the greatest in the world: for why? *his portion is no other, but a month may devour it.* If thou hadst the whol Kindom and many Kingdoms for thy portion, if this were all, thou hadst a poor pittance

pittance for thee that haſt an immortal ſoul, who art made for eternity, a month may devour it. That man is but a poor man that hath no other portion but that which a month may devour. But now the Saints they have God Himſelf for their portion, that portion that neither month can devour nor time deſtroy, but that portion which they ſhall enjoy freſh, and green, lively, and full, and that unto all eternity; that portion which liveth for ever, and that portion which will keep them ſafe to live for ever too.

## V E R. 8.

*Blow ye the Cornet in Gibeah, and the Trumpet in Ramah;  
Cry aloud at Beth-aven; after thee, O Benjamin.*

**T**HE Prophet ſeeing how little impreſſion his words of threatening made in the hearts of this people: O theſe are but words of wind, that we ſhould be devoured &c. therefore in the Name of the Lord, he putteth upon himſelf another perſon. He ſpeakes now in this verſe rather as a Captain, as a General of the field, calling an Allarm preſently as if the enemy were now come to the gates; *Blow ye the Cornet in Ramah, and the Trumpet in Gibeah*: as if he ſhould ſay, you have often heard that the Lord would bring the ſword upon you, now it is come, it is come, the enemy is even ready to break into your Cities, to riſſe your houſes, to raviſh your wives, to murder your children, *Blow ye the Cornet in Gibeah, and the Trumpet in Ramah, and howl ye and cry out, O ye of Beth-aven; after thee, O Benjamin.* It is a ſummoning of them, as if one ſhould come to the City and cry, The enemy, the enemy is come to the gates, Arm, Arm: So the Prophet here, that he might ſtrike into the hearts of thoſe that are ſtupid and ſenceleſs; ſaith he, I have often in the Name of God threatned His wrath, that He will bring the ſword upon you, I ſee you are a ſtupid and ſenceleſs people; Know, that the Lord is upon you in wrath, the enemy is come, now is the time come of your deſtruction; *Blow ye the Trumpet and reſiſt it as well as you can, ſet your ſelves in batel aray as well as you can,*  
for

Conexiō.

for now wrath and misery is upon you. That generally is the scope of the words.

Expof.  
partic.

But yet there are Three things to be considered for the further opening of these words. (The Cornet and the Trumpet, these you know were instruments of war, the one was made of horn, the other of brass.) But why in *Ramah* and in *Gibeah*? that's the first thing: And then, why *Cry aloud at Beth-aven*? And thirdly, what is the meaning of that, *after thee, O Benjamin*?

Ramah  
& Gibeah.

יְמִי תַּרְס  
בִּרְוֹס עַל־  
תְּוֹן וְפִן  
לֹאֵן.

רֹם  
גִּבְעָה

1. *Ramah* and *Gibeah*; I find many take these words not as proper names for Cities, but to signify the hills and high-places of the Country. And the Seventy indeed translate these words, *Upon the hills, and upon the high places*; for so *Ramah* doth signify an high place; and *Gibeah* doth signify by way of excellency, an Hil. Now then they would carry the meaning thus, as if the Lord should say to the Prophet, Go to the highest places that are in the Country, the highest hills, and there let the Cornet and the Trumpet be blown as an Alarm to awaken the whol Land. And then the Note would be this:

Obs. 1.

*When a people is in danger of Gods wrath, it is fit for all the people of the Land to be awakened.*

It is fit that it should be made known to them. Not only that they should go to the Governors and those that are in high places of authority, but go where they may make known the danger to all the people of the Land. It is true, in the first place it is fit the Governors should be awakened, but if they be awakened and not the people it will prove to little purpose. It is that which many men of vile spirits of late could not endure, that Ministers should tell people of dangers, or tell them of the fore-runners of Gods displeasure against a Nation; to preach such things in publick Auditories, this their spirits mightily rose against: But it is the way of God, in times of publick dangers to have the people made acquainted.

2

But further, *Ramah* and *Gibeah*, they were two eminent Cities, and they did belong both to the Kingdom of *Judah*.  
Indeed

Indeed they were in the Tribe of Benjamin, but Benjamin and Judah were joined in one Kingdom under the house of David, and the other ten Tribes were rent away under Jeroboam. Now these two Cities (I say) were in the Kingdom of Judah and eminent Cities, and it is likely they were fortified Cities, and two of the strongest Cities in the Kingdom. Now God is here threatning of judgment against Judah as He did before when He said, *Judah also shall fall with them.* Therefore saith he, *Blow ye the Cornet in Ramah, and the Trumpet in Gibeah, in the eminentest places of Judah, in the most fortified, and let us see how they are able to resist the miserie that is coming upon them.*

And further, I find this to be the translation of the Chaldee paraphrase, that they would import as if the meaning were, because that Gibeah was the Citie of Saul; and Ramah was the Citie of Samuel, therefore that God did threaten judgment for their making of a King against his mind, and for their disobedience to the words of Samuel. So they paraphrase the text. But I think that to be somewhat too far fetched. The other two I conceive are the mind of the holie Ghost here, in the high places of the Countrie, and especially in those eminent Cities that were the most fortified, that though they were in the Tribe of Benjamin, yet belonged to the Kingdom of Judah.

2. *Cry out, O Beth-aven.*] Beth-aven I find was another Citie different from that of Bethel where one of the Calves were; But there are neer ten Interpreters to one, that make it to be the same City Bethel wherein one of the Calves were set, and this belonged unto the ten Tribes. 2. Bethave

Now this Bethel, which signifies *the house of God*, is call'd Beth-aven here, which signifies *the house of vanity*, because of the Idol that was there. Therefore mark the emphasis, when he speaks of Ramah & Gibeah, saies he, blow the cornet and the trumpet, but when he speaks of Beth-aven, saith he, *Cry aloud*, or as the latin signifies, *howl out, O Beth-aven*, for that was the great place of superstition. He name'd this Citie rather than Dan (where the other of the two Calves was placed) because

it was so neer unto the Kingdom of *Judah*.

3. O *Benjamin*.

3. *After thee, O Benjamin.*] That is, *Benjamin* was upon the back of this *Beth-aven*, it was next unto the Kingdom of *Israel*. Now saith God by the Prophet, the wrath of God shall come out against *Israel*, *Ephraim* shall be left desolate, and *Beth-aven* shall howl and cry out, and you *Benjamin* that are so neer them, take you heed to your selves, *after thee, O Benjamin*, thy turn will be next. You have reason to look to your selves when your neighbors house is on fire; so saith God here, *Howl Beth-aven, after thee, O Benjamin; Benjamin* lived hard by *Beth-aven*, and when *Benjamin* saw the wrath of God against the ten Tribes and in that City of *Beth-aven* that was so neer to it, *Benjamin* should look to it self. That's the meaning of the holy Ghost in these words.

Now for the Notes of observation from them. The first is this,

Obser. 1.

*When danger is apprehended as present and real, then it takes the heart most.*

The Lord had threatened the sword many times by the Prophet, and their hearts were secure, stupid; but now he comes and presents it as present and real unto them, *Blow ye the trumpet*, the danger is now at hand, here it is saith the Prophet. There is a great deal of difference between mens hearing of wars and rumors of wars, and the very reallity of the evil it self when that cometh before their eyes. This judgment of war, of the sword, it hath been threatened against this Nation long ago. I dare appeal to you, for a matter of twenty yeers since (you that remember the way & the common strain, almost of all the godly Ministers in the Kindom) was not their usual theam about such an argument as this, to shew what were the forerunners of Gods judgments against a Nation? Ever since I was a youth and took any notice of Sermons, I know no argument that kept the sound in mine ears more than that: Usually it was the theam almost of all the places in the Kingdom, of all your eminent Ministers to search into Gods word, to see what were the sins that brought publick judgments upon a Nation and apply them unto

Use to  
England.

godly mi-  
nisters  
preaching

Ministers  
duty to  
search  
what sins  
bring  
publick  
judgment

Eng-  
land;

*land*; what were the forerunners of destruction upon a Nation and apply them unto *England*: But this was ordinarily slighted. Some indeed of our brethren that feared the Lord and feared his judgments, and thought that they did foresee a storm, upon that they withdrew themselves, and they were scorned and contemned for their labors. But now we see the thing that was feared and threatned is come, it is upon many Countries: & do we not apprehend it after another manner than we did when we only heard of it? In those Countries where the sword hath been raging, do not they apprehend the evil of war in another manner than ever they did when they heard it threatned in Sermons? O when it is come indeed and made real it works after another manner than it doth when it is spoken of. Those men that continually have their ears fill'd with the noise of the Drum and Trumpet, with the neighing of Horses and roaring of the Cannon, they will tell you that war is a dreadful thing indeed. So it is in all other afflictions that are threatned; how little are they regarded in their threats? but when they come indeed, Oh then how do the hearts of men sink within them! Oh now God is coming against me, now wrath is upon me saith the guilty soul, how far it may go out I know not; I heard often of such and such things, now it is come, it is come. Oh the dreadful apprehensions that are in mens hearts of the wrath of God when it is come! whereas before when it is threatned it is never feared.

Warre.

And this is a rule, an everlasting rule, That the lesse a judgment is feared when it is threatned, the more dreadfull apprehensions there are of it in the heart when once it cometh to be executed. That's the first Note.

The second is this,

*The Ministers of God they must make the things they are to preach to the people as real before their eyes as possibly they can.*

They should study all waies and means they can to make what they preach to the people to be real to them, not to be as notions to them. So the Prophet here, he had preached

Obs. The lesse a threatning is heard, the more the judgment is felt when upon us.

Obs. 2. Sermons must represent to the life what they presse.

often times of the judgments of God, of the Sword, but this would not do it, therefore now he strives to make what he had delivered to appear in the most real way that possibly he could to the eyes and hearts of the people, & he saw that to be the only way to do them good. It is not therefore enough for a Minister barely to tel the people truths, to tel them what danger they are in, but by all means of expressions that may be to make this appear in the reality of it unto them. We know how *Ezekiel* was wont to do, he threatned their carrying away, and he went and made before them a kind of siege to make it real to them. So *Jeremiah* and other Prophets. Now though Ministers cannot do so as they did, yet they are to study all manner of expressions that possibly they can to present things in the greatest realitie that may be. And indeed this is a great part of the skill of a good Minister, not barely to tell truths unto people, but to be able to make things appear real to them. The art of preaching I say lies especially in this, to make things appear real to the souls of an Auditory. As now, when we come to tell you of the danger of sin and of the wrath of God that is due to it; we tell you this and we quote Scripture for it, this perhaps stirs not the heart; but now if we can so present Gods wrath to you, to make it real before your eyes, to put you upon this, to be-think your selves in what a case you would be if now all creatures were taking their leaves of you, if now you were standing before the great God to receive the sentence of condemnation, if God were now at this instant coming upon you: If I say we could put you to it, and so preach as that you should apprehend these things as real before your eyes, this would stick, and more good might be done in one quarter of an hour this way, than perhaps in divers yeers before. The power of a Ministry consisteth much in this. And I suppose some of you know by experience what that is that now I mean by the Ministers making things real to your hearts. Have not you found sometimes some truths made so real to you out of the word, to your consciences, that you have thought that you have even stood before the Throne of God and

Wherein especially consists the Art of preaching

More good this way in a quarter of an hour than in many years otherwise.

When a Sermon works really.



and you have thought that God was even pronouncing ſentence againſt you? Some have expreſt it thus, and have ſaid, ſuch a time I went to hear the Word, and me thought there I was ſummoned before the great God unto judgment, I ſaw the Lord God Himſelf ſpeaking to me, I had repreſented before mine eyes the wickedneſs of my life, my danger, the wrath of GóD, and even the very ſiſhes of Hell fire upon my conſcience, I felt this upon me. Now God was in the Word indeed when the reality of things were preſented to my ſoul. And certainly it is the labor and endeavor of godly Miniſters in their ſtudies, not only to ſpeak an hour or two out of a text and to wear out ſo much time; but they are thinking, what way ſhall I take (& ſo they pray that God would help them to take ſuch a way) to preſent ſuch and ſuch Truths in the greateſt reality to the ſouls of their Audience that poſſibly they can. This is apparent from hence, that the Prophet doth not only tell them of their danger, but ſpeaks as if it were at hand, and makes it thus real before them.

Another Obſervation is this,

*That though the Miniſters of God are at firſt to be the Ambaſſadors of peace and reconciliation, to preach peace between God and people; but yet if this their Miniſtry of Reconciliation do not take effect, if it prevail not; then they are to come in the Name of God to proclaim the war of God againſt a ſoul.*

Obſ. 3.  
Miniſters after their Embaſſie of peace is ſlighted muſt denounce war.

For they know that God muſt have honor one way or other, either by peoples ſubjecting themſelves unto Him, or by Gods revenging Himſelf upon them. Honor, God muſt have: howſoever you may think the Word of God will paſs, yet thoſe that are faithful Miniſters, they know God muſt have His Honor one way or other; either willingly you muſt come in and give it unto Him, or He will force it out from you: If the joyful ſound of mercy be not received, the dreadful ſound of war muſt fill your ears.

Fourthly, *What occaſions of war ſoever there be in a Land, the principal cauſe is, Gods diſpleaſure againſt the ſins of that Nation; and eſpecially the cauſe is thoſe that are ſuperſtitious and idolatrous in that Nation.*

Obſer. 4.

For so it is here, *They have dealt treacherously, they have begotten strange children; therefore a month shall devour them. Blow ye the cornet in Ramah, and the trumpet in Gibeah &c.* Upon this ground, because of their treacherous dealing with God, and bringing up of their children in waies of idolatry. It is true, when danger is come to a Nation, the people of the Land are ready to lay it upon those that are most free from it. Who is it that men at this day lay the troubles of this Nation upon, but upon those that have all this while stood in the gap to prevent dangers to the Nation, and that have with more prayers & tears sought God than those that are so ready to charge them with it? But this hath been in all ages, the Saints have been made the troublers of a Nation: *But is it not Thou and thy fathers horse,* saith the Prophet, speaking even to *Abah* Himself? The troublers of Israel lie not in the Prophets, lie not in the Ministers as men cry out, that they preach sedition.

And it was wont indeed to be the title of *Luther* that great instrument of God, they called him the trumpet of rebellion: and not a new thing therefore is it, that the Ministers of God that first preach the word of Reconciliation, and then seek to shew people their danger, no marvel they be accounted the causers of their troubles, because they will not let people go on quietly in their waies, but in the Name of God oppose, and *reprove* them. But we know where our trouble lies, it lies in those that are most superstitious and idolatrous, they bring the sword: Do not attribute it to this and the other cause, it is the provocation of the most high God that brought these wars in upon us, : If therefore we be weary of war, let us be weary of our sins. I remember *Polanus* upon this text hath this Note, and indeed he hinted it unto me; saith he, The Jesuits they cry out of the Gospel in *Hungary*; a place which is near the Turks, and the Turks you know have often made incursions upon those Countries, and your Papists and Jesuits they cried out of your *Evangelici*, of your Gospelers, as if they were the cause of the Turks coming in amongst them. But the Lord knows where to lay the burden right.

*Polanus.*

Again

Again, in the next place, from thoſe words, [*Cry aloud at Beth-aven*] According to that interpretation I gave you, it was the place where one of the Idols were ſet, and a moſt ſuperſtitious and Idolatrous place. Now mark the difference, it is but only blow the Cornet and Trumpet in *Ramah* and in *Gibeah*; but it is *cry aloud*, or ſhrike out, and howl, *Oh Beth-aven*. From thence theſe two Notes.

First, *That ſuperſtitious places in the time of Gods judgment* Obſer. 1.  
*are in the greateſt diſtreſſ of all*: and ſo ſuperſtitious perſons.

When Gods hand cometh out againſt a Nation, it will fall heavielt upon thoſe that are Idolatrous and ſuperſtitious. It is true, Gods hand hath hitherto fallen heavie and very heavy upon many of our brethren, upon Gods dear Saints; but hath it not fallen heavily upon Idolaters and ſuperſtitious ones? How ever, mark the end, ſtay till God hath done, and you will find that the hand of God will be heavielt upon them; *Howl O Beth-aven*. Thoſe places that have been the neſts of ſuperſtition and Idolatry, thoſe are the places that His wrath will be moſt againſt. And indeed they do begin to howl and cry out already: For though ſome of Gods people have felt hard things, yet, Have two Nations liſted up their hands to the moſt high God to extirpate Gods people? But they have liſted up their hands to endeavor to extirpate a ſuperſtitious people amongſt us; therefore Gods hand is heavielt againſt *Beth-aven*.

Secondly, *In times of greateſt trouble thoſe that are ungodly* Obſer. 2.  
*and ſuperſtitious, they are in ſuch perplexity as they know not what to do.*

Instead of repairing unto God by faith and repentance, all that they have to do is to cry out and to howl. *Howl O Beth-aven*; they were far enough from coming to humble their ſouls to the Lord, and in a gracious manner to accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity; and to bear the affliction that God laies upon them; Oh no, but their ſpirits were vexed and enraged, they could howl and cry out, and that is all. Is not this the way of many that heretofore, *Oh how diligent* Applic.  
were

were they in their prayers and worshipping of God, yet when they come into affliction what do they? but vex and rage, howl and cry out; but far are they from giving glory unto God according to that way he requireth; they howl upon their bed, saith God, but they did not seek unto me. And God threatneth this in *Amos*, 5. 10. (and that Prophet was contemporary with *Hosea*) *I will turn the songs of their Temples into howlings*: They had their singing service before, saith God, I will turn those into howlings, for it is no other, their crying out under affliction and trouble, it is no other before God but as howling. The Lord accepteth in another manner of the cryings of His people under oppression; they cry unto God and send up their prayers of faith, and the incense of a broken heart, and God accepteth of the sighs, and of the moans that they make unto Him, and they do prevail exceedingly with the Heart of God. But for the crying out of wicked and ungodly men under Gods hand, He regards it not, no more than howling. Thus it is here, *Howl O Beth-aven*; much like those in *Esai.* 51. 20. that in the time of distress, are described to lie in the head of all the streets as a wild bull in a net, fil'd with the fury of the Lord; howl and cry out, and that is all.

*Benjamin* After thee, O Benjamin.] The meaning of the words I gave you. The Notes from thence are these.

*Obser. 1.* First, That it is an ill thing to have ill neighbors. Benjamin was neer *Beth-aven*, therefore he must fare the worse for *Beth-aven*.

To dwell amongst ill neighbors is a dangerous thing, and we should take heed of it. I remember a Commentator upon this place, upon this occasion makes a grave exhortation to men, that when they are to hire Houses and Farms they should enquire what neighbors were to be neer them, and to take heed of dwelling nigh unto wicked men, for saith he, when Gods judgments come out against them you may smarr, you being so neer them they may find you at least. I have often read of *Themistocles* a Heathen, that having a Farm to let (and their way was to publish it at the Marketplace) and

he added, there is ſuch a place to let, and there are good neighbours, thinking it were more comfortable for men to live neer thoſe that are good than thoſe that are wicked.

Secondly, which indeed is the main obſervation from hence and that which concerns us neerly.

*When the wrath of God is out againſt our neighbors, we had* Obſ. 2.  
*then need look to it.*

Though we have been in ſecurity before, yet if Gods wrath come neer to us we had need to ſtir. It is high time to look to our ſelves when our neighbors houſe is on fire. The truth is, we in *England* have been a long time in deep ſecurity, though *Germany*, though *France*, though the *Low Countries*, the *Palatinate*, *Italy* and almoſt all the Countries about us have been on fire, the Sword hath raged amongſt them, and it hath been threatned that it is likely we were the next, and been told us that the Sword takes its circuit and that the Lord is going about to judg the Nations of the earth, and had judged the Nations about us; but becauſe we felt nothing, though it was neer us, we had no hearts to prevent it: Therefore God is now come amongſt us, and come into the very midſt of us. The truth is, we in *England* did lie a great while as it were like a faggot upon the fire, you know when many faggots are on the fire, the under-faggots they are on fire and they flame, and the faggots a little above they begin to be taken, and the next above thoſe they grow black; but iſſo be you would not have the uppermoſt faggot burnt, will you let it lie there and ſay, though the neathermoſt faggots be burnt yet this is not touched? Is not that faggot think you in danger? So I compare ſeveral Nations to faggots in the fire; It is true, *Germany* was the under-faggot and was in the flame, and other faggots have been burning, and we in *England* lay as it were on the top of all, and it was a good while ere the flame took us and though we were cryed unto to pluck our ſelves as a fire-brand out of the fire, yet we through ſecurity lay ſtill, and now the flame hath got us, yea though we be now burning in many places in the Kingdom,

Englands  
ſecurity.

A fit  
ſimilitude

yet because we find that the heat of the wars are it may be twenty, thirty, or forty miles from us, how secure are we, as if God did not intend us at all, as if we had nothing to do to take notice of Gods hand upon our brethren. Wrath is pursuing, but because it is not upon us, Oh the security and desperate folly that is amongst us in the mean time! Just so it was in *Germany* as travellers observed, that if the wars were but a Town or a few miles from them, they went on in their trading as quietly and securely as ever till at length it came upon them and devoured them. Hath it not been so in many places in *England*? May it not be said of many places amongst us, as here in the text, *Ramah*, and *Gibeah*, and *Bethaven*, after thee, *O Benjamin*? So may we not name several Towns, *Banbury* and *Worcester*, after thee, *O Exceter*, *O Bristol*? It may be those in *Bristol* and in *Exceter* when the wars were in *Shropshire* and *Coventry* and other parts, they thought they were free, and they were safe enough: And truly though God hath delivered us all this while, yet if we be secure, it may be as well said of us, *Exceter* and *Bristol*, and after thee, *O London*.

But you will say, *What shall we do upon this, when the hand of God is stretched out thus neer us?*

First, *Humble our souls before God*, go forth to meet this mighty God with repentance, cry mightily unto him that if it be possible His wrath may be appeased before it fasten upon us. As in that *Luke 14. 32.* it is said of those that are wise, when a great King cometh out against them with twenty thousand, when he was a great way off, they send Ambassadors to desire conditions of peace. Mark, when he is a great way off; So we must not stay till God is come to our gates, till he be just upon us, but while this great King, the Lord God is a great way off, at a distance, we must send unto Him, and meet Him by repentance and by humbling our souls and making of our peace with him. Let not us think it true, the hand of God was against our brethren of *Scotland*, but they were quickly delivered; but I may say, after thee, *O England*. We have not done what our brethren did;

For

Luke, 14.  
32.  
opened.

For it is obſerved that though the generallity of that people were notorious vile, wicked, and rude before theſe times, but yet partly through the Covenant they have entred into and otherwiſe, (though no queſtion there is much evil there, and perhaps not the power of godlineſs ſo thoroughly as in many of Gods people here;) but there is certainly abundance of reformation more in the common people than there is amongſt us at this day; which ſpeaks hard things to us: Oh let us go forth and meet our God by repentance.

Secondly, *We ſhould riſe as one man, ſenſible of our brethrens miſery, and go out and help them.* For this hath been our evil, that we have ſuffered the Kingdom to moulder away, our brethren to be deſtroyed; Oh ſaith one place, what need we trouble our ſelves? and ſo the Land is deſtroyed by peice-meal. Certainly it is the duty of the Kingdom and of thoſe that remain, that when they ſee their brethren though at a diſtance to ſuffer ſo much wrong, they ſhould all riſe as one man to venture themſelves for the releif of their brethren, and not think themſelves ſecure becauſe it is not yet upon them. We ſee our brethren of *Scotland* do ſo, they were willing to come in with their help, and though the ſword is far from them yet no queſtion ſome of them think of this very text, now the Trumpet is blown in *England*, in the *Northern-parts*, after thee, *O Scotland*, they think after our turn is over, theirs is next, therefore they are willing to prevent it, though it be in ſuch a hard ſeaſon as this, to help their brethren.

Scots coming into  
England.

Thirdly, *We ſhould be ſo wiſe in a way of true prudence to our ſelves, as to meet with our danger before it cometh; not ſuffering our adverſaries to make our Countrey the ſeat of their war.* It is eaſier to keep an adverſary at a diſtance than to repell him when he is cloſed with us. This hath ever been the policie of wiſe men, rather to go out to meet an adverſary than to think to have ſtrength enough to repel them when they come. Thus in general.

And then, As Kingdoms, ſo particular perſons they ſhould lay to heart Gods judgments neer to them; As thus: Doſt thou ſee Gods hand upon thy neighbor, after thee, *O ſinner*;

thy turn may be next : what is Gods hand stretched out, upon your fellow-servant, upon your brother, upon your dear friend ? after thee, O sinner, thou art guilty of the same sin, thy turn may be next : Is Gods hand out upon thy companion, after thee, O sinner. Oh lay this to heart, think with thy self, my turn may come to be the next, and it may soon come to be my turn. The very thought of this, when God hath struck some with sudden death in a fearful manner, God hath sanctified this to some ; what (thought they) if God strike me next ? such a one is sent down for ought I know to his place, I may be the next : the thought (I say) of this hath been so serled upon the heart of some, that it hath been a means of their conversion. The Lord make it so to every sinner, that sees his fellow, his neighbor sinner struck before him.

## V E R. 9.

*Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke ; among the Tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be.*

**I**N the words before you heard that the Lord by the Prophet did not only threaten war, but summon the Cities of Israel, Judah, and Benjamin, as if war were at the gates. But what if troubles do come, we shall do well enough, they will have an end, and blow over again, we shall wear them out : we have been delivered out of great troubles and so we may be out of these. No, 'tis otherwise now, *Ephraim* shall now be desolate, *Ephraim* (that is the ten Tribes) shall be desolate; *Leshamne*, the word signifies a most stupendious thing, the the hand of God shall be upon them even to amazement, they shall come into desolation, in the time of his rebuke, in the day of his trouble: The words are plain ; the Notes from them are these.

לשמה

Obs. 1.

*That the day of Gods peoples affliction, is the day of their rebuke.* See this proved in *Numb. 12. 14.* *Moses* saith : *If her father had spit in her face should she not be ashamed :* When God afflicts His people, he doth as it were spit in their faces : and ought not they



they much more to be aſhamed? what ever that wanton generation think or ſay, that God never chaſtiſeth his people for ſin, there is nothing more frequent in Scripture, than this, that God chaſtiſeth His for ſin. But they tell us it was in the old Teſtament; and herein they ſhew their weakneſs and a Old Te-  
mer caval, but that which ſeems to have ſome ſhow of ſtrength ſtament  
is this.

They tell us, *That it derogates from the ſatisfaction of* Obj. 1  
*Chriſt.*

But the force of this is nothing, for Chriſt ſatisfied for Anſw.  
them under the Law, as well as for us; they were ſaved by the ſame ſatisfaction that we are, therefore if it now derogates from Chriſts ſatisfaction under the Goſpel, it did then alſo under the Law.

A ſecond Note is, *God hath his ſet times of rebuke.* As they have Obj. 2.  
their daies of ſinning, ſo God wil have his daies of correcting; you have your daies of proſperity now, riches honor, & plenty in abundance, but remember it may be the day of rebuke is coming: 'Tis good to put this very caſe to our ſelves. I have mercy now both for ſoul and body, and Oh how comfortable is it, and how happy is my condition! but is there not a day of rebuke coming, when all theſe will be taken from thee, and then what wilt thou do Oh my ſoul? *Iſa. 10. 3. and what will you do in the day of viſitation?*

*When wicked men ſtand out leſſer judgments, and corrections, they* Obj. 3.  
*have cauſe to fear a day of utter deſolation.* Ephraim had daies of leſſer chaſtiſements, but ſlighting them, God would try him no more; there are times in which God wil utterly purſue ſinners to deſtroy them not for inſtruction, but deſtruction: the Lord hath his houſes of inſtruction, correction, and execution, when the firſt cannot effect Gods end, the third ſhall, and yet the Lord be juſt and righteous, for the Lord hath no need of us, what is it to him if we ſhould periſh everlaſtingly, He could have his glory from us in our damnation.

*That is a dreadful time, when the Lord comes ſo to rebuke a people* Obj. 4.  
*as to deſtroy them; when the hand of God ſhall be ſo upon them, as he is reſolved never to take it off again, even as it was upon*  
*Ephraim*

*Ephraim* at this time, I intend not to mend him, but to ruine him : this now is a most dreadful time ; For

Reaf. 1 1. All that wrath which they have treasured up breaks in then upon them : Now as wicked men treasure up wrath, so doth God *Rom. 2. 5.* Now God lets out the foudgates of His wrath against such a people.

Reaf. 2 2. Because then, all a mans sins comes together into Gods remembrance. *In that day I'll visit for this saith the Lord God.* It may be you are for the present spared, but the time is coming that God will visit, and then look to it.

Reaf. 3. 3. In this day the cries of justice prevails against such men, (I speak of wicked men mingled and intermixed with the godly) In this day God will not call back His anger ; there are times in which God doth not stir up all His wrath, as in *Psal. 78. 38.* Many times Gods anger is coming against a Nation, family, or person, but God calls it back again : but in this day of rebuke God wil not call it back again, but let it forth to the uttermost.

Reaf. 4. 4. Because in this day Mercy leaves such a people, and wil never own them to to them any good. *Ezek. 7. 5.* *An evil, an only evil, behold, it is come.* But that place is most remarkable for this, *Ezek. 22. 20.* *I will bring you into the fornaee, and there I will leave you.* God brings His people into great troubles sometimes, but never leaves them there. But there are some whom Mercy leaves and forsakes in their troubles, and this is a most sad condition, for by this God shews that He will have no more honor by them in their servings of Him, but in their sufferings. God saith thus, Seeing they would not give Me My glory in a way of duty, I will extract and force it from them in a way of suffering.

Reaf. 5. 5. Because the Lord then intends hurt to such a people, the Lord perhaps brings you out of an affliction, but in that deliverance He intends your hurt and no good at all, *Jer. 24. 9.* I intend nothing but hurt to such a people in all My dealings.

Reaf. 6 Because then al Creatuees leaves such an one and dares not own him ; God being against thee, the Creatures cannot help in the least degree. Lastly,

Laſtly, Becauſe then all ſervices are rejected, and God will be no more intreated for them, now conſcience ſmites and torments the ſpirits, and al the miſeries that come upon them are but the beginning of eternal ſorrows, and this is a moſt ſad caſe; therefore let us pray with *David*, *Pſal. 6.1.* Lord rebuke us not in thy wrath: And as the Prophet in *Jer. 17. 17.* Be not a terror unto me O Lord. But now, becauſe tender conſciences are ready to think when God rebukes them, or lays any affliction upon them, that it is to ruin and deſtroy them; as the Iſraelites ſaid, in *Deut. 1. 27.* Becauſe the Lord hated us, therefore he brought us out of Egypt. In every ſtrait they were in, they conceited God hated them in it, though God had done them good ſo many times. And hath not this been the reaſonings of our unbelieving hearts, and the murmuring of our ſpirits in our afflictions? Oh take heed of ſuch unbelieving reaſonings, they are very much diſpleaſing unto God: There is a great difference between the rebukes of God upon the godly, and the wicked, though perhaps rebuked both in one and the ſame affliction: as the Apothecary breaks Bezar ſtones to powder, but is very careful of it, and will not loſe the leaſt grain of it. So the Lords people even in the fornace are as dear to him & have the moſt experience of Gods love to them then that ever they had. *Jacob* when he lay upon the ground, and had the ſtone for his pillow, even then he had that heavenly viſion from God.

Uſe.

ſimile

But now the queſtion is, *How ſhall we know whether theſe rebukes that are upon us are intended for our good or our hurt, our deſolation, or our reſtoration?* Queſt.

It may be known thus: If Gods diſpleaſures be ſuch, that we find Him more ſet againſt our ſins than our perſons, 'tis an argument He intends our good not our hurt in His rebukes upon us. Anſw.

But you will ſay, *This is as difficult as the other, How ſhall we know God aims at our ſins, and not ur perſons?* Thus:

If His rebukes work us to a humiliation for our ſins, a reſignation of our ſelves up unto Gods diſpoſe, and to accept of the puniſhment of our iniquities; this is an argument God aims

aims at our sins, and not at our persons in His rebukes, and so in them our good and not our hurt: But 'tis usual for wicked men in their rebukes to cry out of their sins, 'twas their sins that brought this upon them. But here the difference is thus discerned.

First, They cry out of their sins but *per accidens*, but of the judgement *per se*, as we use to say, the judgement troubles them more than their sins the cause of the judgment: but the godly cry out of their sins *per se*, and of the judgment *per accidens*, their sin troubles them.

Secondly, A child of God more desires the sanctification of an affliction than the removing of it; but the wicked care not for removing the cause of judgment [even sin] so the smart the correction may be taken off. It follows.

Expof. 1. *Among the Tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be.*

Some conceive that these words are spoken as the aggravation of this peoples misery; and if so, the Notes from them are,

Obs. 1. *That God smites not a people with judgment before he warns them off judgment.* Among the Tribes of Israel have I made known this.

Obs. 2. *When God threatens He is real in His threatenings.* That which shall surely be.

*Ephraim* think that God intends not him. Sinners think that when God warns them he is not in good earnest, it shall not be, but God saith *it shall be*, God esteems more of His Word than Heaven and Earth besides, nay Heaven and Earth shall pass away before the least jot or tittle of it shall fail; and cursed be that peace that hath no other ground or foundation than this hope, that those things are not true which the Ministers of the Word from the Word threaten against sinners. And yet this is the condition of many people, which doth mightily provoke God, as you may see in *Deut. 29. 19, 20, 21.* *If notwithstanding what is written in this book be bless himself*

ſelf, ſaying, He ſhall have peace; the anger of the Lord ſhall ſmoke againſt ſuch a man. Oh the bitter aggravating circumſtances in this Scripture againſt ſuch a ſinner as this. Now if God will be ſo punctual in His threatening word, that it ſhall be made good, how much more His promiſing word, for God hath not done ſo much to make His threatening word good, as His promiſing word. For,

Uſe

1. God hath not call'd ſuch witneſſes to His threatening word as to His promiſing word, there are Three in Heaven and Three on Earth who are Witneſſes but not to the threatening word, ſometimes in the general he calls the Heavens to witneſſes to His threatening. *Hear oh heavens, and hearken oh earth, I have nourished up a people and they rebel againſt me.*

2. To the verifying of a promiſe there is not only Gods faithfulneſs, but 'tis His faithfulneſs in Chriſt, all the promiſes are in Him, yea and Amen; there is in Gods promiſing word, not only His faithfulneſs, but His faithfulneſs in Chriſt, all the promiſes are made in Chriſt, ſo are not the threatenings, Judgments have not ſuch immediate relation to Chriſt.

3. More ſure, becauſe promiſes are not only Gods Covenant with His people, but His Teſtament, and ſo more ſure than a Covenant, for a Covenant may be broken on the one party, but a Teſtament cannot, it being confirmed by the death of the Teſtator; the promiſe on our part may be broken, but when we look upon them as confirmed by the death of the great Teſtator Jeſus Chriſt, we have ſtronge conſolation: as 'tis a great evil not to believe the threats of God, ſo 'tis alſo a great evil not to credit the promiſes of God. Chriſtians, you wonder when wicked men believe not Gods threatenings and His judgments to tremble at them, Know Oh Chriſtian, that not only men but Angels ſtand and wonder when thou doſt not believe the promiſes of God when they be ſo confirmed that we might believe them and walk comfortably.

The revealing of ſin before a judgment comes, aggravates Obſ. 3.

both the sin and the judgment, the punishment will be so much the heavier, it aggravates the sin, because then there is the greater contempt against God: If a father should desire his child not to do such a thing, may not only desire him but forbid him, yea threaten him with punishment if he doth it; now if he shall after all this gainsay his fathers will, he puts a greater contempt upon his father, for now he breaks through hedges and fences, which should have kept him in: so when God shall forbid, yea threaten if we will break out it puts a great contempt upon God.

1. The goodness of God is not honored by us, when the Lord for our good shall give us notice of our sins that so we may prevent judgment the desert of our sins, and we notwithstanding shall sin, it dishonors Gods goodness.

2. The truth of God is not honored, when we do not obey, this is no other than a venturing whether the word be true or no; whether Gods words are yea and nay, Oh sinner dost thou know what thou dost, thou temptest God, saying, "Lord there are such and such threatnings against sin but I do not beleve them, Lord Ple venture it, Ple put it to the try-  
"all whether it be so or no.

3. As it aggravates the sin, so the punishment; the judgment cannot but be the greater, thou canst expect but little pittie from the goodness of God which thou hast slighted, when it warned thee of those judgments which are now upon thee, His mercy to remove them cannot be expected. God by His Ministers warned me in such a Sermon, but I went on and would not reform, and now there is matter for the worm of conscience to gnaw upon: that thou maist say as *Job*, *What I feared is now come upon me*, and this is that which aggravates our misery. At this time have not the Ministers of God for these twenty yeers, especially in these latter seven yeers made this the subject of their preaching, to warn us of judgments, and now the judgments of God are come upon us, God hath vindicated the word of His servants.

But these words though they may be thus understood, yet I conceive they bear a further signification which is, this: *I have*

have declared among the Tribes what ſhall be without revolk, without any change or alteration; I have formerly repented, and have been intreated, but now Ple repent no more. They continue Gods unchangable purpoſe for the deſolating of this people, and being thus underſtood, the Note from them will be this.

That there is a time when there ſhall be no help to be delivered from judgment, though they ſhould call, cry, mourn, weep, faſt, and intreat, yet the judgment ſhould not be removed. Expoſ. 2

As 'tis ſaid of *Eſau*, He found no place for repentance. *Heb. 12.* Heb. 12.  
 17. There is a great miſtake by many in the interpretation of that place, from which text many gather that there may be many tears ſhed, much ſorrow found, and yet no true repentance, but the meaning of the words is this, he found no place for his father *Iſaacs* repentance, though he cried and ſhed tears for the bleſſing, yet his father repented not that he had beſtowed it upon *Jacob*: ſo that people may cry and humble their ſouls before God, yet ſhall find in God no place of repentance, nay if that the Saints of God ſhould all joyn together and pray for ſuch a people they ſhould not prevail; *Ezek. 14. 20.* Though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* ſhould pray for them, they ſhould not prevail. 17.  
 Oh ſinner take heed this be not thy condition, thou haſt godly parents and kindred it may be, and they ſet themſelves to ſeek God for thee, but God will deny them, their prayers ſhall not prevail for thee; this may be the caſe of Nations and Kingdoms, that there may be true repentance found and turning to God, and yet no deliverance from outward affliction. I deny not but that true repentance ſhall deliver a ſoul from eternal wrath, from perishing in hell; but this I affirm that there may be true repentance found and turning unto God and yet no deliverance from a temporal affliction. And this I ſhall make good by two famous texts of Scripture. The firſt is in *Deut. 3. 26.* *Moses* had ſinned, and God ſaith he ſhould not go into the land of *Canaan*, which was a ſore affliction to *Moses*, upon this *Moses* he praid, and 'tis certain *Moses* had repented him of that ſin, yet ſee what he ſaith, *The Lord was wrath with me, for your ſake, and would not bear me, but let it*

*suffice thee, speak no more of this matter.* All his prayers and repentance could not deliver him from that outward affliction, and bring him into Canaan. The second text is in 2 Kings, 23. 25. in the former chapter we find the heart of the King melting when he heard the law read, and perceived the anger of the Lord against his people was provoked, yet the Lord tels him that he should die in peace. And in the 23. Chapter, the King he sets upon reforming the people, enters into a solemn Covenant with God, causeth the people to joyn with him, pulls down the groves, destroys Idolatry, and although it be said in the 25. verse, that like unto him was there no King before him, yet in the 26. verse God saith, *Notwithstanding all this, he will remove Judah out of his sight.* So that sometimes God is so set upon his threats, that they shall come to pass, God will make them good whatever comes of it; this I conceive to be the meaning of these words. And so Mr. Calvin reads them, God may be so resolved against a mans eternal estate that he will never shew such a man or such a people mercy more; as we may see in those which were bid to the Gospel-snapper: therefore we had need to gather our selves together before the decree bring forth, *Zeph. 2. 1, 2.* Oh let us in this Kingdom take heed; yet through Gods mercy we are not left desolate, but have many points of mercy, even in this day of our rebuke, but what God will do one cannot determine, therefore it concerns us to prepare to meet our God, lest the wrath of God meet us, overcome and destroy us till there be no remedy, though through mercy for the present we may say there is remedy, yea rather let us tremble and be awakened, because God sometimes comes against, and is more quick with a people that are not so openly, and notoriously vile as others are, than he doth with the most profane: So much for this ninth verse.



## V E R. 10.

*The Princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound ; therefore I will powre out my wrath upon them like water.*

**B**UT why is God ſo wrath with Iſrael? Have not the Princes of Judah provoked Him alſo? Conexiō.

Yea, for God here ſpeaks to them principally. It ſeems the people were not ſo bad, ſo ſinful as they, for in the next words he ſaith, That *Ephraim is oppreſſed, and broken in judgment ; becauſe he willingly walked after the commandement.*

Fiſt, Princes muſt answer to God for all their doings : Though they are above all men in power, and ſo are not ſo lyable to give an account to man as others are, yet to God they muſt, thoſe actions which are leaſt obnoxious to men, are much to God.

*The Princes of Judah are like to them that remove the bounds.* Obſer. 1.

*Are like.*] That is, not ſo much in a ſimilitude, as reality : as 'tis uſual in Scripture to put the word, *like*, for the thing it ſelf, As thus, *His glory was as the Son of God.* The Princes of Judah were thoſe that removed the bound ; by the light of Nature, and the Law of God it was a wicked thing to remove bounds ; you may ſee it forbidden by the Law of God, *Deut. 27. 17.*

It was a cuſtom among the Heathens, and the *Romans*, That if any man removed the bound, the antient Land-mark, if they were poor, they were adjudged to ſlavery, to dig in deep pits ; if rich men, to be baniſhed and loſe a third part of their eſtates. Obſer. 2.

The Princes of Judah broke down the bounds in a Four-fold way.

1. *They took away mens eſtates th it were none of their own.* God appoints men their bounds and eſtates, therefore 'tis not in the power of Princes to take them away at their pleaſure. It was not in the power of *Ahab* to take away *Naboths* Vinyard, nay, nor to force him to ſell it, though a King, he thought it too much to take it by violence ; and *Jezebel*, though a cruel woman

woman; yet would not take his Vineyard without some colour of Law. Therefore Princes have no right to the Subjects estates, and liberty for to take them away at their pleasures; though such principles of late have been infused into them by some, for which we at this day suffer so heavily. In *Isa. 1. 23.* Their Princes are said, *to be rebellious and companions of thieves.* Now if all were their own they could not break bounds: We would think that they of all men should not break bounds, for what is it they may not have if they would? I have read a story in *Plutarch*, concerning *Cyneas* and *Pyrrhus* who was mightily set upon war with *Italy*, *Cyneas* speaks thus unto him; What shall we get if we overcome the *Romans*? Saith *Pyrrhus*, We shall subdue our great enemy, and be made possessors of a brave Country. *Cyneas* asked him what he would do then? Saith *Pyrrhus*, Then we will subdue *Affrica*, *Carthage*, and *Sicila*: And what then? Then saith *Pyrrhus* we will feast, drink and be merry. *Cyneas* answered, Why may you not do so now without shedding so much blood, putting your self to so much trouble and endangering your person. If Princes would keep within their bounds what hinders but that they may enjoy themselves and their comforts with peace and quiet without the shedding of so much blood.

2. *They break all bounds*: That is, They break all Laws and Liberties; they will not be bound by Laws, saying thus, *Laws were made for subjects, and not for Princes.* And thus these Princes broke the bounds. Hence we may see what corruption there is in the hearts of men naturally, and this is furthered by evil Counsellors. I have read of *Cambyfes* who had a desire to marry his Sister, but questioning whether he might do it or no, he calls his Judges together to give him their advice, they told him, there was a Law against it; but say they, Ye Princes of *Persia* may do what you will: They were so far from diswading him from that wicked act, that they gave him encouragement to it. *And hath not our time afforded such Counsellors to our Princes?*

2. *They break the bonds of Religion.* Therefore Interpreters conceive that our Prophet *Hosea* prophesied in *Abaz* his time, when he provoked God so by Idolatry, setting up the abomination of desolation. And this is the great breach of bonds, when people must provoke God. God hath set bounds to His Word, for His Worship and Service: Now take heed that you go not beyond those bounds for any pretence of decency or comlineſſe, ſutable to the ſtate in which we live, and ſuch like. God hath given great liberty in Civil things for men to uſe, but none in his Worſhip and waies. Oh what evil have Popiſh Princes done in this thing, in removing theſe bounds! and this is the main reaſon which makes Papiſts ſo to labour for the upholding and ſetting up an arbitrary government, having thereby full liberty to break all bounds in Religion.

Laſtly, *They brake the bonds of their own Covenants, and regarded them not:* Theſe were the corruptions of theſe Princes, they brake all ſorts of bonds, Civil, Spiritual Covenanting bonds, nothing will keep them in.

But hath God left no means to keep theſe in bounds, Prin- Queſt.  
ces as well as Subjects?

To this I anſwer: Yea certainly. Thoſe who at firſt gave Anſw.  
power for families and perſons to keep theſe, never tollerated the great ones to break them. The Law of Nature never gives power to deſtroy it ſelf, eſpecially in a Kingdom where there are deſenſive & offenſive means to be uſed againſt any means that the greateſt in power may raiſe againſt the Laws and Liberties of men; for there is no man who is a ſubject to the Prince, but is alſo to the State, and the State may deal with his inſtruments that he imployes either deſenſively, or offenſively. *Trajan* after he was made Emperor put a ſword into his Officers hand to defend him while he defended the Laws; but if he did fail in his duty, gave the Officer leave to deal with him as a delinquent. It will be worth our pains and coſt if after all our troubles we can but get the Kingdom ſetled in its true rights and liberties, though our workmen who are making up our breaches through ſome negligence or miſ-  
carriage:

carriage suffer the wild beasts to break in, yet let not us murmur, and repine, but be content, and bless God that we have means for to help our selves; few years since we thought our breaches to be so wide, that none could help, or deliver us; now then that God hath raised up for us helpers contrary to our expectation, bless God for them, and be content, let us stir up our selves and joyn with them for their assistance. If the Sea should break in upon a Country, would you sit stil or let any rest quiet by you that would not stir to make up the breach? A Farmer is contented to suffer Cattel, and see them to run up and down in his ground while his workmen are making up his hedges, and fences for to keep them out: So our workmen are making up the hedges, let us be contented to suffer a while patiently. The truth is those most complain of confusions and disturbances who have been most instrumental to make our breaches and distractions: and thus the Princes of Judah were, like them that break the bound, and for thus doing the Lord threatens in the following words, *to pour out his wrath upon them like water.* They have past their bounds in sinning, and my wrath shall pass its bounds upon them; they kept no bounds in sinning, and my wrath shall keep no bounds in punishing. The Hebrews use to express anger by a word that signifies, *going beyond bounds*, noting thus much, that ordinarily in our anger we are apt to go beyond bounds and besides the rule. The fence then is, *I will pour my wrath upon them in great abundance, like waters.* The judgments of God in Scripture, are often set out unto us by this similitude of water, as in *Isa. 28. 17. Nahum 1. 8.* look as their anger ran like water, so my wrath shall run upon them until they are consumed.

That Gods wrath is very hot against wicked Governours, such as break the bounds of Religion, Laws, and Covenants: the Lord is much displeas'd against great ones when wicked, *Numb. 25. 4.* the people of Israel committed a great evil in provoking God by their Idolatry, joyning themselves to Baal-Peor, and the Lord said, *Take the heads of Israel.* The people offended and it was by the encouragement of the Governours,

vernors, therefore their heads muſt off, the people ſin and the Governours muſt ſuffer becauſe they reprov'd them not nor reſtrained them, but countenanced them.

Hence we may note, *That we had need to pray much for Princes.* Fearful are the examples which hiftorians report of, concerning the judgments of God upon wicked Princes.

*Leander* in the diſcription of *Italy* reports of a cruel Tyrant, who perſwaded himſelf that he muſt give an account to no man, none could call him to an account for what he did; at laſt God gave him into the hands of the people, who ſtrip'd him naked, bound him upon a planck, and drew him through the ſtreets in the ſight of all the people, then made a great fire by him, and heated tongs red hot in the fire; when they had done thus, then proclamation was made in the Market place, that ſeeing he had wronged ſo many, that he was never able to make ſatisfaction for the wrong he had done, therefore all that had ſuffered by him ſhould come and have a pull at his fleſh with the red hot tongs.

Another fearful example we have of latter times, concerning *Charls*, the 9<sup>th</sup>, about the maſſacre in *France*, who at that time pretended great love and kindneſs to the Proteſtant party, invited them to a great marriage feaſt, and at that time by his Commiſſion, calls in thoſe bloody miſcreants, who cruelly murdered the Proteſtant party; there he broke bounds: but ſee how God met with him, in a moſt grievous diſeaſe, through the violence of which there ſpurred out blood from him in ſeveral parts of his body, ſo that he wallowed in his blood before he died. God powred out His wrath upon them in blood who in their life time thirſted after blood.

Secondly, *The bounds of Religion and Laws, as they keep in obedience, ſo they keep out judgments.* Pure Religion and good Laws as they are bounds to keep us in duty, ſo they keep judgments and wrath from us. And we ought to look upon Laws in both theſe notions, not only to keep us in order and duty, but alſo to keep out wrath; if we break our bounds, we muſt look that wrath ſhould break in upon us; therefore we had need to do as men that live neer the Sea, when the Sea breaks

in upon them, they presently leave all their other businesses, and go about that. Our bounds are broken, and who is the occasion of it the Lord knows, and wrath is broken in upon us at our breaches, therefore let us now as one man set about the making up of our breaches.

Obs. 3.

Thirdly, *God punisheth according to mens sins.* They break the bounds, God breaks in with wrath upon them; are they resolute in sinning? God will be as resolute in his judgments upon them; see that text *Jer. 44. 25. You have sworn and vowed to your superstitions, and I have sworn to bring judgment upon you, and it shall come to pass.* Therefore when judgments are upon us, if we would have them removed, we should diligently observe what sins we are guilty of, which answereth to the judgment which is upon us; for many times we may trace the cause of a judgment by the sin that we are guilty of, and if we ever look to have troubles removed, we must first remove sin the cause of them.

Use.

upon us, if we would have them removed, we should diligently observe what sins we are guilty of, which answereth to the judgment which is upon us; for many times we may trace the cause of a judgment by the sin that we are guilty of, and if we ever look to have troubles removed, we must first remove sin the cause of them.

## VER. 11.

*Ephraim is oppressed, and broken in judgment; because he willingly walked after the commandments.*

**WRATH** in the former verse was threatned against the Princes of Judah, who removed the bound: And here the Lord returns again to *Ephraim*, in this 11. verse; and the 12. verse to *Judah* and *Ephraim* both together, they being both a provocation to God, are plagued both together.

πισ

The word *Oppressed*, in the original is, *Nasbuk*, translated by *Hierom*, *Calumnia*; *Ephraim* suffered and was oppressed by false accusations and slanderings, (for there is an opposition in mens names and estates) which the *Seventy* usually translate by *Sycophantia*; and then we may render it thus, *Ephraim by Sycophants doth suffer a great deal of wrong.* When there are false reports raised against men, they suffer wrong by it: false reports are as a false Medium, which represents things in another manner than they are: As put a staff into the water, and it shews to be crooked, but take it out and 'tis not so.

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συκοφαντι-  
α.

simile

So the actions of men in the reports of others may seem crooked

ked

ked, when in themſelves are ſtrait and good. And thus was *Ephraim*, broken in judgment; though his cauſe was good, yet 'twas made bad, if he were wronged he could have no relief for himſelf. So that good cauſes by bad men are many times perverted: but the Saints may ſupport themſelves with *Pauls* comfort, who paſſed not much for mans judgment. In this ſignification the Seventy Translators do often take the word; but in this place they expreſs it by another word, thus, \**Ephraim bath-over-powered his adverſaries, and ſo bath tread down judgment*: they interpret it aſſively. But the words are well rendred in your books in the paſſive participle, and ſo they are to be read, *Ephraim is broken in judgment.*

\* κατεβη  
 ραδων  
 εφραιμ τω  
 αντιδικου  
 αντω κα  
 τεπαττε  
 τον κριμα  
 English  
 tranſlatio.

*Concuſſus judicio concuſſio* is a Law word, ſignifying ſuch a kind of breaking and oppreſſion as threatneth the utter ruine and undoing of a man by Law; As many rich men threaten poor men when they do them any wrong, I'll be even with you, I'll ow you a good turn: Or as Magiſtrates that are corrupt and wicked, when they cannot bring poor men to ſay or do what they would have them, they will threaten to undo them, or if ever it lie in their power they will ow them a good turn; of which carriage *Samuel* cleers himſelf 1 *Sam.* 12. 3. *Whom have I defrauded? or whom have I\* oppreſſed?* (the word is the ſame here) That is, uſed my power to threaten men to yeeld up their liberties, their rights, their enjoyments by any power which was in my hands. This was the ſin of the great Princes here of the ten Tribes.

Crimea co:  
 cuſſionis.  
 וקפצו

[*Broken in judgment*] That is, Not in Gods judgment upon them, but in the judgment of their own cauſe, they were cruſhed in their eſtates, liberties and laws, and that not only by their own Magiſtrates and Governors, but alſo by the *Aſſyrian*; by their own Magiſtrates they were broken and oppreſſed, good men were diſcountenanced, juſt cauſes betrayed, the whole Court was corrupted, and the Laws of the Land which ſhould have held up the bounds, were broken; they were ſo broken as a thing which is broken, but not quite ſpoiled with the fall, ſome ſhreds of it may be made uſe of; ſo the generality of them were ſo broken that there was little right

Expof,

to be had for any wrong that was done; and as they were thus oppressed in the Prophet *Hosea* his time, so also in the Prophet *Amos* his time, who prophesied at the same time that our Prophet did, *Amos* 2. 7. *They pain after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor*: What's that? Thus, they did not only seek to bring poor men under them, but even utterly to destroy them, they sought to ruin them, and that by perverting of judgment. So in *Amos*, 5. 11. their oppression grew to such a height that they took the poors wheat from them, that if the poor had but gleaned a little wheat in the fields, as they brought it home they robbed them of it, or if they carried it to the mill they took it from them; this was the oppression which was at this time among the ten Tribes, from their own Governors. But they were also oppressed by the *Assyrian*, they calumniated and reproached them, saying, *Where is now your God, in whom you so much trusted?* Thus much for the opening those words.

Expof. The reason follows, *Because he willingly followed after the Commandement.*

Quest. But some may say, What is this such a thing? is there so much in this to provoke God?

The Cō- Yea, this was a great sin; for the opening whereof, take mand. notice of these three things.

1. First, Whose Commandement was it they followed? it was the Commandement of *Jeroboam* and his Princes, men which had authority and power in their hands, and this provoked God so highly against them, because they followed the commandements of men who had authority over them: this is very strange that this charge should be against *Ephraim* for this, no question but they pleaded thus, What, am I wiser than my Governors? must not I do as they bid me?

2. Secondly, What commandement was it that they followed? it was to worship the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, he worshipped God but it was in a false way, and this was the cause which provoked God so against him.

3. Thirdly, He willingly followed the commandement, as soon as ever he was commanded he yielded without any delib-  
eration

*Hosea* and  
*Amos*  
contem-  
poraries.

Expof.

Quest.

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beration, or consultation with himself; whereas he should have stood it out and have bid the worst, rather suffered the loss of all, than yeilded to their commands: as the three children, rather suffer the fiery furnace, than fall down to the Image, and thus they should have done; as there were some which did, though the generality of them followed after the commandement, yet there were some found among *Ephraim* who would go to *Jerusalem* to worship, the place of Gods appointment: in *1 Chron. II. 16.* those which set their hearts to seek God they would go up to *Jerusalem* and not follow *Jeroboam* to *Dan* and *Bethel*; though the most went with *Jeroboam*, yet there was a handful that knew God would be worshiped in his own way and in his own place; the generality of the people liked well enough of the Commandement, because it was will-worship which pleaseth mans nature best, and then it was most for their ease, and this was *Jeroboams* plea, I love my peoples ease, I would not be so harsh to them, therefore come, we will worship the true God still, 'tis but the circumstance of place and that's no such great matter: *Vulg.* Now they willingly followed after the commandement, and thereby encouraged *Jeroboam* in his wicked design, they willingly walked after the Command? the old Latin expresseth it thus, they willingly followed after *dregs*; and the Hebrew word is very nigh the same, they walked after filthy dregs, and if this were the meaning of it, it notes two things.

First, That *Jeroboam* was willing to have the people enjoy their lusts, so he might but enjoy his ends; he was willing to give the people their full swing and liberty in their lusts, and upon this the baser sort of the people clave to him; *Jeroboam* reasons thus, well I must rend the Kingdom from *David*, but how shall I accomplish it? I must have the people to assist me in it, but how shall I gain them? I will let them have their pleasures in sin, they shall have their lusts without contradiction, and then the most will follow me, I shall be sure of the rude multitude the profane in the Kingdom.

Secondly, *Post sordes*, that is, after their Idols: the Calves which

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which he had set up, and the filth which is in them, for the Scripture sets out the filthiness of Idolatry, by the basest things in the world, to dogs vomit, the excrements of men.

Thus much of the words in that sense: But they are more full as read in your books and more agreeable to the Original, the Notes from them are many.

Obfer, r. First, *That 'tis a great judgment for a people to be under oppression:* 'Tis a very sad affliction for a nation, family, or person to be under oppression, and broken in judgment, when good men, and good causes are crusht and slighted, and wicked men and bad causes prevail and prosper, when a mans innocency shall be no help to him. *Solomon saith this to be a great evil, in Eccles. 3. 16. wickedness was got into the place of judgment: God hath promised to deliver his people from this judgment, In righteousness shalt thou be established, thou shalt be far from oppression, Isa. 54. 14.* But these times are not yet come, all the world (for the most part) at this day is under oppression, 'tis sad to have our estates and our liberties to be broken for conscience, Conscience-oppression is the worst oppression; and this was our condition not long since, nay and is the condition of many of our dear brethren in many places of this Kingdom, it was not long since that he which departed from iniquity made himself a prey; was it not come to that pass that the meanest, yea the basest persons in a City or Country had power enough in their hands to undo the best Ministers in a Kingdom? Oh how was the Kingdom oppressed, Parliaments broken, the edg of the Law turned against the godly party, witnesses the banishing of men, Ministers were oppressed in their estates, in their liberties, but especially in their consciences, if they would not be like the filders boy, be ready to dance after every pipe, in so much that when the Lord gave us a little reviving, we were even as men in a dream: when we were under it we were ready to say, O we shal never be delivered, how is it possible that we should be rescued from the oppressors? how was heaven filld with our cries and earth with our moans! thus it was; and worse now it is in many places of the Kingdom with many of our brethren: but let  
them

them and us be comforted in this, it was thus with Israel, when God delivered them out of captivity, but for our adversaries that text may be verified of them, *Iſa. 30. 12. They trust in oppreſſion*; what is their language but this? we will get a great Army and muſter up ſtrong forces, and then we will be maſter of the field, and bring the Rebels under, ſo that they truſt in oppreſſion, and make cruelly their arm of power, take away that and their cauſe falls to the ground: But Gods people are commanded to the contrary in *Pſal. 62. 10. truſt not in oppreſſion* and for thoſe that do oppreſs, they ſhall be like thoſe in *Iſa. 30. 13. Whoſe breaking and miſery ſhall come in an inſtant*, and you that have friends in oppreſſion ſend them theſe Scriptures to comfort them *Pſal. 12. 5, 6. For the oppreſſion of the poor and the ſighing of the needy, I will ariſe ſaith the Lord and ſet him at liberty from him that puffeth at him.*

But you will ſay, 'tis true, God will ariſe, but not yet, *Obj.* theſe are good words, but we may ſuffer extremly in the mean while.

But mark what the Lord ſaith in the 6. and 7. verſes, *The words of the Lord are pure words*; and this word among the reſt, that *God will ariſe, and ſet his people in ſafety from this generation to the end*; and if any of your friends be in danger of oppreſſion ſend them that Scripture in *Iſa. 51. 12, 13. Where is the fury of the oppreſſor?* nay God will ſo work out things in His own time, that we ſhall be able to ſay, where is now the fury of the oppreſſor? Now if God hath made us to know the ſmart of this ſore and heavy burden he looks that we ſhould have very tender carriages and loving diſpoſitions towards our brethren eſpecially towards their conſciences; mark the charge of God concerning this, *Exod. 23. 9. You ſhall not oppreſs a ſtranger*; why ſo? Oh ſaith God, *for ye know the heart of a ſtranger*; perhaps there are ſome who walk cloſe with God have tender conſciences, which cannot yeild to what may be impoſed upon them by authority, Oh take you heed of oppreſſing theſe, God expects that you ſhould uſe them gently and kindly.

A Second Note is this, *That Idolaters are great oppreſſors. Obl. 2.*  
When

When was it that *Ephraim* was oppressed? When he walked after the commandement of *Jeroboam*. Changes in Religion brings people to oppression. Therefore the Scripture sets out Antichrist by *Egypt*, because the people of God were there most grievously oppressed. The Woman in the *Revelations* is said to sit upon the waters, and the Beast a top of her oppressing. That story is famous of a Bishop who would oppress the people; one standing up and told him he could not do it by law: He answered him, that if there were any Law against him he would carry it on his sleeves. Likewise that oppression of the *Wallenses* was very great, who desired that they might but enjoy their liberty to worship God in woods and groves, but it would not be granted them. And was not this our condition some few years since? when the Saints durst not appear for God in publick, but only in private rooms and chambers.

Obf. 3. • Thirdly, *God hath a righteous hand in the delivery of men into the hands of unrighteous oppressors*: For they followed after the commandement saith God. It may be your enemies into whose hands I have delivered you, may deal unjustly and oppress you out of measure; yet am I just in the thing.

We are often times ready to complain of instruments which oppress us; and never look at the hand of God that smites us by them: we should look within our selves, and find the cause there which provokes God, what sins we are guilty of, and make our peace with God: And so likewise in the Kingdom, this is the way to be delivered from our oppressors. I remember a story out of *Cedrenus* concerning *Phocas* that murdered his Master the Emperor *Mamicus* with his wife and children, usurped the Empire, and opened a floudgate to all impiety; there was an honest poor man at that time who was wonderful importunate at the Throne of grace, to know a reason why that wicked man prospered so in his design: he was answered again by a voice, That there could not be a worse man found, and that the sins of Christians, and the City of *Constantinople* did require it. Sins unrepented of, gives strength to an enemies side.

A ſpecial cauſe of oppreſſion is, *Peoples following of falſe worſhip.* We never reade of Iſraels great oppreſſions, but when they followed after the command; and that is very observable, after they once began to follow the commands of *Jeroboam*, the ten Tribes never had any good Kings after; *Judab* indeed ſometimes had good Kings, becauſe they kept ſomething of God amongſt them, the Temple and ſome part of of His worſhip among them. If we ſubmit to wicked men in our conſciences, no wonder if they are quickly uſurpers over our eſtates.

Obſ. 4.

Why the  
10. tribes  
had never  
good  
King.

The giving too much to men God many times puniſheth, by making them the greateſt instruments of our trouble and miſery: If you will make Governors *gods*, 'tis juſt with God to make them *devils* to you. We ſhould labor truly to inform our ſelves in that obedience which we ow to Governors, yeild them that but no more; if people will give that to men which is Gods due, it's juſt with God to make them the greateſt plagues to us.

Obſer. 5.

Men made  
Idols be-  
com Devils

*Here we may ſee the ill nature of wicked men.* *Jeroboam* and his Princes are very fair and ſquare and give good words to the people, and all to gain their own ends, and when they had their own ends, then they broke them in judgment, and oppreſſed them exceedingly, the more they are yeilded to, the more they oppreſs; 'tis a ſign of a baſe ſpirit for men thus to abuſe poor people, *The wicked boaſteth himſelf of his hearts deſire, and bleſſeth the covetous whom the Lord abhors, Pſal. 10. 3.*

Obſer. 6.

*It is an old way of Satan to get falſe worſhip backed with the commands of authority.* Satans cheif deſign is to get his worſhip into the throne and for the effecting of this, he labors to corrupt the pure worſhip of God, and preſſeth his own upon the people, backt with the command of authority; the Devil knows that there is no way ſo prevalent as this to take with the people, that if authority commands it, that overpowers all reaſon brought to the contrary; and this is the aſperſion which is laid upon the godly at this very day, that they rebel againſt authority, this hath been the Devils old plot which in all ages he hath uſed to get advantages againſt the

Obſer. 7.

Applic.

Saints; this was *Hamans* argument, that it was not for the Kings honor to suffer the Jews to live in his provinces. *Samballet* and *Tobish* would not suffer the people of God to build the Temple, why? because they were factious people, disobedient to authority. So *Paul* himself was accused of *sedition*: and the false Prophets tell the King, that *Amos* was such a turbulent fellow that the Land would not bear his words he uttered.

Obs. 8.

That mens authority commanding us to do duty in a wrong manner is not sufficient for our warrant: No evil may be committed upon pretence of the commands of authority. Therefore

Use

the Papists blind obedience is too great a burden and bondage for man, as man to bear; then much more as Christians: 'tis not enough for children or servants to obey their parents or masters in things which are evil, because they command it; the wrath of God may break out upon us for obeying Princes and Governors in things which are evil. If God command

Quis.

Quid. 10

any thing we must look more at the *quis*, than at the *quid*, but in the commands of men we must look at the *quid*, what 'tis that is commanded, more than the *quis*, who commands: the commands of men may be such that the best obedience is to disobey: the Pope writing to *Bernard* requiring a thing of him which was unlawful, *Bernard* writes back again this answer, *I as a child do not obey, and I obey in disobeying*. Gods authority is that which we must look at in all our actions.

The Pope  
to Bernard

Authority at the first was set up for the good of Commonwealths; and not for their hurt, therefore it was no wonder that so many in former times did deny obedience to the unlawful commands of Magistrates when the edge of justice was turned against them; but now since authority is good, joining for God, punishing sin and wickedness, who obeys more than those who formerly were accounted disobedient to authority: therefore 'tis a false reproach which is cast upon the professors of the Gospel, that they are disobedient to Governors and contemn authority: who are they which venture most in this cause, in their estates, liberties, and lives? is it not the people of God? nay is not this used as an argument

Applica.

to godly Souldiers to be content in the want of their pay, becauſe they are the owners of this war? 'tis for Religion and liberty they ſtand for, 'tis conſcience puts them on to ſhew themſelves active for God and venture largely for his ſake, though they verily beleve they ſhall never ſee a return of their coſt: let but Law and authority go on Gods ſide, and then they will obey willingly.

It is true, Authority againſt God muſt not be obeyed; but ſuppoſe the command be in indifferent things? Object.

I anſwer, That abſolute indifferent things are not in the reach of the Magiſtrate, he is to command that which in his conſcience and according to Law he conceives to be for the good of the Common-wealth. Anſw.

But in this caſe who muſt be judg?

'Tis true, the Magiſtrate is to be judg, whether the thing be indifferent or no, and accordingly are we to yeild obedience if it do not apparantly appear to the contrary. Queſt.  
Anſw.

But may not a man judg of his own actions? 'Tis true, he may; but with a twofold peril, that if it be right and ſincere to put it to the venture, and if it prove to be light and falſe then to lie liable to the Magiſtrates cenſure; now if the Magiſtrate ſhould command any thing which you in conſcience think is not right according to the rule, you muſt diſobey them, obſerving but theſe cautions.

1. With much ſuſpicion and ſelf-jealouſie, thinking that they may underſtand better than we. 1

2. Pray and beg earneſtly of God with much humility that he would diſcover the truth to you, and not preſently to diſobey them, but upon ſerious deliberation. 2

3. Account it your affliction and trouble that you cannot agree with them, and make it not matter of joy to you. 3.

4. If in ſome things you cannot obey them, do it as ſecretly as you can, make not a publick buſineſs of it, to prevent ſcandal, boaiſt not of that which ſhould be thy trouble and affliction. 4

5. You muſt be very modeſt in your not yeilding to them, 5.

not proud and self-conceited, thinking your selves before them, or better than they.

6. 6. You must have a high and reverend esteem and respect to them, for their place-sake, although they require that from you, you cannot yeild unto.

7. 7. You must be careful to be so much the more obedient in other things; if in some things you cannot yeild to them, in other things that you can you should be the more obedient, that so your Masters and Governors may see that it is not stoutness, but conscience which you plead; and this will mightily convince Masters and Governors.

8. 8. You must be so much the more conscientious in your walking with God, in all things: if in some things you plead conscience, and be remiss in other things, your Governors may justly say, that 'tis out of humor and fancy, not out of conscience.

9. 9. If after all this, the Magistrate shall in a legal way inflict punishment upon you, you are to submit to it and patiently to bear it, or else avoid the place.

Thus, observing these Cautions, you may with a good conscience disobey Magistrates or Governors, in things which your conscience tels you are not according to truth. And thus much of the Eighth Note.

Obf. 9.  
the more  
Will, the  
greater  
Sin.

*The more willing any men are in sin, the greater is the sin.*

The more of the will there is in any thing, if it be evil, the worse it is; if it be good, the better it is: Many men make this for their excuse, in things done which are evil: It was against their wils: but this doth not excuse, for rather than they would suffer &c. they chose this, now where the will goes along with any thing, if evil, it is very evil indeed.

1. Now the wil may be said to be in sin, when a man doth those things which produce sin, or sin follow upon it, or omits that which would keep him from sin; a drunkard perhaps doth not will to swear, strike, and abuse men, yet being not himself, doing of such things, his wil may be said to be those sins, because he did not shun those things which occasioned them.



2. The will may be ſaid to be in a ſin, when a man ſhall in two difficult things, in which he muſt either *ſin* or *ſuffer*, rather chuſe to ſin than to ſuffer. This people here were commanded by *Jeroboam* to worſhip at *Dan* and *Bethel*; but God commanded them to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*; now for them to diſobey Gods command, and rather chuſe to obey *Jeroboams* command than ſuffer *Jeroboams* puniſhment, was a ſin of willingneſs in them: when a man omits a duty commanded, for ſome hardships in it, he ſins willingly in that omiſſion of his.

*The approbation and furthering Governors in that which is evil, by a willing obedience, doth bring much guilt upon people.*

This people ſhould not preſently have yeilded to the Kings command, but petitioned againſt, yea ſuffered puniſhment rather than yeilded, then they had done ſomething; but no ſooner was the command out but they as willingly yeilded. Governors they command that which perhaps is not good, and they do not know it; but if they ſee their people ſtand out againſt it, they then will begin to bethink themſelves, there is much evil in this obedience; for by this you mightily inrage them againſt thoſe that cannot obey them, by reaſon of the tenderneſs of their conſciences. I have read a ſtory in a French Hiſtory of *Lewis* the 11<sup>th</sup>. who being about to confirm unlawful Edicts, many of the Nobility came to him in their ſcarlet Gowns to petition him not to do it, and if he would proceed, that he would take their lives away, for they told him they had rather die than live to ſee the confirmation of ſuch unlawful Commands; whereupon the King ſeeing their coming in ſuch an unuſual manner, holds his hand, and ſtaies the proſecution of them. Oh! how happy are Princes and People in ſuch Nobility! Had *Ephraim* done thus, they had done well in it, and might have had comfort from it.

Obſ. 10.  
willing  
obedience  
in evil  
brings  
guilt upō  
a people.

*That commands for falſe worſhip do eaſily prevail with people:* Obſ. 11.  
Witness in this Kingdom; when King *Edward* would have reformed the Maſs, what Rebellion was there in *Cornwel*?  
But when Queen *Mary* ſet it up, how did people pleaſe themſelves  
Cōmands  
of Super-  
ſtitio find  
obedience

felves in such abominations. So in our daies, what was it that a Bishop commanded but he was obeyed presently?

Obs. 12. *What a shame is it, that we should not willingly obey the commands of God, when Devils and wicked men have some that will obey them willingly?*

The duty of Christians willingly to obey God. How do you think to follow after God, and put off all thoughts of God till you come to lie upon your death beds? Our hangings off from God doth mightily hinder our comforts.

Object. But you will say, *Were we but assured that they were the commands of God, we would obey them.*

Answer. But if we would examin, we should find that it is oft times our own unwillingness to obey the commands of God, rather than any scruple we make of it. There are many things, in which the Scriptures are dark and not so cleer; yet if things can be proved by reason and consequences from Scripture, we are to obey; otherwise how can we be said to obey with the obedience of faith which we are commanded: Now how can we be said to obey with the obedience of faith if we must have reasons for every thing?

Consequences. Obedi-  
ence of Faith. Quest. *But how shall we know Gods mind in matter of worship?*

Answer. In this case we are to compare things together and weigh them seriously, and so get out the result and mind of God, and follow that, although for the present there want demonstrative reason to make it out cleer. And thus much for the words so understood.

Expos. 2. Now from the other reading of the words after the vulgar Latin [*Post Serdes*] we may observe:

Obs. 1. *That it is the way of bad Princes to give liberty to mens lusts.*

Now surely that way which hath so much of sin in it, cannot be the safe way for men to walk in.

Obs. 2. *That Idolatry is filthy stuff.*

Therefore you that are so pleased with them, and take such delight in superstitious vanities, much good may you do with them; for our parts that truly fear God, we desire the pure Ordinances of Jesus Christ.

## VER 12.

*Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth; and to the house of Judah as rottenneſs.*

**G**OD made a great difference between Judah and Israel; but they joynd in the ſame waies of ſin, and God coupleth them in the ſame way of wrath: *Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the houſe of Judah as rottenneſs.*

Why Ephraim and Judah coupled.

*Therefore*] Why? wherefore? It hath reference unto the words we ſpake of the laſt day [*they willingly followed the commandment*] Because they followed the unlawful commands of Jeroboam and his Princes, *Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth: That for Ephraim.*

And it is like the ſame cauſe might be for the rottenneſs God would be unto Judah. Had they reſiſted the unlawful commands of thoſe that were above them in power: They thought there might have been ſome diſturbance in the State, Oh it is better for us to obey, to be quiet, that we may be at peace; but in the mean time while they, to free themſelves from ſome diſturbance and to enjoy their own quiet, would obey unlawful commands, the ſecret curſe of God was upon their ſtates: *Therefore (ſaith the Lord) will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the houſe of Judah as rottenneſs.* A ſecret curſe there was upon that peace ſo procured.

In the opening of theſe words, and preſenting the mind of God unto you in them, there are theſe Five or Six things to be done.

1. The reading of the words.
2. The ſcope of the words, what it is that God aimeth at in them.
3. The reaſon of the difference of the expreſſion, *A moth to Ephraim, and rottenneſs to Judah.*
4. When this was, what time this referreth to, when was God a moth to Iſrael and rottenneſs unto Judah?
5. How and in what reſpects God may be ſaid to be a moth and rottenneſs to a people.

6. The:

6. The several observations to be drawn from it.

All this is necessary for the opening of this twelfth verse.

1. Reading.

עַוָּו אֲשֶׁר  
תַּרְאִיחַ תִּפְסֵף  
עַל עַמִּי וְעַל  
אֲשֶׁר יִבְרָחוּ  
מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה  
יִשְׂרָאֵל.

כַּעֲמֵץ

וְכַרְסֵב

sicut tineæ,

& sicut

putredo.

Munster,

Leo Iuda.

Drusius.

Luther.

Plini.

For the first then, *The reading of the words.* The *Seventy* read the words a little different from this reading of ours in the English, *ταραχή & κίρτες.* *Conturbatio ac stimulus*, I will be a trouble unto Ephraim and a prick unto Judah. I will trouble, prick, goad them, I will vex them. The blessed God who is a rest unto His people; He is a trouble, a prick, and goad to vex His enemies, to vex the ungodly. The old Latin, and so *Hierom* readeth it thus, *Ego tanquam tinea Ephraim*, I will be as a moth unto Ephraim; he readeth the first as we do in our books: but the second, *Quasi & putredo domui Juda.* Others as *Munster*, *Leo Juda*, *Drusius*, render it, *quasi teredimis.* *Teredo* is a worm that eateth out the heart of the strongest wood. *Minutissimus vermiculus*, saith *Luther* upon the place; And *Plini* saith it is the worm that breeds in Ships at Sea, and eateth out the heart of the strongest Oaken plancks at Sea: but yet often translated rottenness, because the worm causeth that wood to be rotten. *Prov. 12. 4.* *A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband* saith the text, *but she that makes ashamed, is rottenness to his bones*: There is the same word, a woman whose behavior is such in company as makes ashamed, is rottenness to a mans bones, be they never so strong. That for the reading.

2. Scope.

For the scope of these words, what it is that God aimeth at, which is, That judgment should come.

1. *Secretly*, 2. *Gradually*, 3. *Insensibly*. These three things.

That wrath that I intend to let out upon Ephraim and Judah shall,

Secretly.

First, be very *secret*, as the moth doth eat the garment secretly, so my wrath shall be, there shall be no noise of it for a while.

gradually

And it shall be *gradually* too, that's the second, I will go on by degrees; a moth and rottenness doth not consume the garment or the wood all at once, but one degree after another.

And

And then thirdly, *Inſenſibly*; They ſhall not ſo<sup>o</sup> much as inſenſibly perceive it, they ſhall not ſee for a long time how My wrath is out againſt them, and yet it ſhall conſume them. That's the ſcope

But what is the reaſon of the difference of the expreſſion. that's the third? If God intended only to ſhew his ſecret, gradual, inſenſible judgment, then one expreſſion might have been enough; a moth, or rottenneſs, either of them. But the reaſon of the different expreſſion is this, *Israel* was to be deſtroyed ſooner than *Judah*: *Judah* ſhould hold out a time longer than *Israel* ſhould though both of them were to be deſtroyed at length. As ſtrong wood, heart of Oak, it holds out longer though there ſhould be a worm in it, than a garment doth when a moth is in it; ſo *Judah* held out above a hundred yeers after this threat, after this rottenneſs began in them, longer than *Israel* did; for the time that this moth was in *Israel* (of which we ſhall ſpeak preſently) unto *Israel's* captivity, it was but ſome two or three and forty yeers; but it was one hundred and threſcore yeers from the time of Gods being a rottenneſs unto *Judah*.

But Fourthly, When was this time? To what time doth this refer? when was God a moth unto *Ephraim* and rottenneſs to *Judah*? For that, and to ſhew the ſtory of it, it would require ſome time, I only refer you to the Scriptures that have the ſtories of both theſe, when the moth began, and when the rottenneſs began. In the 1 *King*. chap. 15. from verſe 8. and ſoon, to the end of the 17. chapter of the ſecond book of the *Kings*, there you may find, the time when God was a moth unto *Ephraim*: And for *Judah*, in 2. *King*. chapter 16. there you may find how God was rottenneſs unto *Judah*, and it was from *Abaz* his time to the time of their being carried away captive into *Babylon*, which was about an hundred and ſixty yeers. And *Joſephus* in his book (beſides the books of the Scripture) in *Lib. 9.* chap. 12. and *Lib. 15.* towards the latter end, and *Lib. 10.* chap. 10. He likewiſe ſetteth forth the condition both of *Ephraim* and of *Judah*, when the Lord was a moth unto the one and rottenneſs to the other.

5. What  
it is for  
God to be  
a moth &  
rottenness

But that which will be more useful unto us, will be, to enquire the meaning, *What it is for God to be a moth and rottenness to a people*: For indeed there is the same thing signified in both these expressions, only (as I told you) the first signifies a quicker dispatch of Israel, and the second, a more slow dispatch of Judah, but in the effect the same is signified. Now God is a moth and rottenness unto a people many waies.

As,

1. in the  
spirits of  
men.

1. weak-  
ness.

First, *He is a moth in the very spirits of people*. There is a secret way of Gods wrath upon a people in their spirits which is not perceived in the world. As thus: When the spirits of men in a Nation grow *weak* and *cowardly*. The weakness and cowardlines of mens spirits shews a judgment of God upon them that is a as moth to them: And so it was in Israel, as you may find it in that 2 *King. 15* and so on, There their Governors did what they list, one kild another, and another kild him, and the people laid down quietly and dared not to appear in the least way to find fault with any thing done.

2. sloath.

And then a base *sloth* of spirit that seizeth upon the hearts of people, a dnlness, a sordidness of spirit; minding low things, not regarding any worthy and honorable achievement; when men are thus then God is as a moth and rottenness to them.

3. jealousies  
and  
divisions.

When there is raising of *jealousies* one against another in their spirits, envying one another, and divisions in the spirits one of another, then God is as a moth and rottenness; as we know a moth in a garment doth make the thread that it doth not hang firm together, and rottenness makes the wood that one part doth not unite together so firmly as it did; but yet in a secret way; so though open wars indeed devour in a publick way, but secret jealousies in the hearts of people, that one dare not trust another, and secret divisions that there are in their hearts, this is like to a moth and rottenness. As a

moth

4. self-  
ends.

5. falsness  
in pub-  
lick trust.

moth in a garment and rottenness in wood, so secret jealousies and secret divisions in the spirits of men in a Kingdom consume and destroy them. And then base compliance for their *own ends*. And lastly, *falsness* of spirit in the trust committed to them. When you see this prevail in the spirits of men, especially

eſpecially of thoſe that are put in publick truſt, then is God a moth and rottenneſs unto that people. And that is the firſt, A moth and rottenneſs in the ſpirits of men.

Secondly, *A moth and rottenneſs in mens counſels.* As firſt, **2. in counſels.** In *blindneſs*, that they ſhall not be able to ſee the plots of their enemies, they ſhall not know their own advantages, nor how to improve what they have: They ſhall not hit upon the right means to cure themſelves. There ſhall be a perplexity in their counſels, a contradiction in their counſels, one counſelling one way and another counſel another way. They ſhall enſnare themſelves in their counſels: There ſhall be much folly in their counſels. And they ſhall be *blaſted* in their counſels: Now God is a moth and rottenneſs to a people: All this while God doth not appear in an outward hoſtile and terrible way, but there is a ſecret curſe of God upon their counſels and ſo he is a moth and rottenneſs to them. **1. blindneſs.**

Thirdly, *God is a moth and rottenneſs to a people in their eſtates,* **3. in eſtates.** in their tradings; there ſhall be a decay of trading amongſt them, and they ſhall grow poorer and poorer no man knows how. There ſhall be a ſecret curſe upon their tradings and eſtates that no man can give a cauſe of.

Fourthly, *God is a moth and rottenneſs in the cheif instruments* **4. in the instruments of their good** that they make uſe of for their good: taking away cheif ones ſecretly when no body takes notice of them, one dropeth away after another; as in rottenneſs of wood one little piece dropeth down after another, ſome duſt of it drops down and no body takes notice of it; ſo in a State and Kingdom, cheif instruments ſhall be taken away and no body takes notice of it, ſometimes one and then another and then another after him, ſo they ſhall moulder away by degrees: And thoſe that are remaining ſhall be blaſted in their eſteems amongſt the people: Thoſe that God gives ability to do them good and might be very uſeful and ſerviceable unto them, yet though they live amongſt them they ſhall be ſo blaſted by reports one way or other, that they ſhall not be able to do them much good. And when you ſee this prevailing in a Kingdom, then God is a moth and rottenneſs to them.

5. in their enterprises. Fifthly, *God is a moth and rottenness to a people in their Enterprises; when in their Actions and Enterprises there is division amongst them; not only division in their spirits but in their actions, one goes one way and another another way, they scarce can agreee in any thing, and so al their enterprises are brought unto nothing.*

6. in their warlike power, in the Militia, in their publick monies. Sixthly, *God is a moth and rottenness in their warlike power and strength. There shall be a great charge upon the people and much shall be gathered together, but no man shal know how it is spent; it shal moulder away so that every one shall complain of the charge and of what goeth from him, but no body almost can see to what it comes to.*

7. in their religion. Seventhly and lastly, *God is a moth and rottenness unto them in their Religion, in corrupting that. (I mean by suffering of it) A secret curse of God upon them that their Religion should be corrupted, that their wine should be mixt with water, their silver with dross; that when they think to have their Religion to be more pure there shall be such mixtures of such opinions and contradictions one of another, that there shall be a secret moth and rottenness there, a secret curse of God even upon their Religion. These Seven waies God may be said to be a moth and rottenness unto a people.*

6. Observations. Now from all these, there are these Observations that we should take special notice of as neerly concerning us.

Obfer. 1. The first is this: *God may be in a way of wrath against a Kingdom, and in the mean time be very patient and long-suffering towards that Kingdom. And so against a particular man or woman. These two may stand together.*

Therefore no people must think themselves secure because that God appeareth not in the height of his displeasure. Neither let any man or woman think themselves safe because God is patient towards them. As in the greatest afflictions that are upon the Saints there are glimpses of Gods goodness; so in the greatest prosperity of the wicked, when God is most patient towards them, there are some footsteps of his wrath. No child of God is ever in such a dark night but he hath some beams of Gods goodness; and no wicked man is ever in such

a height

simile afflictions of the Saints.



a height of proſperity, but he hath ſome workings of Gods wrath againſt him.

Secondly, *God many times letteth out his wrath againſt a people in little things. And ſo againſt a particular perſon.* Obl. 2.

*I will be a moth and rottenneſſ;* They are both little things. What is a moth? And that which is tranſlated rottenneſſ, it is one of the leaſt worms that is, the leaſt worm that eateth into the heart of the wood and ſo bringeth rottenneſſ into it. Gods wrath (I ſay) may be let out in minnumſ. As there may be much poiſon in little drops, ſo there may be much wrath in little things. You know the wrath of God was much let out upon the *Egyptians* in Lice and Flies; and ſo it may be let out againſt thee in very ſmall and contemptible things: Things thou little thinkeſt of, things that thou paſſeſt by and doſt not mind, there may be much of the wrath of God let out in theſe. ſimile

Thirdly, *When God letteth out his wrath in ſmall things and cometh not in a terrible way againſt people, then his wrath is contemptible to carnal hearts.* Obl. 3.

That is the reaſon of this expreſſion, *I will be a moth and rottenneſſ.* Thoſe that were carnal in *Israel* and *Judah* they little thought of ſo much evil as was againſt them at this time, but they ſlighted and contemned all that the Prophet could threaten, for it was but a moth and rottenneſſ, as that little worm, and what is that? It hath been ſo amongſt us heretofore. With what contempt did many men hear the threatenings of Gods Miniſters againſt *England*? And why? Applica. Because there was not ſome viſible dreadful judgment upon the Nation: though in the mean time there was much of the wrath of God and fruits of his diſpleaſure amongſt us. Men are ſeldom ſenſible of little things. As men little mind and regard mercies in ſmall things, ſo they little regard Gods wrath in ſmall things. As it is an argument of a gracious heart to bleſs God for his mercies in ſmall things, ſo likewise it is an argument of a gracious heart to take notice of Gods diſpleaſure in ſmall things. If God do but hold up his finger, preſently to take notice and to be ſenſible of it,

is an argument of a gracious heart. As it is an argument that  
 simile that flesh is full of life that is sensible of the least touch; so  
 a heart that that is full of grace when it is sensible of the least  
 fruit of Gods displeasure. But when men and women are in  
 such a disposition, that except God strikes them in some ter-  
 rible manner they are not sensible of his displeasure, this is  
 a sign that they have brawny and hard hearts of their  
 own.

Obf. 4. Fourthly, *Though carnal hearts do slight and contemn Gods  
 displeasure in little things, yet this displeasure and wrath of God in  
 little things, will eat them out at last.* It will bring them down,  
 it will destroy them if it be neglected. You know in *Exod. 8.*  
*25.* that judgment of the flies brought down the spirit of  
*Pharaoh* more than all the other judgments before; he said be-  
 fore that he would *let* the people go, but he never *bad* them go  
 till then. God is able to bring down the stoutest, the prou-  
 dest spirit upon the face of the earth by little things. He can  
 eat out the heart of the strongest wood by this little worm,  
 and so by any little judgment of his, he can bring down the  
 stoutest and proudest spirit in the world.

Obf. 5. Fifthly, *God is slow in punishing.* He punisheth by degrees  
 at first: yea his punishing is as a moth, and as a little worm  
 in the wood, it is a long time before they do any hurt: This  
 is to shew that Gods wrath it is at first but slow. And by this  
 Use. we are taught to do even as God Himself doth, *to be slow to  
 wrath*; in our waies of wrath and displeasure against our bre-  
 thren to be slow as God is; not presently to fly in the faces  
 of our servants or of our children when they displease us:  
 God doth not deal so with us, He flies not presently upon  
 us; God is a long time before He bring any sensible evil  
 upon us. The *Romans* used to have the Rod and the Axe  
 carried before their Magistrates, to shew that they began by  
 lower afflictions at first, they did not come to the extremity  
 at first but went on gradually in their way of punishing.

Obf. 6. Sixthly, *God hath secret judgments to bring upon a people, upon  
 particular persons; waies of judgment secretly that they little think  
 of.* In *2 King. 3. 17.* Thus saith the Lord, you shall not see the  
 wind,

*wind, neither ſhall you ſee rain, yet the valleyes ſhall be filled with water:* There ſhall be a filling with water though you ſee neither wind nor rain; you ſhall not know whence it cometh yet the vallies ſhall be filled with water. So, many times there is the judgment of God againſt a people, againſt a family, againſt a particular perſon, and no body can tell from whence it comes. As God hath many ſecret bleſſings for his people, ſo He hath ſecret curſes againſt the ungodly. Let us take heed of ſecret ſins, for God hath ſecret wrath to avenge ſecret ſins. Many of you that find the hand of God out againſt you and you do not know how; do you examine your own hearts whether there be not many ſecret ſins in you againſt the Lord. It was ſo at this time when God came to be a moth againſt Ephraim, in *2 King. 17. 9.* ſpeaking of that very time that this propheſie doth relate unto, wherein God was a moth unto Ephraim, the text ſaith there, that the children of Iſrael did ſecretly that which was not right in the eyes of the Lord: Therefore juſt was God in this, to be a moth, to have His diſpleaſure to come ſecretly. Take you heed of ſecret ſins, leſt God conſume you by ſecret judgments.

Seventhly, *Our corruption within us breedeth our trouble and our undoing.* Whence cometh the moth but from the very cloth it ſelf that it eateth out? it is bred there: and this worm it is bred in the wood that it doth conſume. *A moth ſhall eat them;* it ſeems to be a proverbial ſpeech amongſt the Hebrews, when they would expreſs the periſhing of any by their own counſels and their own waies; as the Latins have proverbial ſpeeches ſuitable; *Fabrum conſtringi compedibus quæ ipſe cuderat,* The workman he is fetterd with thoſe fetters he makes himſelf; And ſo that proverb that we have, *to nourish a Snake in a mans own boſom,* is as much as a moth ſhall eat them; that is, what evil cometh to us it is bred within us: that wrath that doth conſume us it is that which is bred out of the corruption that is in us. So they ſay of the black bird, that of the dung that comes from it the lime is made that your fowlers make uſe of to make their lime-twigs withal; ſo from our own ſins comes our own miſery. From the unclean-

Uſe, be-  
ware of  
ſecret ſins

*2 King. 17*  
9. applied

Obſ. 7.

ness of a Nation or a particular soul cometh the evil of it ; Therefore if we should reade the foregoing words (*they willingly followed the commandment*) according to the old Latin, they followed *post sordes*, after the filth of *Jeroboam*, then the elegance of the expression would be more ; It was those filthy waies of *Jeroboam* that caused these moths to be bred.

simile

From our uncleanness cometh our consumption? as from the uncleanness of the body many evils are bred, so from the uncleanness of the spirit. Therefore we should be willing to take pains in the work of repentance, yea though it be somewhat troublesom to the flesh, yet better wear out our selves by washing, better wear out cloathes a little by the washing of them than to let them rot in the dirt of them : it is true, washing of clothes wears them a little, but if you let them alone in their dirt, that will rot them worse : so the work of repentance may put you to pain and wear you a little, but if you let your hearts alone in the filth of sin, that filth of sin will breed your misery. Take heed of letting any sin alone in your hearts, it will breed a worm (for so this word rottenness signifies a worm) it will breed a worm, the worm of conscience, that may prove the worm that never dieth.

Obs. 8.

Eightly, *Gods wrath though secret yet many times eateth out mens spirits and makes them unuseful*. Therefore it is compared to a moth and to rottenness, to a worm in the wood : As the moth eateth out the strength of the garment and makes it unuseful for any thing; and as the worm eateth out the strength of the wood and makes that unuseful; so the secret wrath of God many times eateth out mens spirits and makes them very unuseful in the places where they are set. How many have had excellent parts when they were young and were very useful; yet the uncleanness of their spirits hath bred such a worm that hath eat out the excellency of their parts, and before they have died they have been as a moth-eaten garment and rotten wood: indeed there hath been the same bulk as before, yet if you come to make use of them there is as much difference from what they were wont to be, as a moth-eaten garment

garment from it ſelf, and as rotten wood that hath the heart of it eaten out by the worm, differeth from it ſelf, ſo are the hearts of many men different from what they were wont.

In the ninth place, *Though* (a ſad conſideration for thoſe who are preſerved a while longer than others) *others go before them yet they ſhall follow not long after.* This Note is drawn from the diverſity of the expreſſion, *a moth to Ephraim, and rottenneſs to Judah.* God indeed will deal more quick with Ephraim and conſume them in His wrath, but Judah ſhall follow not long after. A ſad conſideration for any people to think, though others go before us and are conſumed before us, yet it will not be long before we ſhall follow. It is true Germany and other Countries have gone before us; we cannot propheteſie as here the Prophet did, but yet except God comes to prevent by an extraordinary hand we may follow not many yeers after, and who knows how ſoon? And particularly, It may be ſuch a friend of thine is gone, the hand of God is upon him and hath conſumed him and eaten out his very heart, and he is periſhed as filth and dung from the face of the earth; and thou art yet alive; and is there not rottenneſs in thee? Is there not the ſecret wrath of God eating out thy heart? He is gone a little before but thou art like to follow within a little while after. What great matter is it though thy companion be ſtruck dead and gone to Hell and thou left alive when thou ſhalt follow not long after? It is in this caſe as it is with travellers that travel together, perhaps one rideth before another & ſo comes to his Inn a quarter of an hour ſooner than the reſt of his company, but before he is lighted off his horſe, or gone up into his chamber, the other are come in alſo: So perhaps Gods hand ſtrikes one dead and ſends him to Hell, yet within a while the reſt will follow after. Therefore conſider when Gods hand is upon any to ſtrike them dead, Oh I may follow not long after. *A moth to Ephraim and rottenneſs to Judah.*

What a poor creature is man, yea a Kingdom, when as a moth and a little worm may conſume them! God in expreſſing

Obſ. 9.

Uſe

Germany

ſimile

Obſ. 10.

sing Himself thus to be a moth and rottenness, He speaks with a kind of contempt against the pride of Ephraim and Judah: they were haughty and proud, but saith God, a worm shall consume them. *Job. 4. 19.* it is said of man, *That his foundation is in the dust, and he is crushed before the moth:* It is a strange expression, I know not any such in Scripture to shew the weakness and the vanity of man, that he is crushed before the moth; Indeed to be crushed before a Lion is not so much; but that he should be crushed before a moth, that a moth should be able to crush a man, this shews the weakness that is in man: Wherein is he to be desired? Oh man is but vain, yea vanity it self, when he can be crushed before a moth: And so what are the great Kingdoms of the world? let them be never so proud and haughty, yet they are but as a moth, and a worm may consume them.

Job. 4. 19  
 confide-  
 red.

Obs. II. *We see how low God condescendeth that He may express His meaning unto the children of men.* It is a very strange expression, for the high and glorious and dreadful God, whom the Angels themselves adore, yet for this God to say of Himself, that He will be a moth, and for this infinite and blessed Deity to say of Himself, that He will be rottenness. Dare any creature have brought God so low in expression, if we had it not in the Word of God? If any man should be so bold to say God will be rottenness, were it not a strange speech? or to say that God will be a moth. Yet this high and glorious God condescendeth thus low only that he might the better express Himself to us, that we may come to understand his meaning. Surely we should be willing to appear very low, to do any service for God, seeing God is pleased to present Himself so low to express his mind unto us.

Use.

Obs. 12. And then lastly, *A moth to Ephraim and rottenness to Judah; Ephraim and Judah both together shall have a secret curse upon them:* From the connection of both these, the Note is, That it is a sad thing that divers countries neer together, professing the same Religion, and living in the midst of a common enemy should have Gods hand against them both at the same time. These ten Tribes and Judah together with Benjamin were the

only

only people that God had, that profeſt the true God, and they lived in the miſt of their common enemy, in the miſt of Heathens; now this is the dreadful threatening, that the hand of God ſhould be out againſt them both together. This is that we have a ſpecial occaſion to take notice of at this day. The truth is, many waies of Gods wrath have been againſt us in *England*, not only as a moth and rottenneſs, but more viſibly, it hath been ſo long together a moth and rottenneſs that we have ſeen the moth and rottenneſs; but bleſſed be God that he hath been gracious to our brethren neer unto us, I mean our brethren of *Scotland*, that the ſame judgments that have been upon us have not been upon them at the ſame time: that though Gods hand be out againſt us, yet that the ſame hand of God was not out againſt them at the ſame time. For ſo we may compare *England* and *Scotland* unto *Ephraim* and *Judah*, brethren living neer together and living in the miſt of common enemies. Had the Lord at the ſame time been the like moth and rottenneſs there as he was here, what had become of us? That is thus, Had there been the ſame diviſions in *Scotland*, that there were, that there are here in *England*, what had become of us at this day? Oh! it is a mercy of God that we muſt take notice of and bleſs His Name for, that though God were a moth unto us in this particular, in our diviſions, diſſentions, jealousies one againſt another, whereby we were weakned and were unlike to help our ſelves, but to be made a prey to the common enemy; though at this time there were nothing more endeavored than to make the like diviſions in *Scotland*, yet that the Lord hath delivered them from that judgment, that the Lord hath not been that moth and rottenneſs unto them that there ſhould be the ſame diviſions there that there hath been here; How had the common enemy rejoiced and boaſted then that he had had his hearts deſire! This was Gods mercy unto us whereas it was threatened againſt *Israel* and *Judah* that his wrath ſhould be againſt them both together. And thus much for this 12. verſe, Of Gods being a moth unto one, and rottenneſs unto the other. It follows.

Uſe for  
*England*,  
and  
*Scotland*.

*Scotland*.

## V E R. 13.

When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound; then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb &c.

W H E N Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound.]

The word translated *Sickness*, is from a word that signifies *Doluit Aegrotavit &c.* that signifies grief and sickness. And the word translated *Wound*, from a word that signifies *Colligavit*, he hath bound up, either because of the corruption of the body that is gathered together, or because of the binding up of it with cloathes.

הלוו  
אָגֵרְפִּיט.  
אָגֵרְפִּיט  
אָגֵרְפִּיט  
alicuere &  
comprime-  
re atq; col-  
ligare.

Now *Judah saw his sickness, and Ephraim saw his wound*: that is, God at length made them to see what a crazy condition their State was in, their Civil-State and Church-State too; in what a very crazie condition it was, and how wounded it was, and how like to perish, ready to die. And especially of this first, this sickness of Judah: we have a notable story (for it is referred to these times) in *Isa. 7. 1.* and so on; There you may find the sickness of Judah, and how *Judah saw it*: When *Rezin King of Syria*, and *Pekah son of Remaliab* came against *Judah*, the heart of the King, and the heart of his people were moved, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind; as we use to say, they did shake like an Aspen leaf, they were so troubled. Here *Judah saw his sickness*, the dangerous condition wherein he was. And how *Ephraim saw his wound*, that we shall see further presently when we shall see what help they sought to get against it.

Wrath was out against Ephraim and Judah some time, and had almost consumed them before they would take notice of it. Hence observe, *That by occasion of the pride and stoutness of mans heart, he will not easily be brought to see and acknowledge the hand of God.* *Isa. 26. 11.* Lord, when thine hand is lifted up, they will not see: They will not own the hand of God against them, they think it would be a shame to them, they rather would bear the world in hand that all is well with them: So it was  
for

Obser. I.

Isa. 26. 11



for a long time with Ephraim, and Judah, but at length they ſaw their ſickneſs and their wound.

Secondly, *God will force men to ſee and to be ſenſible of His hand* Obſ. 2.  
*out againſt them: He will make them to ſee their ſickneſs and*  
*their wound. Mic. 6. 13. I wil make thee ſick in ſmiting thee ſaith* Mic. 6. 13.  
*God; I will ſmite thee, and I will make thee ſenſible of My* opened.  
*ſtroke: ſo in that forenamed place Eſa. 26. 11. Lord when thy*  
*hand is lifted up they will not ſee; But they ſhall ſee and be aſhamed*  
*ſaith God; I will make chem to know and to be ſenſible of*  
*My ſtroke, the ſickneſs ſhall ſo grow upon them, the anguiſh*  
*of the wound ſhall be ſo great, that they ſhall be ſenſible.*

Thirdly, *They ſee their ſickneſſe and their wound, but here is no-* Obſ. 3.  
*thing of their ſin.* This is uſual with carnal hearts in their af-  
 ſlictions, to look at nothing but their wound and their ſick-  
 neſs; they regard nothing but to get that heald; ſeldom you  
 ſhall hear them cry out of their ſin. Thus it was with Iſrael  
 and Judah. And this is the way of carnal hearts.

*Then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to King Jareb.*

*Men uſe not to ſeek for help till they ſee and be made ſenſible of* Obſ. 4.  
*ther miſery.* And this is true ſpiritually; till the ſoul cometh  
 to be made ſenſible of its ſickneſs, and till God wounds it, it  
 ſeldom, yea never ſends out for help, but when God cometh  
 to wound the conſcience, then it ſendeth out for help. And  
 many times it is with ſoul affliction as it is here in outward  
 affliction, they ſeek out for help, but for help in a falſe way.  
 They went to the Aſſyrian and ſent to King Jareb.

You will ſay, *When did they do ſo?*

For the ſhewing the meaning of this we muſt refer to the  
 ſtory of the Kings, for though you have this Propheſie of Ho-  
 ſea in your books placed in a great diſtance from the book of  
 the Kings, yet this Prophet and ſo others did propheſie in  
 the time of the Kings, and therefore the hiſtory of the Kings  
 will much help to underſtand the meaning of the Propheſie.  
 Firſt then for Ephraims beginning to ſend to the Aſſyrian and  
 to King Jareb, you have it in the 2 King 15. 19. There you  
 ſhall read that Menahem who was King of the ten Tribes,  
 gave Pul that was King of Aſſyria a thouſand talents of ſilver,

Queſt.

Anſw.

When  
 they ſent  
 to king  
 Jareb.

that

that his hand might be with him, to confirme the Kingdom in his hand. Mark, that his hand might be with him to confirm the Kingdom; It seems this King that was the King of *Israel*, he saw his Kingdom to be in a crazy condition, he saw his sickness and his wound, therefore he sends to the King of *Assyria* whose name was *Pul*, and gave him a thousand talents of silver that he might confirm the Kingdom in his hand; and in the 20. verse, you shall find that the Subject was faine to pay for it, he exacted the money (saith the text) of all the mighty men of wealth in *Israel*. Oh what things do Subjects suffer many times for the satisfying the humors of those that are above them: Aud in 2 *King*. 17. 4. you shall find that *Hoshea* another King of *Israel*, he sent messengers to *So* King of *Egypt* to help him. And for that which is named here, *Jareb*, I find most to understand it to be but the very same. Some say that *Jareb* was a principal City in *Assyria*; And others say that it was a special name of the Kings of *Assyria*: But others (and that very likely to be true) they take the word appellatively, according to the signification of the word and do not make it the proper name of any man, but a word of appellation, according to the signification of it; For *Jareb* signifies *Defensorem*, the defender, or avenger: Therefore when as *Gideons* father spake to the people concerning his sons casting down the Altar of *Baal* and cutting down the Grove that was by it, saith he, *Will you plead for Baal, will you save him? if he be a god let him plead for himself*: and thereupon they called *Gideons* name *Jerub-baal*, the same word that is here. So that *Jareb*, signifies a defender or an avenger. So that they sent to the King of *Assyria* as to one that should be a defender or an avenger of them: They do not seek unto God, but they sent to King *Jareb* saith he, to their defender; as many times in scorn we call men by the name of that they would undertake to be; so because they trusted in the King of *Assyria* as their defender or avenger, therefore God in a kind of contempt calls him *Jareb*, they sent to their defender, but they little thought of me. That for *Ephraim*.

And then for *Judah*, though he be not particularly named,

Subjects  
suffer for  
Princes  
lusts.

Jareb

1

2

3.

med, becauſe Ephraim was the moſt forward and the firſt that ſent for help, yet no queſtion Judah he reproved it as well as Judah. Ephraim; for in the 2 King. 16. 7. Abaz that was then King of Judah ſent to Tiglath-Pileſer King of Aſſyria to come up and ſave him out of the hand of Rezin and Pekah, Kings of Syria and Iſrael that did riſe up againſt him; And in 2 Chron. 28. 16. you ſhall find Judah again ſending for external helps, unto the Kings of Aſſyria. The words being thus opened, the Notes are theſe.

Firſt, *It is the way of carnal hearts to ſhift out to the creature for help in time of ſtraites.* Obſer.

They ſaw their ſickneſs, they ſaw their wound, what did they then? They went to the Aſſyrian, and ſent to King Jareb. They look to no higher cauſes of their trouble than ſecond cauſes, therefore they ſeek to no higher means for their help but ſecond cauſes. They look upon their troubles as ſuch as befalls other men as well as them, and ſo look not up unto God. They are led by ſence, and the ſecond cauſes are before them and neer to them, and God is above them and beyond them, and his waies are often contrary to ſence; they know little of God, and have leſs intereſt in God; therefore it is that they little mind God in their ſtraights, but ſend out for help unto the creature. Reaſ.

We ſee the way of carnal hearts at this very day. What helps do they ſend for but creature helps? Therefore (my brethren) let us not fear them much; Let us not fear our adverſaries much, for their ſtrength is in the arm of fleſh: & we know they take no other courſe but to ſtrengthen themſelves in the creature; they know no other help; they little mind God in all their waies; Let them have what they will, yet pray they cannot, they have little heart to go unto God; they curſe and ſwear, yea and tell us, that it was never worſe with them than when they prayed moſt: Therefore all their help is on this ſide Heaven, therefore not much to be feared; They have that carnality of heart in them as was here in Ephraim and Judah, when they were a people to be deſtroyed, then they were given over by God to ſeek out for help only in the creature. Applic.

creature, to goe to the Assyrian and to send to King Jareb.

Use. 3. As it is in outward, so it is sometimes in spiritual straights. Admonition to those in spiritual distresse. When God strikes the souls of men with sicknesses, & wounds their consciences, what course do they take? They seek not to the Lord that smote them, but they seek out to the creature for help, they go to their companions, to their trading, to their shops, to their pleasures &c. and seek to have ease to their souls that way. This is the way of carnal hearts, both for soul and body to seek out unto the creature for help when they are smitten.

Obser. But secondly, There is much guilt contracted by resting upon creature-helpers. It is that which encreaseth mens sins and provokes Gods wrath very much, when they neglect him and seek to shift for themselves in the creature. Thus it was with Israel and Judah; they contracted much guilt unto themselves that way. And we find that God is much provoked with such as do so. In 2 Chron. 25. 7, 8. when Amaziab King of Judah in a time of danger, hired an hundred thousand men out of Israel, which were Idolaters; the Lord would not have Amaziab to make use of them, but bids him send them away; *Let not the Army of Israel go with thee* (saith God) *for the Lord is not with Israel*: Yea but what shall we do (saith the King) for the hundred talents which I have given to the Army of Israel? Be content saith the Prophet, rather to lose the hundred talents than to make use of such wicked men as they that have forsaken the true worship of God.

Question whether we are to make use of wicked mens help. Pet. Mar. It is a great question that many make, whether it be lawfull in any cases to make use of wicked men, especially in publick affairs of Kingdoms? to send for their help in time of publick danger, to think to strengthen our selves by ungodly men? *Peter Martyr*, in his Comment upon the book of *Judges*, Chap. 4. ver. 17. handleth this question, how far leagues may be made with Idolaters and wicked men? And there he gives two reasons why Idolaters should never be sent for to help us in any of our straights. The first is, for then saith he, there will be by this means danger of mixture of Idolatry

dolatry, for they joyning with you, they will come ſecretly to cauſe their Idolatrous waies to have an influence into you. But ſecondly, he gives eſpecially this reaſon, if you ſend for their help ſaith he, how can you joyn together in prayer to God to bleſs you? and when you have gotten victory how can you joyn together in praizing God? And indeed this is as great an argument not to make uſe of the help of wicked men in publick affairs of a Kingdom as poſſibly can be, for how can they joyn together in prayer? And truly they are unfit to joyn together in fighting that cannot joyn together in prayer and in praizing of God. And yet this is very natural to moſt men, yea good men are ſometimes guilty of this, to ſeek out too much unto wicked men for help in times of ſtraits. That was the blame that was laid upon *Aſa*, though otherwiſe a godly King, in the 1 *King*. 15. 19. that he ſent to *Benhadad* the King of Syria to help him; And in 2. *Chron*. 16. 7. *Hanani* the Seer told him that he ought not to have done it, and that he had done fooliſhly in doing it, for ſaith he, why will you do it, you need not ſend for ſuch help, for the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the behalf of thoſe whoſe heart is perfect towards Him. So that it was an argument that in this thing *Aſa's* heart was not perfect with God, becauſe he ſought for help from wicked men ſo much as he did, and did not relye upon the Lord. And it is very obſervable of this King, though a good man, and it ſeems, a Souldier, yet he was very angry with the Seer, the text ſaith, verſe 10. that *Aſa was wrath with the Seer and put him in a priſon houſe*, for he was in a rage with him becauſe of this thing: what! ſhall a Prophet contradict him in his warlike affairs? I muſt have Souldiers, old Souldiers about me; let men talk what they will of good men and that God will be with thoſe that can pray, I muſt have thoſe that can fight, thoſe that are Soldiers. I would it were not ſo at this day, that if a man did but ſpeak againſt evil Officers in an Army and wicked men that are about them, that their hearts did not riſe in a kind of indignation, and let be ſaid what will be yet ſuch and ſuch they will

2  
they can-  
not pray  
nor give  
thanks.

Applica

Esa. 30. 1, 2. *Wo to the rebellious childre<sup>n</sup> saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of Me, and that cover with a covering, but not of My Spirit: Wherefore do they this? That they may ad sin to sin.* This is a strange charge, wo to the rebellious children that take counsel, they go on in their own waies and take counsel, but not of *Me*, and they cover things over with vain pretences, but not by *My Spirit*, there is none of My Spirit in it; yea and all is, that they may ad sin to sin: And what is all this? It followeth presently, *They walk to go down into Egypt to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and have not asked of My mouth saith God.* They think to strengthen themselves by *Pharaoh* and never ask counsel of *Me*. This is rebellion, this is to follow their own counsels, this is to cover over things but not by Gods Spirit, this is to ad sin unto sin, to seek for help from wicked and ungodly men.

Revetuson  
the quest. *Revetus* upon this text hath a large tract about this very case or question, of being in league with Idolater, and wicked men; And thus far at least he confirmeth it and saith, That for whol Kingdoms to call in the help of ungodly men against those that are of the same Religion, upon any pretence whatsoever, he concludes that to be unlawful and sinful, though possibly in some cases he thinks it may be allowed: but it will ask a great deal of time to handle fully every case in this and to give all the Cautions that possibly may be given in it: But certainly this is an argument, that men and their cause have little to do with God when they seek for such helps as they do and trust so much in them as they do, when they send for *Papists*, for *Irish Rebels*, for *Atheists*, if there be any in the Country, what care they who they have so be it they may drive on their own designs and deliver themselves from the hand of God that is out against them. They cannot but see and take notice that the hand of God is against them, and riggle and keep a stir they do, and send for all the help, that possibly they can get. And on the other side, this is an argument of the faithfulness of others, who are a party low and ready to be trodden down, yet have been so far from seeking help

King's  
party.

Parliam,

help from, or protection of wicked men, that though they have been sent unto and have had fair offers of enjoying what they desire, yet they have resolved to venture the loss of all in a good Cause, whether they get any thing by it or no, whether they have what they would have, Liberties, or not Liberties, yet they are content to venture their estates, their lives, and all in that Cause, and not to provide for themselves by the help of such as they see to be evil, and whose waies and designs they see are not with God.

And if to seek unto wicked men for help and protection be so sinful; what is it then for men in times of straights to seek to the Devil for help? Surely that must be much more sinful; to use those waies that are in themselves directly evil, as lying, swearing, cheating, and cozening &c. In times of straights for you to think to help your self by those waies, it is as much as if you should say, I see God doth not help me, I will try what the Devil will do. *Certainly by iniquity shall no man be established. Prov. 12. 3.* Art thou in a straight under any affliction? never think of seeking out to unlawful means to help thy self, for thou canst get no good that way; And that will appear more in the words that follow.

Use, Ad-  
monition  
to those  
that seek  
to Satan.  
See Peter.  
Martyron  
1 Sam.  
22. 23.

*Yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound.*

The Assyrian could not help, Jareb could do no good; yea indeed they were so far from helping of Israel and Judah, that they made the wound greater; for Israel was afterward carried away captive by the Assyrian to whom he sent for help: and for Judah we read in 2 Chron. 28. 20. that when Ahaz sent for help to Tilgath-Pileser King of Assyria, he came unto him indeed, but he distressed him and strengthened him not. From whence we may observe.

First, *That creature comforts avail little in the day of Gods wrath.* Obs. 1. Gods wrath was out against Ephraim and Judah, and they would fain seek to help themselves in some creature way, but it would do them no good. Creatures are little helpful in the day of Gods wrath, they are all as a broken reed that rather

ther runneth into a mans hand than any way releeveth him. So the Scripture saith of riches, that they avail not in the day of wrath. All the creatures will then say to you, if God help you not how can we help you? They are but as a tree in the time of a storm; you may run under the tree, and perhaps a few droppings may be kept from you for a while, but if the storm be great and continue, what good can the leaves of a tree do you to keep you from it? The creature may refresh you a little, but if Gods wrath continue what good can the creature do?

But the word which the Seventy translate [*he could not heal you*] *ε μιν θαυατον εδωλω*. *Non sedabit dolorem vestrum*, he shall not so much as ease or mitigate your grief, or give you a little refreshment. It's true, sometimes by seeking to creature comforts a man may think he hath some refreshing, but the truth is, it endeth in trouble and sorrow. A man in this case that seeks for help to the creature when God hath struck him, is as a Deer that is shot with an Arrow, the Deer runs up and down from one bush to another to seek for ease, but the blood falls all along, and perhaps by and by his bowels run out; what ease can bushes do to a poor Deer when the arrow sticks in his body? God many times strikes his arrows into the sides of people, and they run up and down to the creature, to this bush and to the other bush for help, but little or none can they have from any.

simile

I confess sometimes for a little while (as I say) there is a little ease. I find it so in the case of *Abaz*, when he was in straits, his heart did melt (as you heard before:) Now that story in *Isa. 7.* hath reference to the 2 *Kings*, 16. aforementioned: When *Rezin* and *Pekah* came against him, you shall find that *Abaz* had a little help for the present by *Tiglath-Pileser* King of *Affyria* that he sent for, but afterwards (as we shall shew you when we come to another point) it did him little good, for Gods hand was out against *Judah* so much the more dreadfully.

Obi. 2.

And as the creature hath but little help in it in the time of straits; *So of all things that men rest on for help, wicked men are*

most



*moſt like to prove helpleſſ.* They leave you in your ſtraits as the Scribes and Pharifees did *Judas*: When *Judas* was brought into ſtraits by his ſin, and in the anguiſh of his ſpirit came and ſaid, *I have ſinned, in betraying innocent blood.* *What is that to us ſay they, look thou to it.* There was all the comfort he could have from them. They were forward to draw him into the ſin, but when he had done it, then *Look you to it.* Such comfort you are like to have from your wicked companions in times of ſtraits: They will draw you into that which is evil, and afterward when God ſhall ſtrike you and they come to viſit you, and you lie crying out of thoſe waies they have drawn you into; Oh! miſerable comforters will they be. You can have noe helpe from wicked men in times of ſtraits.

Uſe.

Yea, *We are not to reſt upon the beſt men of all in time of ſtraits.* The beſt God hath given us experience at this day, that every man is not to be vanity; ſo the Scripture ſaith, *Verely every man is vanity:* depended Ceafe from Man for wherein is he to be eſteemed? Had we no on. other reſt but upon man what ſhould become of us? Therefore neither unto the *Aſſyrian*, no nor unto any living are we to ſend for help, ſo as to look higher upon them than as on an arm of fleſh. God pronounceth a curſe upon him that truſteth in man and maketh fleſh his arm, and ſaith, he ſhall be like the heath in the deſert and ſhall not ſee. when good cometh, but ſhall inhabit the parched places in the wilderneſs, Jer. 17. 5, 6.

But why is it that the *Aſſyrian* can do *Israel* no good? It follows:

## V E R. 14.

*For I will be unto Ephraim as a Lyon, and as a young Lyon to the houſe of Judah.*

**T**HAT which is here tranſlated in your books, a *Lyon*, the Seventy tranſlate it by the *Panther*, which is the moſt ſwift & fierce creature one of them in the world. Gods wrath for ſtrength is compared to a *Lyon*, and for ſwiftnes to a Panther,

Expof.

Panther Panther. To a Lyon, because though he is most strong and terrible, yet Historians say, that if you fall down and submit unto him he will shew mercy. God is a Lyon, and strong and fierce in his wrath, yet merciful to those that submit unto Him.

The word here translated, *Lyon*, it is not that ordinary word that is for a Lyon, but *Shacal*, that signifies a fierce Lyon: And so you have it in *Job, 4. 10. the roaring of the Lyon, and the voice of the fierce Lyon, Shacal.* So that God threatneth here to be a fierce Lyon. This creature is very fierce, and therefore *Gesner* in his *Historie of living creatures* saith, That nature hath so ordered it that because the Lyon is so fierce of himself, that alwaies he hath a kind of a *quartan* feaver or ague upon him to mitigate or refresh his fierceness. And it were well with many if it were so with them. Many that are fierce and of Lyon-like spirits, for their lusts, and for the satisfying of their own humors, but are sheepish enough for the cause of God.

But mark, God wa. before a moth and a little worm, but now He is become a Lyon. *I will be a moth unto Ephraim, and a little worm unto Judah* (for so you may translate it) And now *I will be a Lyon to Ephraim, and a young Lyon to Judah.* Why a Lyon? that is, He will appear in the fierceness of his wrath against Ephraim.

But what is the reason of the difference of these expressions here? As he said before, He would be a moth to Ephraim and rottenness to Judah; so here he saith, *He will be a Lyon to Ephraim, and a young Lyon unto Judah.* Here is a different expression, and the reason is the same here that was there: As there it was to shew that God though He intended the destruction of Ephraim and of Judah both, yet Ephraim sooner, and Judah later; so here, though God would be terrible in His wrath to Judah, yet He would be more terrible in His wrath to the ten Tribes: For we find, that though Judah was carried into captivity, yet that captivity lasted but for seventy years, and Judah returned again; but Israel, he was torn in pieces so as he was never made up after. They were both sinners,

לָיוֹן  
the ordinary word  
is לָיוֹן  
of לָיוֹן  
to tear, or  
לָיוֹן  
validus.  
Gesner  
the Lyon

The different expression of the text,

ners, but Judah retained ſomewhat of Gods true worſhip, therefore God would ſpare them a little; Though wicked men will ſpare the Saints ſo much the leſs becauſe of their godlineſs, and will take ſo much the more advantage of their frailties becauſe they are profeſſors, yet God will pitie them.

The obſervations from hence are theſe:

First, *When Gods leſſer afflictions work not, there God will be* Obſer. 1.  
*moſt terrible.* You heard of the moth and little worm before; they are leſſer afflictions, and it ſeems the moth and little worm did not work their hearts to repentance, to bring them unto God, therefore God doth turn to be a fierce Lyon and a Lyons whelp unto Ephraim and Judah. Gods wrath is as *Elijahs* cloud that at firſt appeareth but as a handbreadth, but within a while after the whol Heavens were overſpread with it: It is as the thunder, that when you hear it firſt it is ſimile 1. but a little roaring noiſe a far off, but ſtay a while and it will be a dreadful crack. It is as the fire that at firſt burneth a little within upon a few boards, but when it prevailleth it 2 burſteth out in a moſt terrible flame. As in that known place *Levit. 26. 18.* *If you will not yet for all this ſaith the Lord, bearken unto me, then will I puniſh you ſeven times more for your ſins; and again, ſeven times more, and ſeven times more.* God will go on in His wrath from a little unto a great deal of wrath; From being as a moth and as a little worm, to be like a Lyon. Such degrees there are in Gods wrath. You had need look to it when the hand of God is ſtretched out but a little againſt you, though it be but as a moth and as a worm yet if you look not to it, there may be ſuch a gradation of Gods wrath upon you; For as great a difference as is between a moth and a fierce Lyon, ſuch a difference may be between wrath now and that which is to come. Thus the Lord is many times unto mens ſpirits: Many men have gripes and nips of conſcience, and God cauſeth ſecretly that worm of conſcience to be gnawing upon them, and there is ſome kind of trouble, but notwithstanding they go on in their ſins; and at length God coumeth upon them as a Lyon, tearing their ſpirits. Did you Admonit. to thoſe that are a little touched in ſpirit. never ſee a ſinner lying upon his death bed in the torment of his

A dying  
& terrifi-  
ed con-  
science.

his soul, Gods wrath like the pawes of a Lyon preying upon the very caul of his heart, when he lies roaring out he is damned, he is damned! and now he sees, yea feels the heat of the wrath of God against him. Thus God comes as a Lyon to prey upon those that will not regard the gnawings of the worm: When the worm was but little and small, they slighted it, and that caused God to bring the greater judgment. So it is with families; God cometh upon families sometimes in a little sickness, in a child or in a servant, and that is not regarded; afterwards God cometh with plague of pestilence or some other dreadful judgment.

Ireland.

So in Kingdoms, the Lord cometh first with little judgments, and then with greater. As in *Ireland*, for many yeers together, there the Lord was as a moth and rottenness, but of late how like a Lyon hath he there appeared? How hath He torn and rent that Kingdom in a most dreadful manner?

England

Yea the truth is the Lord had been to *England* as a moth and rottenness; And this very text I make no question but some of you have heard many yeers ago applied unto *England*, when as those Ministers that preached upon this text did little think that ever there should be such a hand of God against many parts of *England* as now there is at this day. In many parts of this Kingdom the Lord is at this day as a Lyon. We all hear the roaring of the Lyon, and who can but tremble! Oh it is time for us, all to fall down to the ground before the Lord. It is true God hath not yet come to this Citi-

London.

as a Lyon to tear and rend it as other places in the Countrey; but yet we have heard the roaring of the Lyon abroad, and God calleth us to fall down before Him that He may not be so to us, that he may not come and tear us likewise. Certainly, the Lord will have glory of His creature; God hath sworn by Himself and the word hath proceeded out of His mouth in righteousness, that every knee must bow to Him, and every tongue confess His Name: Every creature must submit unto Him, and if lesser judgments will not do it, God will lay every sinner upon His back, He will come as a Lyon to tear him in pieces.

Secondly,

Secondly, Mark what is between theſe two, being a *moth* Expof. 2  
and a *Lyon*; between theſe two it is ſaid, *Ephraim ſaw his ſick-*  
*neſs and his wound, and he went to the Aſſyrian and ſent to King*  
*Jareb,* and now ſaith God, *I will be a Lyon unto Ephraim.* Hence  
Note,

*That ſeeking out ſhifting waies for our ſelves in times of affliction,* Obſer:  
*provoketh God very much and makes our affliction to be very great.*  
The Lord looks upon this with indignation; what, when I  
appear in My diſpleaſure, do they ſeek to ſhift me off by ſen-  
ding to the Aſſyrian and to King *Jareb*? upon this the in-  
dignation of God riſeth high, and He becometh a fierce Ly-  
on to them. *Joſephus* reports in the factions that were in Je-  
ruſalem, *Antiochus* being called in by one party who proved Antiq.  
the ruin of both. This is the honor God expects, that in our lib. 12.  
affliction we ſhould not flye from, but humble our ſelves cap. 6, 7.  
before Him; if we do not, His anger, His jealouſie ariſeth to a  
feaful height, He wil purſue in the fierceneſs of His wrath.  
The way is not to flie from God, but to fall down before  
Him, to lie at His feet. If a Lyon ſhould come roaring upon  
us, the way is not to run away ſhreeking, but to fall down be-  
fore him. There is no man can abide the ſlighting of his an-  
ger; if a parent or a maſter ſhould be ſlighted by the child or  
the ſervant, this makes him more angry: ſo when men make  
light of the anger of God and think that there is power e-  
nough in any creature to pacifie Him, this cauſeth the wrath  
of God burn more fiercely againſt them: you have as notable a  
example as any in the book of God; in *Iſa. 7. 17* if you com-  
pare the ſtory there with the *2 King. 17.* you ſhall find that *A-*  
*baz*, in the time of his diſtreſs ſought unto the King of Aſſyria,  
and though God offered him a ſign by the Prophet that he  
Himſelf would deliver him, yet he ſends for help unto others:  
But mark; upon this the Lord threatneth that he would bring  
upon him and upon his people daies the like whereof had not  
come ſince the day that Ephraim departed from Judah, ſuch  
daies God would bring upon them, more dreadful than ever  
yet came upon Judah, and that becauſe at this time when  
they were in ſtraights they ſought for help from the Aſſyri-

an. And as it provoketh God in a dreadful manner against those that seek unto others for help in outward dangers; so if a man shall seek for help in the straits of his soul; Doth God wound thy spirit, doth he make it sick, and dost thou seek for unlawful means to help thy self? dost thou go to thy company, to musick, to good cheer to help thee? Oh this provokes God against thee! This is just as if a man in a fever should drink a draught of cold water from the conduit; it's true for a while he may have a little ease; but O what a scalding fit doth this bring him into afterwards! so those that in trouble of conscience seek for carnal helps, it will bring them to a dreadful fit afterwards. It follows.

Smile

*I, even I will tear.*] The main thing wherein God expresseth the dreadfulnes of His wrath here in this place, is the tearing of them as a Lyon, we may take in pieces that which we intend to mend and to make use of: but when we tear a thing we intend to make no further use of it. God expresseth great severity of his wrath in this expression, *Psal. 50. 22. Consider this ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces.* Now this tearing here, refers to the letting in the Assyrian upon Israel, and the Babylonian upon Judah. And the main observation from it, and which is indeed seasonable for these times of ours, is, That,

Oblser.

*When God in his wrath causeth war in a Kingdom, then God teareth.*

The Teeth  
& Claws  
of the Lyon,  
& his  
mouth.

I will send the sword amongst you, I will send the Assyrian against you and then I will tear you. The judgment of war it is a tearing judgment. Gods wrath never appeareth more dreadful than in letting out the wrath and rage of provoked enemies upon a people. The teeth and claws of this Lyon is no other than spears and swords and poleaxes, the mouth of this Lyon is no other than the roaring Cannon, from whose mouth proceedeth fire and smoke and sudden death: Here you may see thousands stout and strong ones struck down to the ground in a moment; Here one mans arm is torn from his shoulders, there another mans leg is rent from his body; here one lies wallowing in his own blood giving up the ghost,

ghost, there another weltring in his gore all mangled and wounded, *Every battel of the warrior is with confused noise and with garments rolled in blood,* death reigneth in the field and is ſure to have the day which ſide ſo ever falleth; And when report of what is done in the field cometh home, as in 1 Sam. 4. 17. when there was a great ſlaughter among the people, one brings *Phineas* his wife news that her Husband and her Brother-in-law was dead; So when news comes home to the poor fatherleſs children and widdows, your husband is dead, and your father is dead, Oh what tearing of hair, wringing of hands, rending of clothes, liſting up the voice and crying until the noiſe thereof reach up to heaven. My brethren, war is a tearing judgment, it is *Malum complexum*, a compound of ſorrow. The cup that is now in the hand of God, *Pſa. 57. 8.* is full of mixture, full of bloody ingredients, of fire, famine, opened, peſtilences, murders, rapes, cruelties, and all miſeries; the Lord teareth now indeed: Oh how is the husband rent from his wife, haled to priſon by cruel and bloody ſouldiers! How are mens eſtates and whatſoever is comfortable unto them rent and torn from them in tumultuous outrages! Their pleadings and cryings are rejected with ſcorn and contempt, and the bodies of their wives and children and their own too, abuſed in the rage and malice of the insulting adverſary. And of all wars, Civil wars are moſt dreadful; there God Civil teareth moſt indeed; there the brother contendeth with the war moſt brother, and the father goes about to tear out the bowels of dreadful. his ſon. Thus the Lord hath been a Lyon in many parts of the Kingdom. Alas our brethren abroad they cannot ſay as they in *Jer. 4. 5.* *Arise, Let us go into the fenced Cities,* they ſtand a far off, & are afraid to come out of the Land of their captivity becauſe of the oppreſſing ſword. Yea here is tearing indeed in this heavy judgment that is upon us, never was Gods Name ſo torn as now it is by bloody Oathes and hideous and unheard of blaſphemies, And what do our adverſaries deſire but to tear the Saints and to trample them under their feet? 2. tearing of Gods Name.

My brethren, time it is for us all to rend our hearts, even

to tear and rend our very hearts within us, because the Lord is come out against us as a tearing Lyon, rending and tearing this way and that way. The Jews were wont when they heard the Name of God blasphemed to rend their garments presently. We hear of the dreadful blasphemies of our adversaries, rending and tearing of the Name of God, Oh how should we rend our hearts rather than our garments! It is dreadful to hear of the tearing of mens estates and bodies, but much more dreadful should it be to us to hear of the tearing of the Name of God. It's time then for sorrow to be in our hearts, and not ordinary sorrow neither, but rending of our hearts now; and now we should even be ready to tear the heart out of our bowels to see that we have been no more affected hitherto than we have. And the rather because we have escaped for the present & our estates and bodies are yet whole. Our sins have had an influence into the miseries of our brethren; our sins have been those claws and teeth that have torn our brethren. Thus the Lord is raised from a moth and worm even to a tearing Lyon.

Obf. 2. And note, Though the Assyrians and cursed Babylonians did this, yet saith God, *I will be as a Lyon to tear them.*

Hence another observation, *That God hath a righteous hand in the worst actions of men.*

We cry out of men that they are thus and thus, Oh never such vile and wicked men. But you must look upon God, He hath a hand in all. The most horrid wickedness that ever was done in the world, the betraying of Christ and the crucifying of the Lord of life, the Scripture saith, it was done by the fore-determined counsel of God. Therefore let those that have been sensible of the tearing of their estates, and have had their husbands and their children torn from them by wicked men, let them not only cry out of such vile and ungodly men, but let them know that the Lord hath had a hand in it. Though men be wicked, yet the Lord is righteous, let them justifie God in all: This is Gods glory, that He can have a hand in the most hideous wickedness in the world and yet remain righteous notwithstanding: There-  
fore



fore He ſaith here, *I, even I will do it.* He doth not only own it, but He would have people to take ſpecial notice that *He* hath ahand in all. Oh the uſe that we might make of this to our ſelves, if in all thoſe dreadful judgments that are upon us, if in all thoſe tearing judgments that ſome of our brethren have felt; we could but take notice that the hand of God hath done it. *I, even I have done it,* here is the Emphaſis in this; *I, even I.* And in this one verſe here is *I,* four times together; Let the thing be never ſo hideous unto you, yet know that I am the great orderer and diſpoſer of all, and I have ſome great thing to bring to paſs in all this that is come upon you. And certainly though the miſery be great that ſome parts of the Kingdom endure, yet becauſe Gods hand is ſo much in it, therefore we muſt know that God hath ſome great thing to bring to paſſe by this that He hath begun to doe amongſt us.

What the wicked *Aſſyrians* and curſed *Babylonians* did, that God is ſaid here to do. Hence obſerve, That

*God hath a righteous hand in the worſt actions.*

Obſ. 3.

As in the ſin of *Judas*, the moſt horrible that ever was *Act. 2. 23.* God doth not only permit, but order all, and ſo far as an evil of puniſhment works in it: and ſo far as any natural action is in the ſin; as in opening the mouth the natural act of ſpeaking; drawing the ſword (the natural act towards fighting) &c. This is Gods glory, and yet to be free from the evil of ſin. Many knots there are about this, that men exerciſe their wits to untie; but *cum veniet Elias* (as the Hebrews uſe to ſay when they are grave'd, when *Elias* cometh we ſhall underſtand, there is a time when all difficulty ſhall be eaſie to reconcile) let us look to Gods hand, nor cry out on ſuch and ſuch wicked men. You whoſe eſtates have been torne from you, and it may be many of your deareſt friends, conſider that it is God that is the Lyon tearing.

From the duplication of the words, we may obſerve this Note, That the hand of God is more imediate in ſome judgments than in others, and the more imediate the more remarkable, there ſhall not only come judgments upon you, but I will bring them,

Obſ. 4.

them, they shall be such, that you shall see, that I am in them. In some judgments upon men, God makes so much use of the creature, that sinners can see little of Gods hand in them, but in some others, they can easily see the hand of God in them; *Belsazzar* trembled at the hand-writing, and his thoughts were troubled within him, why so? the hand struck him not at all, only he saw it to be the hand of God, the hand of the Deity was in it, *Dan. 5. 5, 6.* and this made him to tremble. *Gen. 6. 17.* Behold, I, even I do bring a flood: And that wrath which is out against us at this time, especially our adversaries, is the hand of God in a special manner, God may well say to us, I, even I wil tear ye O *England*, O how hath God manifested Himself to us in these latter yeers since the wars began. As we ought to take notice of Gods tearing and rending Kingdoms, so also in families, and particular persons, God would have us take notice, that it's He; as a godly heart takes notice of Gods hand in mercies; and then they are most sweet; so on the contrary, he takes notice of Gods hand in every judgment to be humbled under it: *I will establisb my Covenant with you: Gen. 9. 11.* and *Isa. 43. 19. 25.* I, even I am he which blotteb out thine iniquities: Mercies are then most sweet when we see them come from Gods immediate hand, in a special providence. Gods hand-remarkable in judgments must be taken notice of. For,

Applic.  
England.

Reas. 1.  
It hum-  
bleth,

1. Hereby the heart comes to be humbled, when it considers that 'tis God which appeareth against him, not devils nor men, but God, that God upon whom I live and enjoy every mercy that I have; this it was that troubled *Christ*, more than all the wrong which the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* did to him, when he considered that it was His God, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* When the *Saints* see Gods hand against them in any thing, this troubles them and humbles them more than any thing else.

2. It is a special mean to quiet the heart with patience, *It quiets. Psa. 39. 9.* I was dumb and spake not, because thou Lord didst it. See it in *Ely*, It is the Lord, let him do what he wil with me: and in *Christ* himself, shall not I drink of the cup which my father

father ſhall give me? Is God my God, and doth this come from my Father? I will take it, I am ſure it will do me no harm but much good.

3. By this means the ſoul is put upon the enquire, why this affliction is upon it, what the cauſe of this trouble may be; when we ſee nothing but man the inſtrument of an affliction, we look not ſo much at it, it never puts us upon ſoul-ſearch and tryal of our ſelves, but when God is ſeen in a croſs, the ſoul begins to conſider, what have I done? what's the matter oh my ſoul? Thus did the Church: *Mica. 6.9. Hear ye the Rod, and who hath appointed it: There are letters written upon Gods rods which the man of wiſedome can read.*

3.  
It puts up  
on ſearch

4. It cauſes the ſoul to receive content and ſatisfaction in nothing but God alone, and in peace with him, to get him our friend; when we look upon judgments only in the ſecond cauſe, we are apt to think that ſecond means will make up the breach again, which ſin hath made; as they in *Iſa. 9. 9, 10. The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn ſtone; for all this his anger is not turned away: why ſo? in the 13. verſe we have the reaſon, For the people turned not unto him that ſmiteth them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of hoſts: They would not ſee the hand of God, nor give glory to him, for if they did, they would ſay as this people, in the next chapter, Come, let us return unto the Lord, for he hath wounded us, and He will heal us. Thus much for the doubling the expreſſion. It follows.*

4  
Cauſeth  
the ſoul  
to make  
out for  
God

*I, even I will tear you and go away.*

The Lyons when they tear their prey, they are not afraid of what they have done, but walk majeſtically before the dead carkiſe as it were bidding defiance to al other creatures, they run not away as the Fox doth, but walk as it were in ſtate, for ſo the words in the original carry: *I, even I will tear.* As if God did challenge all the creatures in Heaven or Earth for to grapple with him, I wil tear them. It implies how God will deal

Expoſ.

778

deal

deal with Judah, He will not be afraid of them, what He doth it shall be in an open way, He will not come against them in secret but in a publick way.

Applic.  
enemies  
of Engl.

The judgment at this time upon our enemies is not in a secret, but an open way, the Lord doth not deal subtilly and by craft with them, as they do with his people; and though the Lord deal as a Lyon with them, tearing and rending them, yet they will not see him, neither are they able to resist him, nor can any rescue them out of his hands: Let the means be never so weak in Gods hand, yet when he is in a way of wrath there shall be no delivery out of his hands; *Isa. 26. 6. The feet shall tread it down: tread down what? the lofty City: by what feet? even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.* Jer. 37. 10. The Lord tels them, that though they had smitten the whol Army of the *Caldeans*, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent and burn their City with fire. When God intends ruin and desolation to a people, 'tis impossible for any to deliver them out of his hands.

*Isa. 26. 6.*  
opened.

Obser.

Further we may note, That when God comes against a people, He takes them to do, when they are the strongest, and greatest in power, and most confident in an arm of flesh, that none at that time may deliver out of His hands. *Isa. 24. 21. And it shall come to pass, in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones, which are on high:* When he is in his greatest pride, gets the greatest victories, conquers and obtains the greatest Cities of refuge, and Towns of harbor. And 'tis very observable, that since our enemies got their greatest advantages they have lost the most, God then puld them down when they were most proud, God will go on in his work though men are never so proud and strong, therefore 'tis our wisdom to give our selves into Gods hands, yea though into his afflicting hand, although no power can rescue out of his hand, yet there is a way to change the operation of his hands by humbling our selves, falling down before him, willingly submitting to him, and this way now God hath his will upon us in the most acceptable way that can be: God had rather have

Applicat.  
for Engl.

have men voluntarily give him his glory, than to compel him to force it from them.

I now come to the laſt.

VER. 15.

*I will go.*

**G**OD repeats it again, which notes, 1. The glory of the Expof. work, that he is not aſhamed of what he hath done, (Gods people ought for to be like God in this, let their actions be warrantable, ſuch as they may with comfort own and ſtand to, yea ſuffer for, if it ſo come to paſs, not like the proverb to ſet a Town on fire, and run away from it, leaving others to quench it) 2. It notes the Irreſiſtibility of Gods work, as if he ſhould ſay, let any try whether they can oppoſe me. 3. And chiefly it implies, I will bring them into captivity and there Pleave them.

Whence note, *That 'tis a heavy judgment for God to tear and* Obſer. *wound a people, and then to leave them*: God ſaith if they return not, I will rend and tear them, make them very miſerable and in that condition will I leave them, Ple be a ſtranger to them, and will not own them. *Ezek. 22. 20. I will gather you in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there.* God in another place promiſeth to be with His people in the fire and in the water; but there is a time that Gods people may ſo provoke God, that he will bring them into the fire and there leave them: when the Philiftims fell upon *Saul*, it was a ſad time to him, becauſe God had left him: Oh how terrible was it when God left *Chriſt* upon the Croſs but for a little while! This we all deſerve, and this is the portion of the damned in Hell: While the Judge is preſent upon the Bench the Malefactor hath hope, but when the Judge goes off the Bench, then they cry and take on: Therefore the Church prays, *Lord, leave us not; Thou art our hope in the day of evil.* ſimile *Jer. 17. 17. God is ſaid to be the ſtrength of his people in Pſal. 37. and Pſal. 39. Now if their ſtrength be gone, they muſt needs be weak. Chriſt rebukes his Diſciples for fearing*

when they were in the Ship, and he was with them: but when God leaves a people, Oh what cause of fear is there then! The Church implies so much, *Jer. 14. 9.* thou art in the midst of us, leave us not, we are in a sad condition already, yet oh Lord do not thou leave us.

How to keep God with us, Now if we would not have God to leave us, let us take heed we do not leave God, would you have God be for you in adversity, then be you for God in prosperity, nor forsake him when he is afflicted, which is when his people and cause suffer. Many will be for the Saints and own the Cause of God when all things goes well, and their side prospers, but in trouble when they are in disgrace or sorrow, then they forsake them, as if they knew no such people; know that in thus doing thou leavest God, and God may justly leave thee in thy affliction: But now, 'tis Gods promise to his people, *That he will not leave them, Psal. 31. 7, 8. Psal. 34. 17, 18.* God may bring thee into their power and jurisdiction that are evil, but wait thou on the Lord and he shall deliver thee. We use to say when we are in any trouble, to our dear friend, What will you also leave me? will you not now own me, and stay by me? As Christ himself said to his Disciples, *Will you also leave me, and go away?* but God will never leave his people in this manner. The Shepherd may suffer his dog to hunt the sheep, to bark at them, to fetch them together, but never suffers him to worry and kill them: so God may suffer the wicked to hunt the Saints, and perhaps to fasten upon them sometimes, but then God will call them off again, for his promise is not to leave them, as he doth the wicked in their afflictions; as *Heb. 13. 5. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee:* in which words we have in the Greek five negatives to affirm the truth of this conclusion: that God will never forsake his people, *I will not, not leave you,* yea but the people of God might say, but Lord we seem to the eye of the world to be forsaken, no saith the Lord, *I will not, not, not leave you;* there is two negatives to leaving, and three to forsaking; from whence we may see how strongly God hath engaged himself for his peoples security.

simile

Heb. 13. 5  
five negatives.

ε μη δε  
απο εστι  
μη δε εγ-  
εγ. μη. εγω.

*And return unto my place.*

Expoſ.  
Gods  
place,  
*Dem eſt  
habitacu-  
lū mundi,  
non mun-  
dus habita-  
culum erit.*

These words are something difficult, What is Gods place? Is God contained in any place? God is rather the place of the world, than the world his place; but here 'tis meant Heaven, I will return unto my place. That is, Ple go to Heaven again, not that God is there only containd, but that is the place from which he reveals himself most, there the holiness of God shines in most glory. There is but little of God in this world to what there is in Heaven, the glory of all the world is but as a dungeon to that place of Gods presence, we are like children born in a dungeon, who think there is no better place because they never saw better: but Heaven is our Fathers place, and Christ who is our elder brother is gone thither before us to provide mansions for us, let us therefore have conversations in Heaven answerable to the holiness of that place: this world is like unto the out-housing, stables, or kennels, belonging to some pällace, or stately building, even as these are very inferior to the rooms in the house, so is the pomp and state of this world unto Heaven, God hath given the world unto worldly men for their portion, but the Saints have a better inheritance reserved for them, even in Heaven.

*I will return to my place.*] When was God from His place? Expoſ. when did He come from thence? Thus: when he did rend and tear them, appearing against them as a Lyon, and as a young Lyon, then it was as if God should come down to rectifie and set in order things which were amiss, and out of their place; as we may see in the case of *Sodom*, Gen. 18. 21. *I will go down and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of their sin*, the sin of *Sodom* fetcht God from his Throne. So in *Isa.* 26. 21. *Behold, the Lord cometh out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their cruelty and wickedness, the earth also shall disclose her blood and shall no longer cover her slain.* God compares himself to a Prince upon his Throne, who goes from his place of State into Countries to quiet mutinees and rebellions among his people. The Note from hence is,

*That sin disturbs Heaven and Earth.* God cannot be quiet in Obſ. 1, Heaven for sinners. Just it is with God to trouble sinners on Earth. In

Obl. 2. *In times of publick judgment God doth in a manner leave his Majesty and Royalty in Heaven, to set things in order here on earth. And surely it will be to their cost when God thus comes, do but view the terribleness of Gods coming down: in Psal 18. 9, 10. Darknes and coals of fire were under his feet: God seems to speak as a father to his children, what must I come to you, will you force me to come among you, if I do, it shall be to your cost.*

*I will return unto my place.]* When I have afflicted them, I will go to Heaven and there will I sit, and my administrations shall be such towards them, as if I regarded them not: as a Prince that goes from the poor subject to his seat of dignity and mindes not the poor prisoner.

*The administrations of God sometimes even to His own people may be such as if He regarded them not: they may be so left in the hands of the wicked that they may think God hath forsaken them, and given them over into their hands, and Gods people may conclude so and think that God is gone and hath now hid Himself for ever; as a poor child in misery in one Country, and his father in another, thinks thus, I am in trouble and sorrow, and I have a father, but he is in another Country, and I know not when he will come again: so God may go to His place, and the soul may seek Him but he is now gone, He is in another place, the Saints should be encouraged notwithstanding to look up to God, and know though God be gone, yet there is a way to bring Him down*

*again, Psal. 18. 9. God was shut up in the Heavens, and His people cryed to Him in their distress, then the Lord bowed the Heavens and came down; Let me make hast saith God, I must go to the help of My people, therefore that I may make speed, let the Heavens bow before me. So in Isa. 64. 1, 2. the Church there cries out, Oh that thou wouldst rend the Heavens and come down, tis true Lord thou art in Heaven and there is thy Majesty and glory, but oh that thou wouldst come down, and help us, Prayer as it will rend the Heavens to get up to God so it will rend the Heavens for God to come down to man, Lord if thou wilt go to thy place, then what*

*will*

Revertar  
ad habitaculum  
sanctitatis mee  
Chald. para-  
phrase.  
Obl. 3.

simile.

Psal. 18 9.  
opened.

Prayer.



will become of thy glory? In the world thou hadſt ſervice and honor done unto thee by the creature, thy Saints offered ſacrifice to thee; though ſometimes God ſeemeth to answer, I care not for this, I can and will have honor to my ſelf in ſome other way.

Further we may obſerve, *When wicked men are in perplexity, then God enjoys himſelf in his perfection*: Ezek. 18. 4. When they are in wrath and ſorrow, and God hath not that ſervice from them in external worſhip which he hath had; but I care not, I will return unto my place, and enjoy my ſelf in my glory: and in this is the miſery of the damned in Hell, we are here in eternal torments and horror, but what doth God loſe by this? He is in his glory and enjoys Himſelf in perfect reſt.

*But how long will it be before God return? will he alwaies beſent Himſelf?*

No. *Till they acknowledge their ſin.* From the Connexion of theſe words with the former, we may obſerve;

*That God ſometimes turns his back upon ſinners, until they return unto him and acknowledge their ſin.* And this is the beſt way for God to deal with ſome kind of men, let them but feel a little of the ſmart of trouble, and then they will conſider: as many men who are wilful they will do ſo and ſo, their wils ſhall be their law; now the beſt way to tame theſe men is, let them ſee what will come of it, and the evil which will follow upon their wilfulneſs will be the beſt convincement to them. So ſaies God, My Prophets and my Meſſengers can do no good upon them, therefore let them alone, According to that 1 King. 8. 47. *If they will beſhink themſelves and repent.* And this is a moſt prudential way, to deale with men who are wilful and ſtubborn.

*Till they acknowledge their ſin*] Note, That when God comes to his people, as in his judgment, ſo in his waies of mercy he leaves his place and majeſty, *He humbles Himſelf to behold what is done upon the earth*; 'tis a kind of ſelf-denial in God to meddle with man at all: As 'tis a mighty condeſcention in a Prince to com from his throne to viſit and comfort poor men in dungeons and priſons: Surely ſuch priſoners need honor ſuch.

Obſ. 4.

Damned,

Expof.

Obſ. 1.

Obſ. 2.

ſimile.

such a Prince, for he comes from his throne to visit them: how much more then had we need to honour God for his love towards us?

Expof. But to come more close to the words in the original, they are, *Till they become guilty in their own hearts, and acknowledge themselves to be so.* It signifies, to offend, to be guilty, to be desolate, and to sacrifice for sin; all these significations this word *Asham* will bear.

*Untill they become guilty.*] Were they not guilty before? Would God have them more guilty? No, but God would have them convinced of their sin, to be guilty of it, to accuse themselves for it, and clear God in all, and to behave themselves as guilty persons with sorrow and shame; and lastly, to acknowledge themselves as guilty persons before God and men: 'Tis true, as soon as ever the sin is committed the person is bound over, being guilty, but then in special he is said to be guilty when he acknowledges himself to be so.

Quest. But here's a Question: *When was this disposition wrought in them? hath it ever yet been? or is it still to be fulfilled and accomplished?*

Ans. I answer, That it was in part made good at their coming out of Captivity, Hence *Daniel* (chap. 9. vers. 5.) in the name of the whol Church speaks after this manner, *We have sinned and done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts &c.* What heaps of expressions hath he there to set out their turning? Also *Ezra*. 9. 13. & 15. it was fulfilled: and in *Nehe*. 9. 16. all these 3. Prophets prophesied after *Hosea*, though in our Bible placed before him. This text is fulfilled again in *Jer*. 31. 18. Ephraim was then guilty when he was found bemoaning himself. Again, it was fulfilled when Christ was preached, *Acts*, 2. 37. *When they heard this they were pricked in their hearts.* And certain it is this Prophecie had an aim at the calling of the Jews, then they shal become guilty; *Zach*. 12. *They shall look on him whom they have pierced &c.*

Obf. 2. That such is the pride of mens spirits by nature, *That so long as they prosper in their sins, they will even contest with God Himself:*  
Malac.

*Malac. 3. 7. But ye ſaid, Wherein ſhall we return? Is not this the ſpeech of many proud ſpirits? being taxed about any crime, they preſently answer, Wherein have they done ſuch and ſuch things? Remarkable is that of Saul, 1 Sam. 15. 13. when he told the Prophet he had performed the commandment of the Lord; then Samuel labors to convince him of his ſin ſaying, What meaneth the bleating of the ſheep and the lowing of the oxen? yet in the 20. verſe he is at it again, I have obeyed the commandment of the Lord. It was otherwiſe with David when the Prophet came to him, I have ſinned againſt the Lord, 2 Sam. 12. 13. 'tis a good ſign of a ſoul truly humbled when it can joyn iſſue with the word. Affliction ſanctified brings men to ſee their ſins and to acknowledge their guiltineſſ. God in afflictions marks men out, and then Conſcience will prey upon a man, as Simeon and Levi fell upon the men of Shechem, for then they were ſore and unable to reſiſt; in time of affliction then thou ſhalt find conſcience hard enough for thee; what pangs of conſcience have men in their ſickneſſ? ſaying as he in Prov. 5. 12. How have I hated inſtruction and my heart deſpiſed reproof? Oh what a deal of guilt is opened and diſcovered in an affliction? afflictions are to the ſoul as earthquakes to the ground, which opens the graves and diſcovers abundance of filch.*

Obſ. 3.

It is a ſign of a very hard heart not to confeſs in affliction when Gods hand is upon us, Pharaoh would do thus: and 'tis that which God requires, Joſhua bids Acan, Give glory to God my ſon and confeſſ; Confeſſion gives glory to God, and when thou ſtandeſt out in this thing, thou oppoſeſt God in his glory. Latimer reports of a man in his time who was to be executed at Oxford for ſome villany, being brought to the place of execution, much means was uſed to him, that he would confeſſ the act, but none could prevail, being turnd off, and after a ſpace hanging he was cut down, and when he was cut down, they perceived he was not quite dead, they carrying him to a fire, and by means uſed came to himſelf, and then he confeſſed all of himſelf to the full. This example may ſhew us thus much, not alwaies to conclude men

are

are not guilty, when they confess nothing, there is that stoutness in the hearts of men, that they will rather venture damnation, than yeild to men.

Obf. 3. *God will have his glory from us*; If we do not acknowledge our guiltiness by lesser judgments, he wil continue them, and ad more to them till we confess and give glory to him: This is the reason that we are so long under trouble because we will not confess when we are cald for to do it; sin in the conscience lies as filthy corrupted matter in a sore, which throbs belks and akestill it be opened and let out; so in the consciences of men, there is much guilt, and that lies throbing in the conscience, no ease can be got, God calls for confession, but it will not be, and no true peace can be enjoyed any other way; Oh therefore sinner confess, and give glory to God: How many are there who have lain a long time under anguish of spirit, till they have taken this course freely and fully to confess sin committed, lying heavy and burdensom upon the conscience? Neglect not this duty when you are cald to it, it is an Ordinance appointed by God for the easing of troubled souls, and when you cannot get peace any other way, having used other means and yet God withholds the light of his countenance, then are you cald to confess to others; see what course *David* took, and how he sped, *Psal. 39. 2, 3, 4. I was dumb, I held my peace, I roared and was vexed, but I said, I would confess my sin, and shame my self for them, and then thou forgavest the sin of thy servant.* Mark here, there was some sin which lay upon *David's* conscience, and he could not get peace in again, what course takes he? I (said he) did but say, *I would confess*; and then thou forgavest my sin, thou diddest then seal a pardon to me. Oh take this course, and thou shalt have the like success. God comes to thee in a sickness, and saith, sinner, *Guiltily, or not guilty?* give God then the glory of an humble confession. 'Tis true, to confess offences against men to men, there may be danger in it, making us liable to trouble: but confession of offences against God never causes trouble.

Expof. *And seek my face,*] that is, my Favour, my Son, and my Ordinances,

nances, for in the general, Gods face is nothing else, but Gods manifestation of himself, in his Love in his Son, in his Ordinances: and 'tis a most blessed thing thus to behold Gods face, *Revel. 22. 4.* this is that which *David* so earnestly praid for, *Lord lift up the light if thy countenance upon me*: one sight of God is better than all the world. To see God any way is sweet, but to see him in Christ this is most excellent: In the world we have nothing of God but his very footsteps, but in Christ there is the chief manifestation of the wisdom, mercy, and love of God to poor lost man; and in the Ordinances there God chiefly lets out himself in an especial manner, These are the Three things which shew unto us the meaning of those words. [*And seek my face.*] The Notes from them are these.

'Tis not enough to acknowledg our sins, but we must, seek Gods face. The heart in the work of humiliation must be active: that soul which is truly humbled before God, must be lively and active after God, else our humiliation is worth nothing in the sight of God: When the heart is sullen, lumpish, and sinking in its humiliation God looks not at it, *Ezek. 33. 10.* we reade of some who are said to pine away in their sin. Many men when God begins to afflict them with their sins, and put them into some trouble of spirit, they pine away in their iniquity: it is a very ill sign when humiliation makes men dull, sullen, and unserviceable, hindering them from dutie, when men lie down under their trouble discontented and melancholly; therefore here's the tryall of our trouble of conscience whether it be right or no; if from melancholly it duls the heart puts it out of all spirit and activity, disabling it wholly from service; but if true, it enlivens the heart, and puts activity into the spirits though naturally dull, and lumpish, it puts the soul in waies of activity for God, when they have to do with God; this is a very good sign that such trouble for sin is right and good. The melting of Lead consumes the Lead, but the melting of Silver doth but refine and purifie it: so the trouble of a carnal heart melts and consumes it, but a gracious spirit will abide the fire, and comes out purified and bettered; therefore repentance is

Obf. r.  
Confessio  
without  
reconcili-  
ation in-  
sufficient.

Dulness  
under af-  
fliction an  
ill sign.

simile

set out by a word of activity, *Isa. 55. 1, 2. Come, buy wine and milk. Mat. 11. 20. Come unto me*: The frame of a true repenting heart is in an active coming posture, fitted for any service.

Obf. 2. *When God leaves his people, he leaves something behind him, which causeth the heart to make after him*; The soul hath her eyes upon God, looking after Him.

Therefore much are they to be reprov'd, who are so full of their sad conclusions, and desperate speeches, from such as these the Lord is gone, and he will never return again, I am undone and lost for ever, there is no hope, to Hell I must go: but a gracious heart in the darkest night of sorrow and trouble can see some glimps of light and comfort, saying as that good man, *Ezra. 9. 2. Yet there is hope in Israel concerning this thing*, and as the Church in *Isa. 42. 24. Who gave Jacob for a spoil and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord? he against whom we have sinned? What then? yet O Israel fear not.*

Use 2. Let us lay up this for sad times to support our spirits with- all, we know not what sad and black daies we may see, yet know that we cannot be in a sadder condition than Ephraim was in here, to have God to be to us as a moth and as a Lyon to tear and devour us: many make their conditions worse by their desperate conclusions. *Austin* saith, that *David* prayed earnestly that he might not be cast out from that face which he had offended: Is God angry with us or the Kingdom? let us not run away from him, but earnestly seek him.

Obf. 3. *True repentance, is not so much to seek our own ease, as Gods face*; the face of God is more in the heart and thoughts of a true penitent, than its own ease, *2 Chron. 7. 14. If my people humble themselves and seek my face, then will I hear in Heaven.* We may not ease, but favor. seek our own good, but we must go beyond it, 'tis God and not our selves only which we must seek after in our seekings after God: This hath been the practice of the Saints, *Psal. 63. 1. Oh God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and barren land; not for water in a dry land, but for thy face.* So *Isa. 26. 8. In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee.* We seek God in our

daies

daies of humiliation and that earnestly ; but what are our ends ? Is it that we may have our peace, our ease, our estates, and our lives ? Indeed we may desire and seek for these, but is it the face of God we seek more than these ? if it be, we have hopes of speeding in our requests.

But what is Gods face ? *Ut amplecterentur verbum & cultos in verba propositos, hec propriam est facies Dei, qua se revelat, & nobis conspiciendum offert :* It is the word, and Gods worship propounded in the word &c. saith Calvin, as upon this place, so on that, *Seek ye my face.* Whence observe,

Calvin

*Gods Ordinances and Worship are his face.* The soule never comes to know God or have communion with Him, so as in these ; in other things darkly, in these with open face. The creatures are but his footsteps ; these His countenance, whereby we know him better than by the other.

Obs. 1.

Again, observe, *Repenting hearts are very solicitous about Gods Ordinances, and the right way of his worship.* As soon as they begin to know God and themselves, they begin to disrelish those waies of worship, that went down with them well enough before.

Obs. 2.

In times of publick calamity, the main thing we should seek after, is, *The Worship of God, His Name and His Ordinances.* Though our sufferings are great, yet we should pray, Lord, take a care of thy great Name, Ordinances, and Worship, which are dearer unto us than any thing in the world, therefore O Lord, whether we have peace or no, liberties or no, estates or not, take care of these and it sufficeth ; Let *England* enjoy but thy Name, thy Ordinances, and the government of thy Son, and we have enough ; Lord, thou knowest our peace, our lives, and estates are dear unto us, and we desire them all, but thy Gospel, thy Presence, & the manifestation of thy Face above all, and seeking of peace is all in order to this. Oh that this frame of spirit were found in us ! then how soon would the Lord return and heal all our breaches, destroy our enemies, and settle us in a sure peace ? See 1 King. 8. 44. *If they in their afflictions look towards the Temple.* So Psal. 78. 7. *All my fresh springs, they are in thee.* It follows,

Obs. 3.

Applicat.  
for Engl.

*In their affliction they will seek me early.*

*Hezekiah* sends to the Prophet, *Isa.* 37. 3. and tells him that it was a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy, as it is with us at this day; therefore saith he, *Lift up thy prayer for the remnant which is left*: and saith my text, *In their afflictions they will seek me early*. We have many rumors of peoples gathering together, and each discovering their poor spirits being dejected and cast down with every rumour of fear, my text saith, *Come, let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn and he will heal, he hath smitten and he will bind up*, therefore let our conversations be as becometh our text; providence at this time hath cast us upon a very seasonable word the Lord make it as sutable, The words are the beginning of the sixt chapter in the *Septuagint* translation, & *Hierom* begins the sixt chapter with these words, and joyn (*come let us return*) with them: the words are a prophesie of what the Lord will work in his people *Judah*, God saith that he will return unto his place, *till they acknowledge their sin*; and here they say, *Come let us return unto the Lord*: this was Gods aim in tearing them, and he had his end in it, now from the Conexion of these two, Gods wounding, and their returning unto him again, observe.

Obj. I.

*That what good God aims at in his administrations to his Elect he will have it.* In my tearing them I aim at their good, and I will accomplish it; and those means which God useth to effect this God will see that it shal perform it: God useth many means, his Word, his Works, and his Encouragements, and all these are of very great force and power to effect this, yet in the ungodly it doth not, but to the Elect it shall; God leaves not them to the means, but he will see the means to effect that good upon them which they want. When God sends the Gospel to any place, there are two sorts of people, *Reprobates* and *Elect*; now God doth to them all that is fit for him to do, now if they do not, or will not receive it, he goes his way and leaves the *Reprobates* to themselves, but to the *Elect* he follows

God in the Ministry of the Word, does both to Reprobates and Elect what is sufficient and fit for him to do



follows them on with the means and accompliſheth the good he aims at : ſome expreſs it thus, A man hath his ſervant and his child ſick of the ſtone, he provides a remedy for both ; brings the Chirurgeon to his ſervant, tells him that he is willing to be at the coſt, but the ſervant refuseth, rather chuſing to endure the miſery and pain : the maſter ſeeing his refusal goes away, and comes to his child, the child refuseth likewise, but now here the father goes not away, but commands his child to be bound, and will ſee the Chirurgeon to perform his office : ſo God offers the means to all, the Reprobates reſuſe it, God lets them alone, the Saints they reſuſe it alſo, but God will not take it ſo from them but ſets the means home upon them by his almighty power.

An apt ſi-  
militude.

But touching the words themſelves, *They will ſeek me early*; the Hebrew hath but one word to expreſs all theſe by, and it is this, *Jehacbruneni*, as if he ſhould ſay, *they ſhall morning me*, they ſhall come in the morning of their time and ſeek me. For the further opening theſe words.

ישח  
רנני  
of the mor-  
ning be-  
forelight.  
In Kal it  
is, *denigra-  
ere nigrum  
eſſe*: in  
*Pibel, ma-  
nequerere.*  
70 89 21301

What time doth this ſeeking of God refer it ſelf unto? when did the Jews thus ſeek God?

1. This refers it ſelf unto theſe three times : as firſt, when the ſeventy yeers were at an end, & this was fulfilled in *Dan. 9* *Ezr. 9.* and *Nebem. 9.* than they ſought God early, when their ſorrows and oppreſſions were greater than in Egypt as *Jeremiab* in the *Lamentations* expreſſes it.

2. Under their captivity & oppreſſion by the *Romans*, which was when Chriſt came into the world, at that time when threethouſand were converted at one Sermon which *Peter* preached to them, *Act. 2.* *And multitudes came in daily. Act. 21. 20.*

3. At the calling of the Jews, who are now in a moſt ſad and deplorable condition, and at their calling ſhall this be principally fulfilled.

How did they ſeek God in any of theſe times early? for in *Daniels* time, he ſaith, *All this evil is come upon us, yet made we not our prayers before the Lord, chap. 9. ver. 13.* they never prayed to God in all the time of their captivity with any ſeriousneſs.

Quære 2  
How 2

riousness till the end of it came: Then for the second time how did they seek God early when Christ came, when the Scripture tells us, *John. 7. 11. That he came unto his own, but his own received him not; they crucified him, and were very bitter enemies to him, even to the death.* And for the third time, at the calling of the Jews, how did they seek him early? for it's two thousand three hundred years since this prophesie was spoken, and yet they have not sought God, how then is this fulfilled, that they sought God early?

Ans<sup>w</sup>. 1. For resolution, Interpreters answer that this is to be understood not in respect of the time, but as soon as they came to be illuminated, to have their eyes open, to see any thing of the truth, in the morning of their day of grace; as in *Cyrus* his time, and upon a sudden in *Peters Sermon, and hereafter, the coming of the Son of man shall be as the lightning: this time seems to be called the day-star arising in their hearts, 2 Pet. 1.* The calling of the Jews shall be suddenly, therefore in the 2. of the *Revelation 28.* they are promised to have the *morning star to arise*, that is, some beginnings of a day of grace, those which overcome shall partake of the good of that day, and then shall be the time in which the people shall seek God early.

2

*Seek me early.*] that is, seek me diligently, *Prov. 7. 15. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee: I came forth to seek thee early in the morning,* the word is the same with this in the text, and thus this was fulfilled in the time of their captivity, *Nebem. 4. 17, 18, 19, 20.* they built the walls diligently, or inflamedly, having their weapons in one hand, and their tools in the other: so the spouse she sought Christ diligently; and in the Apostles time *Acts. 2.* they cry out, *Men and brethren what shall we do?* They were wonderfull solicitous in their seekings of Christ, and when the Jews are cald 'tis prophesied of them, that they shall be as *doves flying to the windows, Isa. 60. 8.* Hence observe.

Obs<sup>r</sup>. 1.

*In the forest and greatest afflictions which befall the people of God, God intends their good in them.* I will return unto my place, that they may seek me early: in all this that is come upon them

them, I intend them no hurt, but every way much good, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this the iniquity of Jacob ſhall be purged, and this is all the fruit, the taking away of their ſin, Iſa.* 16. 14. compared *Iſa* 26. 14. with the 9. and there we may ſee Gods different dealing in aſſiſting the wicked and the godly, in the 14. verſe we have Gods dealing with the wicked, *They are dead, they ſhall not live; they are diſeaſed, they ſhall not riſe.* The wicked they are dead, and being dead, ſhall never riſe: but in the 19. verſe, when he ſpeaks of the Saints he ſaith, *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they riſe.* Gods word ſhews a great deal of difference between the anger of God, and the anger of men, men when they are angry ſeek the deſtruction ſometimes of thoſe with whom they are angry; but God loves them in his anger; the ſpring of Gods anger to his people is love: the outward adminiſtrations of God both to the wicked and the godly may be one and the ſame, yet the root from whence they come much different, they may be love and kindneſs to the one, but wrath and hatred to the other.

We may note, *the little honor which God hath in the world:* *Obſ.* 2. God here ſpeaks of his own people, they ſeek him, but it is but ſeldom, except when in aſſiſtions, and if the ſervice be but ſmall which they perform, what is it he hath from other men? If men make uſe of you for their neceſſities, and in their extremities only, you take it unkindly, and think they ſerve themſelves more than reſpect you. *ſimile*

Oh how ill may God take it then from us, when he ſeldome or never hears from us but in our extremities. *Uſe.*

*Times of aſſiſtions are times of ſeeking of God:* this is the Apoſtles advice, *Is any aſſiſted?* let him pray, *James* 5. 13. and *Iſa.* 26. 16. *They powred out a prayer unto thee when thy chaſtning was upon them, and in their aſſiſtion they viſited thee:* they powred out a prayer to thee, it was not dropping, now and then, but it was violent, and it was a powring, and it was continual, a prayer (not prayers) in the ſingular number, noting that they made their prayers, but as one continued act, the word *prayer* in this text ſignifies inchantment, as in the ſpeaking of *three:*

three or four words there is much efficacy being an enchantment: so here, their prayers, were very powerful to prevail with God.

Reaf.

In the time of affliction the soul sees that it hath to deale with God; the false medium of things are then taken away; they see sin as sin, the false glosses wherewith sin was wont to be set out withal, are then removed. *Luther* saith, that many of *Pauls* Epistles could not be understood but by the cross. Men in prosperity can dispute against the Truth, and grow wanton with it, but let God but lay his hand upon them, how easily wil they yeeld? Afflictions awaken the conscience so that the Truths of God come with more power, *Job*, 33. 16. and *Job*, 36. 10. *He openeth their ears to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity: He commandeth them in another way to return from iniquity then. Did not God command them before? but not with that power and efficacy, the voice of prayer is very pleasing to God when fervent.*

Enter  
Paul's E-  
pistles.

*Job*, 36.  
10.  
opened

Obl. 4.

*When the Lord is pleased to work grace in the heart, that heart is taken off from all creature helps; they dare not go with Ephraim to King Jareb. (How are they then to be blamed who seek to the Devil for help in distress?) they dare not go to Counsels or to Armies for releef, but to God; it is too much to rest upon men, much more upon the Devil: Do any of you go to Inchanters or Wisards to find God? you may seek him but shall not find him.*

Obl. 5.

*We are not to be discouraged in our seeking of God, though our afflictions drive us to it. This people sought God, but their afflictions did drive them to it, yet God accepted them.*

Use.

Sit not down despairing in your afflictions, saying, God will never be gracious, our seeking Him is to no purpose: It is true, God may justly say to us, as *Jeptha* said to the people, *Do you now come to me in your distress?* So God may say, do you now come to me in your sorrows and miseries, and cast me off in your prosperity? I confess it is very dangerous venturing the putting off our seeking of God till then, but if then God be pleased to work upon your hearts, be not discouraged but seek him still. So *Joel* saith, *That in his affliction he sought the*

Caution,

*Lord*

Lord : But did the Lord answer him? Yea, his requests were granted.

Note, *That every seeking of God is not sufficient; it must be early seeking of Him.* Obf. 6.

Now men are said to seek God early.

When?

Early seeking acceptable.

1. It is, in the morning of their years; when young ones shall make this text true in the letter of it, it is wonderful pleasing to God: It may be God laid his hand upon thee in thy youth, and then God revealed the knowledge of Himself to thee, thy misery by sin, thy remedy in his Son, so that the Churches prayer, was thine, *Psal. 90. 14. O satisfy us early with thy mercie*: How many sins are by this prevented? Your father; or master (if godly) would give a world (if they had it) that they had begun sooner to serve the Lord, and to seek him early; therefore bless God who hath put it into your hearts to seek him: *John* was the young Disciple, and he in his youth began to know Christ; and of all the Disciples none had that respect shewed them as *John* had: for it is said that he lay in Christs bosom, and Christ loved him.

1. In youth.

2. As this is acceptable in the morning of our years, so in the morning of Gods revealing Himself; as soon as ever God begins to discover Himself, we should then seek Him early, when the soul saith as *Paul* said, *Acts, 26. 19. I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, neither consulted I with flesh and blood.* Hath God set up a light in your consciences? and hath it discovered to you your misery? and have you hearkened unto the voice of your consciences? What have you done since? Is sin reformed? Are you changed in the inner-man? Is Christ formed in you, and exalted upon his throne in your hearts? Is your will subjected to the will of God, and your whole man delivered up to the government of God? This were happy if it were so: But contrariwise, Is sin let in, and liked of as well as ever after these stirrings and convictions of conscience? Then are you far from the number of those who are early seekers of God.

2. At first enlightning.

3 *When we seek Him with diligence, and with fervency, not in a formal way.* When Gods hand is out against us, He then looks that we should seek him with intentiveness of spirit; See how the Church seeks God with diligence, *Isa 26.9. With my soul have I desired thee in the night season: yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.* When was this? In a grievous night of affliction, when they were in great troubles, then to seek God early, with their spirits within them, this is most emphatical. So, *Acts, 12. 5.* prayer was made by the Church for Peter, *without ceasing*, it was continued prayer, prayer stretched out; even so ought our prayers to be, lifted up with fervency: true prayer is active and working; the fervent prayer of the righteous prevails much with God *Jam. 5. 16.* Lively working prayers are prevailing prayers.

Quest. *But what is it to seek God diligently?*

Ans. 1. *When we seek God with all other things under our feet, when all other things are sought in order to this.* The soul is carried after the seeking of God with a panting and longing desire, as the Hart after the water brooks.

2 *To seek God early is, to seek him with our whole heart;* The heart is not divided in the work, every part is employed; as *Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. 20. 23.* feared and set himself to seek the Lord, he gave his whole self to the duty.

3 *When the soul bears down all difficulties in seeking of God,* when nothing shall keep him off his wook: as *Jacob* wrestled with God, and would not be put off without the blessing, *Gen. 32. 24.* So the woman of Canaan, how earnestly did she seek to Christ for her daughter? and would not be put off by difficulties, *Matt. 15. 22, 23, 24, 25.*

4. *When no means is neglected to be used, whereby that may be had which we seek for;* The soul tries this means, and the other duty, and follows God in all his waies that it may find him; as the poor woman which followed Christ from place to place to touch the hem of his garment, Christ could not be hid from her.

Resolve to die in 5. *Resolutions for to die seeking of God, is earnest seeking of God: in pursuit of it's our constant practise living, and our resolutions dying: him.*

as *Jacob*, the nearer the dawning of the day approached, the more earnest was he. How contrary are the practises of too many, who at the first seek God early and earnestly too, yet after a while leave off and grow cold: Oh that it were not thus with us at this day; the Lord hath brought us low at this time, yea how sad is our condition at this time! 'Tis true, there is a spirit of seeking abroad in the Land, but now God calls for a quickning of this, we should now put an edge upon our seeking of God; *Be fervent in spirit serving the Lord,* <sup>Uſe: England.</sup> in the original 'tis, *boyling in spirit*; let us so seek him now, <sup>Zeoves Seeking</sup> that hereafter we may praise him; *Pſal. 22. 26. they shall praise the Lord that seek him*: your hearts shall live for ever. How sweet are those mercies which are won by prayer, and worn with praises? Therefore now stir up the gift that is within you: you that never prayed before, pray now; and you that have prayed before, quicken up your diligence, and double your care: How much better it is to seek God than men? to cry to God for mercy, than to cursed men? God might have made your condition to have bin the condition of your brethren; How many are this day running for their lives, and begging of their lives at the hands of barbarous, merciless, blood-sucking monsters! and you are yet in peace seeking your God, for your selves and them.

But it may be asked, *Why should we seek God? Can we do any thing to move God? Will God be ever the sooner intreated by us.* <sup>Quest.</sup>

I answer, No, that is not the meaning of the words, that we can alter or change Gods mind; but such exhortations as these, are to make us fit and to prepare us for mercy, to boyl and raise our spirits to a futable frame and disposition for mercies expected and looked for. And thus we leave this rich Mine of the fifth Chapter, which hath been so fruitful in affording many choice truths; and come to the sixth Chapter, a rich Mine also of heavenly and most seasonable Directions; no less useful than the former. <sup>Answer.</sup>





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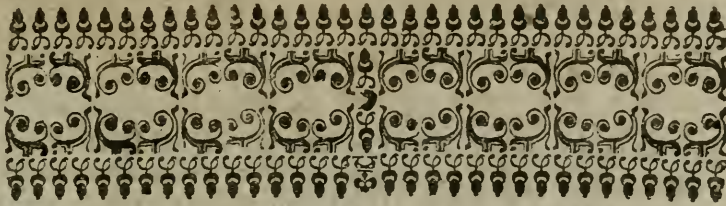
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A N  
**EXPOSITION**  
 Of the PROPHECY of  
**H O S E A.**

C H A P. V I.

V E R S E, I.

*Come, and let us return unto the L O R D, for He hath  
 torn, and He wil heal us ; He hath smitten, and  
 He wil bind us up.*

**I**n this Chapter we have these things confi-  
 derable. First, The work of Israels true  
 repentance, from the first verse to the third  
 verse. Secondly, A sad complaint of the  
 overly repentance of many in Israel, in the  
 fourth verse. Then here is a further up-  
 brading of Israel for their unkind dealing  
 with God. The first part sets out Gods peoples resolution to  
 return to Him who had smitten them, their confidence in His  
 mercy, and their blessing themselves in their happy condition

Parrs of  
 the Chap.

1

2

3.

now they were returned to him. To come to the first verse.

*Come, and let us return &c.*

These words are an excitation of the mind (not the body) to return to God; as also they shew the mighty spirit which came upon this people at this time, what a turn there was in them, as if they had said, Well, our Princes have deceived us, and our Prophets have deluded us and led us aside, we have been false in our worship, wrong in our practises, for which God hath been displeas'd with us; but now, Come, and let us return, we are resolv'd to fall down and humble our selves, *He hath smitten us, and he will bind us up.* The Seventy Translators and also Hierom take these words from Chyrurgions which use to put deep and long tents into great sores, who intends not to skin, but throughly to heal it, by eating out the corrupt flesh and filthy matter: so that these words note Israels dangerous disease, and their great corruptions, and that in their afflictions; but God would not let them die of this disease, or perish under his hand in the curing, but he would heal them and that throughly. A woman whose breasts are sore must be throughly tented before it be healed, and she bids the Chyrurgion cure her well and thoroughly though it be long and painful: So saith God, this people are very sorely wounded, but I will take them in hand and heal them, but their cure will be very long and tedious, sore and painful. Now saith this people, seeing it is thus, Come, let us return, it matters not though our healing cost us dear and it be painful, it is enough that God will heal us; Let our disease be never so grievous, Come and let us return. A man that hath a mortal wound about him, what pain will not he be willing to endure in healing so he may be sure of cure? This people conceived themselves so wounded that if God had not taken them to cure they must have perished, but in that God had undertaken the cure, they were confident they should be healed.

Septuag.  
Hierom.  
μὴν ὀρώμεν.  
But the  
common  
Septuag.  
saith, not  
this word  
but  
ἐδοῦνται,  
the former  
is in  
Hierom.  
simile.

When Gods time of mercy is come to a people He puts a mighty spirit upon them to ſeek to Him. Gods time was come for Iſraels deliverance, & now God put an active ſtiring ſpirit into them, therefore they ſay, Come, let us return; before their ſpirits were dull and lumpiſh like unto men in a Lethurgie, but now they have a ſpirit quickened for God, like unto thoſe in *Iſa.* 2. 3. And many people ſhall ſay, Come, and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, to the houſe of the God of Jacob. The like propheſie we have *Iſa.* 60. 1. and 44. 3. 5. they ſhall come off very willingly & cheerfully and ſubſcribe themſelves by the name of Jacob: As a Ship which is filled with a full & ſtrong wind in the ſails goes againſt all oppoſitions of wind and ſtormes: there is ſuch a ſpirit put into them, as the Apoſtle prays to be in the *Coloſſians*, chap. 4. ver. 12. that ye may ſtand perfect and compleat in all the will of God? Now is reformation like to go on to ſome purpoſe. At the time of Antichriſts deſtruction God hath promiſed to put ſuch a ſpirit into the hearts of the people that all his tyranny ſhall not be able to ſtand before them: God will blow upon the ſpirits of men, and they ſhall be very powerful.

Now conſidering Gods power, let not us deſpair, concerning the great Works a doing in our times. Let men be never ſo baſe and perſideous, yet when Gods time is come He will ſpeak the word for deliverance: What a miſerable ſottiſh condition was the world in a little before *Luthers* time? But when he came, what a ſpirit was raiſed in the people? And what a ſpirit hath there been raiſed amongſt us and that on a ſudden? To conſider what bondages we were in, and greater like to fall into, and that we were not made for ſlavery, to be ſlaves and vaſſals ſubjected to the wills of ſome Twenty or Thirty men: And what a ſpirit did God raiſe in our brethren of *Scotland*, when he was about to do them good and to break the neck of the yoke of their tyranny? Oh then what a curſed thing is it for any to quench, keep under, or reſiſt ſuch a ſpirit as this when it ariſes in people?

A joynt turning to God is very honorable to God. Come and let us return. It is much honor to God when but one ſoul is turned

ned to him, but when many are converted there is much glory, a multitude of praises then are offered up to God; as in *Revel. 5. 11. And the number of them which stood about the throne was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands. And so Revel. 19. 6. The multitudes of voices saying, The Lord God reigneth; Allelujab to the highest.*

Obs. 3. *Times of mercy are joyning times.* Oh 'tis very sad when men will go every one their own way; but when men joyn together in an unanimous way, saying, Come and let us set about the Lords work with one shoulder, every one encouraging each other, then there is hope the times of mercy are nigh that people: But this is our misery, the divisions and the rendings that are amongst us, being dis-joynted each from other, Oh the wantones of mens spirits now among us! for which God is much displeas'd, and certainly is one great stop in the way of mercy, that notwithstanding God hath us in the fire and threatens even our consuming, yet that we should not joyn and unite together.

Use a sad pre-  
face to

Obs. 4. *True penitent hearts seek to get others to joyn with them.* Oh how glad are they to see any comming on to seek the Lord with them, and how careful are they to give encouragement example, they perswade them with al gentleness, saying, Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord, we have found the Lord very gracious to us, Oh come, he is good still, yea and good to you, if you wil come into him: if the husband have found God good to him, he will perswade the wife, the child the servant to come to Christ. Thus much of their resolution to return: the reason follows;

*For he hath smitten us, and he will heal us.*

Hence observe:

Obs. 1. *That in times of the greatest sufferings a true penitent heart retains good thoughts of God.* God hath torn, wounded, and smitten us, what then? run away from God? think hardly of him? No, think well of him and blest his Name, even when you receive the hardest measure from God. This the people of  
God

God in former times have practiſed, *Nehemiah, Ezra,* and *Daniel*, in all their miſeries how careful were they to acquit and cleer God to be juſt in all that was come upon them? yea the Church in the time of her deſertion retains Chriſt as a King and calls him ſo, ſo that they have as high eſteems of God now in their low condition as in their proſperouſeſtate; and as they dare not entertain hard conceipts of God, ſo neither of his Cauſe, nor his People, they are not ſorry that they have been ſo far engaged for them. Many people are like bad ſervants, who while they have every thing fitting that becomes them, can give their maſters family a good report, but let them be croſt of their minds and go away in a diſcontent, Oh how vily do they ſpeak of it; and as ſturdy beggers, while they find releef and ſuccor, they can give good words, and they are their maſters and beſt friends, but let them be ſent away empty, and then what name is bad enough for them? ſo when things goes well with the cauſe of God and his people they will be on Gods ſide: Oh take heed of being ſorry that ever you were engaged ſo far as you are, or thinking to draw back, that it had been better you had not been ſo forward as you have been, this is a baſe and vile ſpirit, ſee but how low the Church was in affliction, and yet with what a gallant ſpirit ſhe carried it out, *Pſal. 44. 12, 13, 15, and 17. verſes*, in theſe times how is this text fulfilled in the 15. verſe, how do they complain that men do blaſphem, deride, and ſcorn them, and in the 17. verſe, *All this is come upon us*, What then? Is not God good, and his Cauſe good that we maintain? No, God forbid ſuch a thought ſhould enter into us: *Although all this evil be come upon us, yet have we not dealt falſly with thee in thy Covenant*: Oh let us lay up this truth, and it would be a mighty comfort and ſtay to us in theſe times, and it would be a very good riſe to prayer; for mark in the 23. verſe, *Awake, why ſleepeſt thou? Oh Lord, ariſe and help us*: Thoſe can pray to purpoſe who in the foreſt afflictions can manifeſt the moſt fear of God, and exerciſe the moſt love towards God and his waies notwithstanding.

ſimile  
Uſe of  
reproof.

Obf. 2.

*A repenting heart is not a discouraged heart.* It is such a heart as sinks not down in discouragements, saying (as some do) we are a lost people, and undone, there is no hope, we had been better never to have ventured so far as we have, but give over what we have done; it dares not draw conclusions from what hath been, to what is, and what will be, this is too much presumption for any man; *David* in the Cave can truit in God, and hide himself under Gods wing, *Psal.* 57. 1. So long as there is a God in Heaven this soul will expect help from him, a true penitent will expect mercy notwithstanding Gods severity and justice; the severity of justice in God cannot keep him from waiting for, and expecting of what God hath promised; if the soul can but get over this difficulty, the deep gulf of Gods justice, it will easily get over all other dreadfulnes of mens displeasure: a repenting heart is a purged heart and therefore not a discouraged but a supported heart, those which are unclean, of foul and filthy spirits are alwaies jealous of God and his dealings towards them: Oh let it appear that we are not of discouraged and sinking spirits by the cleanness of our lives and the purity of our converlations: carnal hearts are not discouraged when they have carnal helps to underprop them, and shall we be afraid of any difficulty, who have God for our help? Remarkable is that place, *1 Sam.* 4. 9. concerning the speech which was made to the *Philistims* upon the coming of the Ark into the camp of Israel, what a fear were they put into? yet how do they encourage themselves? Let us fight valiently for our wives and children and estates, that we and our little ones be not slaves to the *Hebrews*. So say I, let us be couragious in these times and fight for our Liberties, Laws, and Religion: Did we but spend that strength in returning unto God which we do in discouragements, Oh how soon would help come for us were we but thus resolved! Now though we must not be discouraged, when helps and means fail, but yet humbled we must be for our sins which cause these breaches, see how the Prophet *Habackuk* mannages this disposition, c. 3. v. 16, 17. we should improve our humiliation as they did, *Judges*, 20. who

The Philistines  
motive to  
courage  
in the  
battel.

who though in a good cauſe, a cauſe which God approved of Judg. 20.  
yet loſt fourty thouſand men at two battels in the proſecuti-  
on of it; what do they now? leave it off, and run away?  
No, but put on courage and reſolution, ſailed and prayed,  
and humbled themſelves before the God of their fathers, and  
then they proſpered. Oh let us be humbled that we may not  
be diſcouraged.

And as we muſt not be diſcouraged, ſo muſt we not falſly  
encourage our ſelves; as they ſaid, *The bricks are fallen down,*  
*but we can build with hewn ſtone:* ſo ſay not, this Army is loſt,  
but we can raiſe another quickly. Let us only encourage our  
ſelves in the Lord our God, let us take heed of the goodneſs of  
our cauſe thereby too much to reſt upon it, *1 Sam. 4. 3.* the peo-  
ple ſaid, *Let us fetch home the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, that*  
*when it cometh, it may ſave us:* they thought the bare having  
of that among them, would deliver them. Know that it is  
not the goodneſs of our cauſe that can bear us up, and carry  
us through difficulties, if we do not turn to the Lord.

Now that your ſpirits may not ſink under theſe troubles,  
let me give you a few proſts to lean upon. Motives  
to courag

If we have been faithful in our work, we may have this te-  
ſtimony, that what is our place to do as creatures, is perfor-  
med by us, Gods part is only remaining to be done; and  
know, though there were much weakneſſes in our performan-  
ces, yet we have to deal with a God who loves ſincerity in  
infirmities. 1.

If we ſuffer, God ſuffers more, this ſhould mightily en-  
courage us in ſufferings when God is contented to be our  
partner. 2

Know, that God ſees further than we, and knows what is  
beſt for us, when the wars firſt began we promiſed our ſelves a  
preſent end of them, and we thought it would be beſt; but  
God ſaw it was not, had we had peace at the firſt we ſhould  
not have known what to have done with it, it would even  
have undone us by that time. 3

Conſider, things are no more difficult now than they  
were at the firſt unto God; God knows as well how to deli-  
ver 4

ver in the greatest straits as if there were none at all.

5. — God usually works by contrary means, bringing light out of darkness; saving Israel in the red Sea when in the greatest danger of drowning.

6. Know, that God will be seen in the Mount; God hath his time, his set time to appear for his people, and before that time come, he will not shew himself; the soul is very prone in misery, to run into a double extream, either of presumption, or despairing by unbelief; presumption, that puts the evil day far off, and unbelief, that puts the good day far off: therefore take heed of both these.

Object. But could we have the encouragement of this people, could we say that we have returned it were something?

Ansiv. Now for this, know, that if the consideration of Gods healing mercy is more prevailing with us to turn than any misery whatsoever, if we are willing and desirous to turn, the other may be made good, that God is willing to heal and bind us up; Can we but make out the first part, of our turning, I dare affirm the second, of Gods healing; though perhaps it may be very painful, the Lord hath put a deep tent into us to eat out our putrified flesh, therefore we ought more earnestly to desire a through and sound healing, than an easy and sudden cure.

Obj. 3. *When God intends good to a people, he gives them an intimation of his love to them.* How did this people know that God would heal them and that He would bind them up? Thus they argued it out, from Gods goodness, from his Name, and from his Covenant; Oh would God but put into our thoughts to consider the mercy of God to us in the Covenant.

Quest. But I fear this would be presumption in me (may some say.)

Ansiv. I answer, No, if thy believing and resting upon the promise, sanctifies the heart and not make it secure, if thy laying hold upon the promise doth more break the heart, and make it humble and submissive, it is a right supporting the heart upon the promise and not presumption.

Obj. 4. *The apprehension of what mercy is to come, will readily cause the heart*



*heart to turn to him.* Many ſay God will not be gracious, mercy is paſt, there is no hope, therefore we will give over waiting. No, but we will ſeek him ſtill, and wait longer for mercy to come.

Laſtly, *This people being turned to God, do not make the hopes of their healing a fruit of their returning, but a fruit of Gods mercy.* Many poor ſouls think that they muſt not beleve till they are ſo far humbled, and ſo much broken: This is an error; we ſhould exerciſe our faith more upon Gods healing, than our returning, and this will cauſe us to be humbled: humiliati- on will ſoon follow after this. Good works are a good nurſe to faith, but if we make works the mother of faith that faith is not right, it's a baſtard faith.

Obt. 5.

Works &amp; Faith.

## V E R. 2.

*After two daies will he revive us, in the third day he will raiſe us up, and we ſhall live in his ſight.*

**G**ODS Works are Comments upon his Word; and it hath been ſo frequently in the opening of this Propheſie: as Chriſt ſaid of that Scripture, *Luke, 4. 21. This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears,* ſo may I ſay of this Scripture at this time, how hath God literally fulfilled it? The laſt Exerciſe you heard of Gods wounding and of his healing; How hath he healed us in a gracious manner? and how are theſe words fulfilled in the literal ſence? *After two daies he will revive us.* But two daies after our humiliation he revived us, and the third day we lived in his ſight, and if we follow on to know the Lord we ſhall know more of his counſel, and though the darkneſs of the night be not yet over, yet the morning is prepared.

But may we have ſuch ground to think ſo as this people, when any that God will revive us and that we ſhall live in his ſight. If we can prove our turning unto God, and our returning from ſin, the other may be made good; that he will revive us in our ſorrow.

If people may apply the promiſe.

The ſcope of theſe two verſes is to expreſs a further confidence

dence of repenting believing Israel in Gods goodness: before he smote them, and now he would revive them; but before this reviving comes perhaps we may be as dead men, yea lie a day (that is a certain time) as dead men, forsaken of God, quite out of his minde, yea, we may lie the second day also, that is a second time wherein we expected help, yet then also the enemy may triumph over us, yet shall we live in his sight, that is, all shall see, that the eye of God was on us for good: he will revive us, and God shall be in our sight as we shall be in his, glorious things is he about to make known to us, though it be night now, yet know his mercy is a coming, even as the morning followeth the dark night; this is the sum of these words.

Yet for the further opening of them, know that interpreters differ, they keep a great stir to know what's meant by two daies, some think it spoken of the Jewish captivity, others of the second coming of Christ, the Messias therefore: *Luther* seems to condemn their inceties, saying, he thinks them not worthy to find out the meaning of a text, who stand so curiously upon such inceties.

Luther

the meaning

The meaning therefore of the words are, *after two daies*, that is, although God do not come presently, after two daies, yet he will come, mercy though it staies long yet it will come; two daies in Scripture signifies a little and a short time; as *Numb. 9. 22.* whether it were two daies, or a month, or a year, that the cloud stayed upon the Tabernacle: two daies, that is, when we shall be in any great extremity of pain or misery,

Mercer

R. Abrah.

*Mercer* quotes *R. Abrah. Ezra filium*, who saies, that wounds end than at the first; so God may let us lie in the smart of pain and sorrow two daies, but in the third day mercy shall follow.

Christ's resurrection prophesied in this Scripture,

Interpreters generally conceive these words to have reference unto the two daies that Christ lay in the grave; and *Luther* saith that this is the Scripture which *Paul* speaks of in *I Cor. 15. 4.* *That Christ rose the third day according to the Scripture; what Scripture? why this, the third day we shall live in.*

his

his ſight; though the text Notes the confidence which repenting Iſrael had in Gods mercy towards them, yet hath it reference alſo unto Chriſt, as if they ſhould ſay, our ſtraits and miſeries may be great and we may lie in them a while, ſo did Chriſt, but he was raiſed the third day and ſo ſhall we. Mr. Calvin ſaith that God gave a famous and memorable example of Iſraels mercy after their captivity by Chriſts riſing from the grave, and this may well be meant of Chriſt as that Scripture ſhews, *Hoſea*, 11. 1. *When Iſrael was a child then I loved him, and called my ſon out of Egypt*: Who would have thought that this had meant Chriſt, but that the Scripture applies it unto Chriſt, in *Mat.* 2. 15. *And he departed into Egypt, untill the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled &c.* How darkly was Chriſt ſhadowed out in the old Teſtament? as by *Jonas* in the Whales belly three daies: Oh what cauſe have we to bleſs God who lives in the times of the Goſpel where Chriſt is manifeſted ſo clearly? what dark and miſtical intimations had they of Chriſt in thoſe daies, this was one of the cleereſt, and that of *Jonas* in the Whales belly.

Calvin.

When at any time God would comfort his people in diſtreſs, what doth he do? he reveals a propheſie of the Meſſias to come: as in *Iſa.* 7. 14. and in *Iſa.* 9. 6. and when was this? when the rod of the oppreſſor was broken in *Zacca.* 9. 9. and ſo here, God having ſmitten, wounded & torn them, he comes and heals them, promiſing life and reviving to them.

But here now, *Luther* makes an objection, If theſe words had reference unto Chriſt, they ſhould run thus, He ſhould live in his ſight, not we; and he answers it himſelf, that it notes the efficacy of his reſurrection, not only for himſelf but for many others.

*We ſhall live in his ſight*; that is comfortably, *mortis habet vices, que trahitur vita genitib.* before his face, that is, His favor ſhall be towards us for mercy; as the turning the face away ſhews anger, ſo the turning of Gods face towards us ſignifies favor:

2. We ſhall ſee his face with comfort and rejoyce in the ſight of it.

Chriſt  
Gods u-  
ſual me-  
dium to  
comfort  
his afflicted  
people  
Luthers  
Object.

Anſw.  
Oſtendit.  
fructum  
reſurrectio-  
nis Chriſti,  
we are ri-  
ſen & live  
in Chriſts  
reſurrectio  
לפניו  
ad facies  
ejus.

3. We shall eye his face in acts of obedience and he will eye our duties with acceptance.

4. It notes security in his presence: As when we are in the presence of a King his very presence is our security, and safety, so we shall live in his sight, that is, we shall be safe in his presence. The Notes from hence are,

Obs. 1.

*That Gods own people may not only be smitten and wounded by God, but may lie for dead in their own eyes, and in the eyes of all about them for a time: see it in the case of Heman, Psal. 88. 8. Ec 14. verses, Lord, why castest thou off my soul? why hidest thou thy face from me? verse 10. Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead praise thee? Ezek. 37. 3. we reade there of drie bones which should be made to live, and Revel. 11. the witnesses shall be slain and lie dead in the streets, the beast shall overcome them, the generality of those that stand for Christ shall be slain by the beast, and overcome by his power.*

Reas.  
God

works by  
contraries

The reason of this may be, because God can work about his glory by contrary means. This is a great affliction, yet not so great as sin is, when God fetches out his glory from the afflictions of his people, it costs him not so much nor so dear, as when he fetcheth it out of sin, now if Gods glory be so dear to him, that he will suffer sin to be in the world, thereby to fetch his glory out of it, why should we be unwilling that God should suffer afflictions to be upon us seeing by them he fetcheth out glory to himself? *Exod. 15. 7. In the greatness of thine excellency hast thou overthrown them which rose up against thee; how should God manifest his glorious power in raising them up? were they never brought very low? In Heaven God will manifest his glory so to us, that we shall not need such dark shadows to have it set out and opened unto us as here it is.*

Use,  
Care to  
be well  
grounded  
in a cause  
that may  
suffer.

If this be thus, take heed of drawing darker conclusions from Gods dealings than they will bear, as to say, the Lord hath forsaken us, and God will have mercy no more upon us, he hath forgotten to be gracious, or to say, he hath left his cause and turned his back upon his inheritance, therefore we should labor to be well informed in the grounds upon which  
his.

his cauſe ſtands, and is maintained, and which may uphold us in the maintenance of it; for know that God may put thee to the tryal, and if thou art not throughly grounded thou wilt apoſtatize.

*God leaves his people in that dead condition for a time; the first day they may look for help, and it may not come; and the second day he may let them lie when help is look'd for, and this may be after their seeking of God: This people they ſaid, Come, let us return unto the Lord, yet what do they ſay? after two daies he will revive us; it muſt be ſome time firſt: God is a great God, and his creature muſt wait, there is much grace exerciſed in an afflicted condition, when the ſoul quietly ſubmits to God and patiently waits upon his pleaſure, let his dealing be never ſo hard towards them; God ſometimes answers his peoples prayer preſently when they ſeek him, ſo that it may not only be ſaid, in the evening, but in the morning haſt thou heard me; not only this day, but the next alſo: ſee that place in 1 King. 18. 38, and 44. *Elijah* praies, and the Lord heard him preſently, but he praies again, and then the Lord deſers: in the 38. verſe he praies for fire to come down to conſume the ſacrifice, and it did ſo; but in the 44. verſe of the ſame chapter he praies again for rain, and ſee in what a poſture he praies in and obtained his petition with much difficulty, ſent his ſervent Seven times, and at the ſeventh time it was but a little cloud; at firſt God heard him preſently, but he praies again, and then mercy comes difficultly, yet God was not angry with *Elijah*. So *Daniel*, he prayes and was heard preſently; but the people they pray, and pray earneſtly, yet they were not answered.*

Oh therefore let us take heed of impatency and frowardnes of ſpirit in trouble, and of being weary of duty, and growing careleſſe in holy ſervices, becauſe an answer comes not preſently, this ſhows the rottenneſſe of our ſpirits as much as any thing, and 'tis as evident a ſign of an hypocrite as any we have in Scripture. *Iſa. 8.* they faſted and prayed ſo long that they thought themſelves mightily wronged becauſe they were not heard; therefore are they ſo bold to ask God a reaſon why

Uſe:  
be patient  
in prayer.

he.

he was so far behind-hand with them when they had done so much service for him? Oh boldnesse of spirit!

Obs. 3.

*That the time of Gods reviving his people, is neither long in Gods nor the Saints account; 'Tis but two daies, the third day we shall*

Isa. 31. 5.  
opened

*live. Isa. 31. 5. As birds flying, so will the Lord be swift to help Jerusalem; He hath promised not to contend for ever; and*

1 Pet. 1. 6  
rightly  
pointed.

*in 1 Peter, 1. 6. Though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness, through many tribulations: in the Original 'tis, If now, if need be, so that there is great need of afflictions before God sends them. So 2 Cor. 4. 17. afflictions they are for a moment a very little time: Faith, that lifts up the soul upon two hills, where it seeth Heaven on the one, and the vally of Achor in the middle, and it so works in the soul that it causeth it to be patient in suffering the greatest tryals, it is a sign of a distempered spirit, to complain of the length of an affliction, a gracious heart desires more the sanctifying it than taking it away; we might have been swallowed up in the gulf of eternal misery. Hag. 2. 6. yet a little while and I will shake Heaven &c. But it was between five and six hundred yeers before this shaking came, viz. at the coming of Christ; our impatience make affliction seem long.*

Obs. 4.

*In the saddest condition, faith makes present and real Gods reviving mercies. When their help is gone, in the mount of mans extremity will God be seen. We should reason thus, because Gods people are in great extremity, then 'tis a sign that God will arise and help them, and not despair and give over our hopes; as before the morning light is the thickest darkness, so let us never be discouraged at the encrease of afflictions, for they shew the time then hastens for deliverance; and this faith makes present to the soul, it shews the soul life in death, favor in frowns, love in strokes, faith seeth a great difference between the strokes of God upon the Saints and upon the wicked: that place is famous for this, Isa. 26. 14. compared with the 19. They are dead, they shall not live, they are diseased, they shall not rise. When God strikes wicked men their wounds forerun death here, and eternal death hereafter, when he smites them in their cause, in their names, or estates, 'tis*

simile.

to undo them: But now mark in the 19. verſe, *Thy dead men ſhall live, together with my dead body ſhall they ariſe.* Some think that theſe words note the glorious condition of the Church in regard of their ſafety, that though men and means fail, yet faith can ſee deliverance in the womb of an infinite wiſdom, power and faithfulneſs, Faith revives other graces when ſeeming dead and puts life into them, much more doth it into our dead conditions; 'tis reported of the \*Criſtal, that it hath ſuch a vertue in it, that the very touching of it quickens other ſtones, and puts a luſtre and beauty upon them. This is true of faith, it makes evil things preſent, far off, and good things far off, preſent, and herein conſiſts the exerciſe of faith in a great meaſure, *Pſal. 91. 7. A thouſand ſhall fall on thy left hand, and ten thouſand on thy right hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee:* this is a very ſtrange ſpeech, that a man may be in a place where a thouſand ſhall fall by him, and ten thouſand on the ſide of him, and yet he not touched by the diſeaſe. By faith the ſoul enjoys this ſecurity. *Pſal. 60. 6. God hath ſpoken in his holineſs. I will rejoyce, I will divide Sechem and met out the vally of Succoth:* the thing was not yet done, yet they rejoyced in it as preſent; faith it enables a dead and a barren womb to bring forth a child, it raiſeth up a dead ſon out of the aſhes, *Abraham* bids his ſervants to ſtay at the bottom of the hill, and expect his coming, Oh ſtrong was his faith in this thing.

How unbecoming are our ſpirits and how is our faith manifeſted to be weak and poor, when a mercy promiſed is within ſight ready to be fulfilled and made good, yet how impatient are we and froward when it comes not ſo ſoon as we deſire? when we are full of ſuch determinings againſt our ſelves or the Cauſe of God, ſaying, alas all is now gone, we are left deſperate, God hath forſaken his Cauſe, Oh let us take heed of pleaſing our ſelves with this kind of carnal arguing and objecting, for they are ſuch as mightily provoke God and diſhonor him, and hinder much good which elſe we might enjoy.

*But were I worthy, I could think ſomething, then I might have ſome hopes.*

Faith re-  
vives o-  
ther graces  
\* *Vi viues  
alij lapidi-  
bus pretio-  
ſis extin-  
ctis, ſolo at-  
tactu luſci-  
tores.*

Guliel.  
Parif.

Uſe of  
reproof.

Anfw. In this case do thou exercise faith upon Christ even in thine unworthyness, and though thou maiest die and not see the harvest, nor reap the fruit of thy prayers, yet know the generations to come shall, and this may comfort thee. That speech of *Jacob* is remarkable to this purpose; when he lay a dying, saith he, *Eebold I die; but God shall do much more for you.* The Cause may be troden down for a while, and God may hide himself, but know, that he wil keep his Covenant with thee, he never yet broke Covenant; so long as Christ is thine and thou art his, Gods faithfulness in keeping Covenant is also thine; what if those that stand for Christ and his Cause be sometimes beaten, must they therefore give over? No, but venture still, and if our sins hinder not, though we may lie dead to day, and to morrow, yet the third day we may live in his sight.

Obf. 5. *Mercies after two daies death, are reviving mercies.*

*After two daies I will revive you.* Promises in times of afflictions are sweet indeed: Oh then, how much more deliverance? Such mercies are resurrection-mercies which God sends after killing afflictions. And such mercies hath the Lord given us at this very day; the Lord hath revived us when almost dead, therefore would we give God the glory of such mercies, and render unto him due and seasonable praise for such seasonable mercies, let us observe these rules.

Applicat.  
for Engl.

First, Look back to your base unbelieving hearts formerly, and chide them, upbraid them with this now, Oh vile heart of mine, did not I begin to say, Alas I am undone, all is now lost, my hopes are now abortive? was not I sorry that ever I was so engaged as I am? were it to do again I would be better advised? did not I think newters which had never manifested themselves for God in his Cause in a far better estate than I, and wish my self in their condition? how hath the Lord been dishonored by me? what secret pining and grudging thoughts have I had even against God Himself, because of the various dispensations of providence? Say now oh base vile unbelieving heart, how hath the Lord confuted thee, and made thee to see thy shame and ignorance in believing sence rather than faith?

Second-



Secondly, Hath God beſtowed reviving mercies upon you ? then be willing to give God the glory of them, and reſign them up to him, upon this ground, becauſe we have forfeited them by our unbeleef: an unbeleaving heart forfeits all mercies before he hath them ; 'tis true God gives many precious mercies to ſad, dūmpish, froward, diſcontented ſpirits, but you cannot have that comfort in your mercies which others have becauſe they are forfeited, and though God through his bounty lets you enjoy them, yet you are in fear continually leſt God ſhould take his forfeiture. Oh beleeve your mercies in the promiſe through the difficulties.

Thirdly, Remember the Covenants which you made unto God in the times of your trouble, and keep them. 'Tis a provoking ſin to break Covenant with God, God complains of it againſt Iſrael, *Pſal. 78. 38. They flattered him with their lips in making Covenants to him in their trouble, but they were not ſteadfaſt in their Covenants.* Oh how uſual is it with men in any miſery to Covenant largely with God, and preſently to forget what they have done ! this is a ſign of a falſe heart, therefore take heed of it. Lay more wait upon your Covenants which you make, if ever you mean to give God real praiſe for any mercy.

Fourthly, Conſider how much better it is to give God the glory of a mercy willingly, than force him to extort it from you in a way of wrath ; God is better pleaſed with active praiſe, than paſſive for his mercies ; conſider, glory he will have for his mercies, Oh put not God to that trouble to force his own glory ſo due to him. from you, if you give not God the glory of a mercy in poſſeſſion, he in wrath will take it from you : and had not God given us this reviving mercy, it might have been our caſe to have been forced to give God his glory in a paſſive way.

Fifthly, Whatever God calls for now, from you, be willing to give it up to him freely ; whatſoever we would have been willing to have given for ſuch a mercy in our miſery, had God indented with us for it, let us be ready and willing to give it to him now the mercy is come ; had we known our

danger and the miseries which would have flowed in upon us had not mercy prevented, if God should have said thus, What would you do? what would you suffer? what would you part withal for me? and you shall be delivered out of this danger and possess the contrary mercy? Then seeing God hath given us such a mercy without this indenting, make this an arguement to come off freely in giving God that which he now calls for; you have been (perhaps) in bodily fears and danger of death by some sickness, now if God should have cald for your estates, would not you have given them to him? Do that now which you would then have done.

Lastly, Lay up against unbelief for time to come. Hath God remembred us in our low estate? let us say with *David*, *We will trust in him so long as we live*, we will never determine so as formerly we have, either against our selves or the cause of God, we wil never entertain hard thoughts of God more, but we are resolved to do what belongs to us as creatures, and leave the success of the business to God; apply this any way and it will be very useful: hath God helped us in any soul-trouble? revived thee in the depths of sorrow when God hid himself from thee? lay up the passages of God towards thee in this case against all the risings of unbelief whatsoever, resolve upon this; that thy soul shall relye upon him for help whatsoever becomes of thee, this is to give God the glory of reviving mercies. *Psal. 18. 1, 2.* thus doth *David* appropriate God to himself and gathers strength from this to support him, *David* at this time was in a great straight by *Sauls* persecution of him, that he gave all for lost, *I shall one day perish by the hands of Saul*; but he soon recals himself again, *It was in my hast*, he said in his hast the Prophets of God (*Gad* and *Nathan*) they are lyars, they tell me that I shall be King, that I shall sway the Scepter in Israel, but 'tis nothing so, I am like to be kild and betrayed every moment, such enemies wait to catch me, and is it ever likely that I should sit upon the Throne and be King? So, men in their hast are ready to think that God will forsake them, and leave his cause upon every frown and hard word which he speaks; but *David* found

found a reviving mercy preſently upon it in the 1. and 2. verſes of the 18. *Pſalm*, where he praized God for that mercy, which formerly he would not beleeve; before in this 2. verſe he ſets out God in way of praife by eight titles, and all his propriety in them for ſtrengthening of his faith. 1. *My rock*, 2. *my ſortreſſ*, 3. *my deliverer*, 4. *my God*, 5. *my ſtrength in whom I will truſt*, 6. *my buckler*, 7. *the horn of my ſalvation*, 8. *my high Tower*; from all theſe titles of God as his, he ſtrengthens himſelf. In all the Scripture I know not ſuch a ſhort text ſo full for the ſtrengthening of faith as this is: and it is the ſpecial work of faith to make God to be ours in all theſe relations; Oh how beautiful would our praifes for reviving mercies ſhew could we but exerciſe our faith thus upon all theſe titles of God as ours.

8. Relations of God in *Pſal.* 18. 2 with the Believers propriety in them. *Pſ.* 18. 2. An eminent prop of faith.

*The real ſight of deliverance from evil and the apprehenſion of certain mercy a coming, is a ſtrong argument to put the ſoul on to turn to God.* This people did make this uſe of mercy coming to them, What wil God after two daies deliver and revive us? Come then, and let us return unto him, let us not any longer ſtand out but come in, that he may revive us and raiſe us up. When the ſoul ſees mercy coming it beholds God outbidding all other temptations, and over-powering all difficulties; when men by ſence can behold mercy coming they will then think it beſt to turn to God, happy are thoſe who by faith can ſee mercy coming a great way off and thereby are ſtirred up to turn to God, when God lets ſuch thoughts as theſe into the ſoul and ſettles them upon the ſpirit; I am now in a very good condition, well and in health for the preſent, but where may I be within two daies? I enjoy peace and have every thing that heart can deſire, both for neceſſity and delight, but within a ſhort time where may I and theſe be? Theſe are dreadful thoughts to conſider of: But on the other ſide, to beleevers theſe words are very comfortable and full of ſweetneſs, I am in great extremity of miſery, but after two daies they will blow over, then oh where ſhall I be? in heaven, in joy and bleſſedneſs for evermore, at reſt with my Saviour; dreadful are the meditations from theſe words to all the

wicked, but very sweet and comfortable to the Saints of God, as any text I know. This consideration made *Paul* overlook all his afflictions, *2 Cor.* 4. 17. he thus considered, I is true, I am under great afflictions, but they are but light, and 'tis but for a moment, and what shall I have then? An eternal waight of glory. Therefore Christians should not be alwaies poring upon their afflictions, but look up to mercy, behold that which may comfort them as well as what may discourage them; consider, that within two daies God will raise us up again, and this wil mightily raise our spirits and quell the tumults in our hearts; as we should be sensible of Gods hand to be humbled for our sins the cause of it, yet should we take care that we do not destroy our selves by our fears.

Obf. 7.

*The apprehension of the death and resurrection of Christ is a special means to help faith in the times of the greatest afflictions: Many things may help faith in this case, but the consideration of Christs resurrection is the chief: when the soul shall exercise faith thus; I am thus and thus afflicted and in misery, so was Christ and much more, although he were the Son of God, the first begotten of the Father, and so blessed for ever, he was delivered up into his enemies hands, scorned, persecuted, and contemned, nay, he was crucified and put to a shameful death: but my condition for the present is not thus, but if it should be so it is no more than Christs was; in this his great misery all his friends forsook him, which aggravates their misery which are in straits, in so much that those two Disciples which went to *Emmaus* said, *We had thought that God would have delivered Israel by this man: What a low condition did God bring Christ unto? and yet this was the greatest work that ever was done, and such a work as brings God the most glory of any work in the world; was the Church ever in a lower condition than Christ himself was? yet Christ was raised and delivered out of them all, yea this was a special end why Christ was brought into such a low estate, to be a comfort and a pattern for his Churches, that may come into the same condition which he was in; and seeing this is held forth unto us in a cleerer way than it was to the Jews under the**

Christ therefore become miserable for our consolation.

the:

the Law, we ſhould make more uſe of it than they did? was Chriſt ſo low that the wrath of God was upon him, for ſatisfaction even to death? this ſurely was a very low condition; and now, is there any hope that ever he ſhould be raiſed from this? yea now was Gods time to ſhew his power, and to declare him to be his Son, God beſpeaks his people in all their ſtraits thus, Did my power raiſe my ſon in ſuch a low eſtate? it is able alſo to raiſe you; as the Apoſtle argues in the 1 Cor. 15. *If Chriſt be not riſen, the dead are not raiſed &c.* ſo from thence I alſo infer, That the Church muſt riſe becauſe Chriſt is riſen; if the Church does not riſe, Chriſt is not riſen; and if ſo, then our preaching is in vain, and your faith is to no purpoſe; therefore raiſe up your ſaddened ſpirits upon this ground; well, Chriſt is riſen, and I alſo ſhall riſe with him. It was wont to be the ſalutation of the Chriſtians in ancient time, *Chriſtus reſurrexit*, Chriſt iſ- riſen: ſo the Saints may conclude though brought very low, yet that power which raiſed the head will in his time raiſe the body and make it glorious with himſelf.

*Chriſt is riſen: the ancient form of ſalutation among Chriſtians*

*And we ſhall live in his ſight.*

As Iſrael was repenting ſo it was believing Iſrael alſo; and as their believing furthered their repentance, ſo their repentance furthered their faith; they were confident that they ſhould live in his ſight.

*Faith and repentance mutually act one another.*

*When God grants mercies to his people, he would have them of lively ſpirits, to be quick and vigorous and of active ſpirits.* And this is the ſcope of the holy Ghoſt in this text, however the Saints may ſeem as dead men when wicked men prevail over them, yet when God gives reſt and life they ſhall be lively and full of ſpirit; God loves not to ſee his people of a ſad ſullen penſive diſpoſition; when that they have matter of the greateſt joy in the world.

*Obſ. 1.*

*When God is reconciled to a people, his face is then towards his people, he looks then upon them and loves them, Apoc. 22. 4. And they ſhall ſee his face.* God doth not deal with us as David did with his ſon; 2 Sam. 14. 24. *And the King ſaid, Let*

*Obſ. 2.*

*him*

him not see my face any more. But if God be once reconciled all the frowns in his face are turned into smiles, he is all lovely towards them.

Use 1. Now how incongruous a thing is it, that when God smiles we should lowr, be heavy and lumpish: And as God smiles when we humble our selves; So should we look cheerfully upon our children and servants, upon their submission having committed a fault.

Obs. 3. Gods people account their life to be in Gods favour, not so much in what they receive from God, as what they are in Gods favour and presence. Hypocrits desires are only for the enjoyment of mercies, & if they obtain their desires they are contented, though they have no presence of God at all in them: but the Saints if they have precious mercies and no presence of God with them it contents not them; if they have health and not Gods presence in it, if they have peace and not their peace with God it satisfies not them; this is their cry, Lord, let us hear thy voice, let me see thy face; for thy voice is pleasant, and thy countenance comely.

Obs. 4. When the Lord delivers his repenting beleeving Israel, he settles mercy upon them, and settles their hearts in the possession of mercy. He doth not only give them hints, but real possessions of mercy. We are revived and raised, yea but we may die again: No, we shall live in his sight, we shall live before him. Mercies to the Saints are not the fruit of Gods patience, for then they would not be settled mercies: But they are such mercies as comes from the Covenant of grace, and so they come to be settled, therefore called, *the sure mercies of David*, Isa. 55. 3.

Obs. 5. Faith is such a grace, as raises the soul high and will not be contented with small mercies. He will revive us, and He will raise us up; Is that all? No, but *we shall live in his sight*. It is an argument of a very carnal heart to be contented with low mercies, when a man will be put off with any thing: It pleaseth God very well, when his people will not be put off with small mercies: though it's true, we must be thankful for the least mercie, and content with it in opposition to murmuring, yet we must not rest therewithal satisfied, but if thy faith be true,

it

it wil expect more, and if it hath got a promiſe from God it wil improve it to the utmoſt extent that the promiſe wil bear, and when it hath one promiſe fulfilled it wil look out for the anſwering of another; we do not approve of ſuch a craving diſpoſition in a beggar, but God is much delighted with it in his people,

Gods people rejoyce much in this, *That God ſees them, they* Obſ. 6.  
*have much comfort from Gods eye;* whereas 'tis the greateſt ter-  
 ror to the Hypocrites that God ſees them, that they are conti- hypocrits  
 nually in Gods eye, *Job, 24. 17.* If one know them they are  
 in the terrors of the ſhadow of death, if man being a ſpectator  
 is ſo terrible, how much more is Gods eye? It's no wonder  
 they would fain hide themſelves from his preſence, for the  
 face of the Lord is againſt them that do evil, but his eyes are  
 over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer; *1*  
*Pet. 3. 12.* The Saints account it their priviledge that God  
 ſees them, and it's a very good ſign of ſincerity, when the ſoul  
 is not afraid that God ſhould ſee him, when the ſoul can look  
 upon the clear beams of the Sun of righteouſneſs without da- ſimile  
 zeling, as the Eagle when ſhe would prove her young ones  
 holds them up in the ſight of the Sun and if they can endure  
 the ſhining and look upon it, then are they of the right  
 kind. Obſ. 7.

*It is the great care of the Saints to walk as in Gods ſight,* and to  
 have their eyes in Gods ſight, *Pſal. 16. 8.* *I have ſet the Lord*  
*alwaies before me, becauſe he is at my right hand I will not be mo-*  
*ved, I will not fear, I have ſet him before me,* this text is  
 ſpoken chiefly of Chriſt as a Prophetical expreſſion of him.

And if Chriſt muſt be kept from falling, by ſetting the Uſe  
 Lord alwaies before him, much more muſt we, not that he  
 was in danger of falling as we are, but this is to be under-  
 ſtood as that text is, he learned obedience by his ſufferings,  
 he looking at God, helped him to obey and to ſtand in obey-  
 ing; as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *What we ſpeak it is as in the ſight of* 2 Cor. 2  
*God in Chriſt,* that is, what we ſay, it is in the power and effi- ult.  
 cacy of Chriſt: but how comes this to paſs, that they thus  
 preach? why as in the ſight of God? We thus preach, his  
 power enables. The

Obf. 8. *The eye of God upon his people is their safety, and security. The forenamed place testifie it, 1 Pet. 3. 12. The eyes of the Lord are the safety and guard of the righteous; as a child thinks it self safe if it be in the parents eye; so the Saints should look upon themselves very secure in the sight of God. A Philosopher could say in danger of Shipwrack in a light starry night, Surely I shall not perish there are so many eyes of providence over me. Could a Philosopher say thus, and may not a Christian say so much more, that he shall not perish seeing Gods providential eye is over him?*

simile

A notable speech of an hearth in danger

## VER. 3.

*Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: His going forth is prepared, as the morning; and He shall come unto us, as the rain; as the latter and former rain unto the earth.*

**T**HIS Scripture is very full, and hath much sweetnesse in it: As an egg is full of meat, so full are these words of marrow and sweetnes; and there is little difficulty in them.

*We shall know, if we follow on to know.*

**וְנִדְעָה**  
**נִרְדְּפָה**  
*Incumbamus in id  
ne cognoscamus Do-  
minum.*

[If] is not in the original, but it is thus read, *And we shall know, and we shall follow on to know.* The word signifies to persecute and persecute, to follow one as eagerly as a man which persecutes another, and persecutes him, as Paul did the Saints, with all intention and affection: when men thus follow on to know, God will reveal Himself more. Luther applies these words to Christ, and the Gospel revealing him, setting mens minds on fire by the truth so clearly discovered, and inflamed with such love to it, that they followed on to know it. But although these words have reference to Christ, yet first they are to be understood of Gods delivering his people out of Captivity: *Then they shall know: What shall they know? that they shall live in his sight.* When God delivers them, then they shall know.



1. Gods faithfulneſs in his Covenant made to our fathers, What the  
'tis very little that we know of it now, but the time is coming ſaints ſhal  
that we ſhal know it cleerly. know

2. The works of Gods wiſdom, al working for his peoples good in their luſtre and beauty. whē they  
follow on  
to know  
the Lord.

3. The excellency of Gods power, how it over-rules all things, and how it is ſtretched out for the Saints good.

4. The mercy of God acting every way for their beſt advantage; we are now in great miſery, and our troubles increaſe, and we cannot ſee how mercy is working for good; but then we ſhal know.

5. The mind of God we ſhal then know, that we are in darkneſs, not only in our troubles, for the outward man, but in our ſpirits; 'tis very little that we know of God now at the beſt, but we ſhal know him cleerly.

6. The vanity of all worldly pomp, and glory, and the folly of all carnal confidence; men are now ready to call the proud happy, and bleſs the works of iniquity, and run to King Jareb: but then we ſhal know that God is able to deliver his people out of all ſtraits.

7. That it is not in vain for the people of God to ſeek him, even then, when all humane helps and hopes fail, then they ſhal know that there is a power and efficacy in prayer, as 'tis Gods Ordinance, to help them in difficulties.

8. The meaning of many propheſies which are now very dark and obſcure, and yet much ſweetneſs in them for the Churches of God; and if this will be worth the knowing, let men that know any thing be Judges.

9. The glorious purpoſes and decrees of God that he had from all eternity for our good, God hath glorious purpoſes, although we for the preſent know them not, but we ſhal know them, there is ſuch a time that all theſe things and much more than theſe ſhal be revealed to them.

*They ſhal know them, if they follow on to know them.* [If] is not Expoſ. 1.  
in the Original; but put in to fill up the ſenſe; but if we take the words literally, *we ſhal know if we follow on*; then the ſenſe runs thus; Doth God reveal himſelf to his people?

and do his people lay hold of the opportunity? they shall know more. And if you take the words without *If, thus, You know and follow on to know*: the meaning is, *That when God begins to show mercy he will go on to show more mercy*; so that these words are a motive to turn to God, or an expression of their confidence in God, God was now in the dark, his presence was clouded towards them, and the enemies scoffed and mocked at them, saying *where is now your God?* The people answer, *We shall know our God again, and he will discover himself to our comfort, but to your shame.* The Notes are.

Obs. 1. *True penitents turn to God, that they might know God.* As there must be some knowledge before turning to God, so turning to God that we may know him more; and the desire of knowing him should not be so much to deliver from hell, as to be fitted thereby to do him more and better service: the hypocrite if he have but as much service and knowledge to manage it as to attain his own ends he is satisfied; but a gracious heart dares not do so.

Obs. 2. *No man can turn to God, but as Gods face is towards him*: We cannot turn to God except that God turn first to us, when he giveth quietness who then can cause trouble, *Job, 34. 29.*

Obs. 3. *When God comes to his people in mercy he reveals much of himself unto them*: and according to the degrees of his coming unto them are the manifestations of himself unto them, either more or less, he gives them something in this life, an earnest penny at the beginning, and at death the full payment, the perfect enjoyment of all promised good; faith can see a glory in God, even in the darkest times, but in the times of light then it can see abundance of mercy.

Use, Therefore 'tis Christian wisdom to take notice of the mercies we enjoy, else we cannot glorifie Gods Name, Oh how much of the faithfulness, power, wisdom, goodness, and mercy of God in turning the counsels, plots, and devices of the wicked for our good we might have known, had we but diligently observed the mercies we have enjoyed. Those who see not the glory of God now shining brightly in the world, have very little light in themselves, but must needs be very dark,

dark, or wonderful negligent in the obſervation of the good things they enjoy from God; *Revel. 11. 19.* *John* who ſaw the bleſſed eſtate of the Church which it ſhould be in, he ſaith the Temple of God, the Ark of the Teſtament was kept in the holy of holies, and none of the people could ſee it, yet *John* ſaw the time when the holy of holies ſhould be opened, therefore 'tis ſaid, that *John* ſhould prophete again, *Revel. 10. 11.* not that he ſhould ariſe again and prophete, but the time is coming that the Revelations ſhall be ſo clearly underſtood as if *John* had written a new Revelation, according to that in *Iſa. 30. 26.* a Scripture paralel to the text, the Lord promiſeth when he bindeth the breach of the people & heals the ſtroke of their wound, *In that day the light of the Moon ſhall be as the light of the Sun.* Knowledge ſhall wonderfully encreaſe, there ſhall be very glorious manifeſtations of God, to his people, and this text in *Iſa.* ſhews plainly that my text hath an eye to that time in which God will exalt his Church and make it glorious in the eyes of all beholders.

Rev. 10.  
11.  
opened

*The knowledge of God, is a very comfortable thing to the Saints; they ſpeak here in a triumphing way; then ſhall we know if we follow on to know; any thing of God makes gracious hearts to ſpring with joy and gladneſs; ſuch a ſoul looks not ſo much at the quantity, the multitude of mercies which it enjoyes; as how much of thoſe mercies it enjoyes: It is the happineſſe of the Saints in Heaven, to know God, and to have the ſight of God, and ſo it is here, This is eternal life, To know Thee and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent; not only to know him, but to know him as he appears for his Churches deliverance: how many are there now in Heaven bleſſing God that ever their eyes beheld theſe daies? Nay certainly, ſhould God but let our forefathers out of their graves to ſee what a turn of things here is, and what an answer of their prayers; they would be as men aſtoniſhed, in a maze: If it be ſo comfortable to ſee and know God in this life, what will it be in Heaven, where ſhall be nothing to darken this ſight of God?*

Obl. 4.

*Thoſe that turn to God ſhall know God, and the more they turn, the more, they ſhall know of him; yea, this they may be ſure of, what*

Obl. 5.

ever else we here enjoy. *Dan. 9. 13.* All this evil is come upon us; yet made we not our prayer unto thee, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand thy truth. If we understand thy truth and turn from our iniquities, we shall know more of the truth: the pure in heart shall see God, *Mat. 5. 8.* Oh the sweet light which purified minds enjoy, to these God reveals his secrets and acquaints them with the mystery of his Covenant, *Psal. 25. 14.* of which the great Rabbies of the world are ignorant of, these things are mysteries unto them; and this is the reason why they are so ignorant of them, Because they turn not unto God, neither labor to know God.

Obs. 6.

Those that truly know something of God, desire to know more of him: As he that is learned in something, covets after more still; and certainly, none but ignorant people are enemies to learning: those that never knew the worth of it, these are they that cry it down; therefore those which are contented with little, nay and think their little too much sometimes, are of poor, mean, and base spirits, far from following on to know the Lord.

Learning

Obs. 7.

A gracious heart is willing to put forth strong endeavors in the use of means to encrease and get more knowledg of God; he will slip no time, neglect no opportunity in which knowledg may be encreased; *Dan. 9. 13.* This was *Solomons* prayer, *1 King. 3. 9.* Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart; in the Hebrew it is, Lord give me a hearing heart. Though God had discovered himself wonderfully, yet he desires that God would discover himself to him more: therefore they are very foolish that think they know enough of God, and are contented with what they know; 'tis a great blessing of God to have a hearing ear, and an understanding heart: no marvail the Saints take so much pains to know the mind of God, therefore what a fond opinion is it, and what a sluggish spirit does it manifest to be satisfied with that knowledg which hath been before in former times? therefore such speeches as these, What, shall we be wiser than our forefathers? we are to bless God for the knowledg of our forefathers, and say as Master *Greenbam* did, I bless God for what our forefathers knew, saith he

M. Greenbam.

he, I bleſs God alſo that hath kept back ſome of his counſels for this generation to be acquainted with. 'Tis an argument of a poor ſpirit to reſt ſatisfied with ſmal meaſures of knowledg; the light three or four hundred yeers ago was ſmal, and in theſe daies our light is poor and ſmall to that which ſhall be revealed, it is very little in the matter of worſhip in the ordering of his houſe, therefore had not we need to follow on to know the Lord? therefore God forbid that there ſhould be any ſpirits ſcorn at the new lights which God diſcovers, therefore let us be humbled for our ſignornace & now begin to follow on to know the Lord; it is true, there no new truth in reſpect of the word, but in reſpect of the manifeſtation of them to us they may be ſaid to be new.

*It is a bleſſed thing for a man or woman, to take notice of Gods revealing himſelf to them.* Oh how happy a thing had it been for many of us, if when God firſt began to ſtir our hearts we had followed on to know the Lord! How ſad is it for many to look back to former daies? what glorious and ſweet manifeſtations had they of Gods love in former times? but through worldly cares and ſluggiſhneſs of ſpirit have loſt all and are now in the dark, and cannot ſpeak of God in any ſavoury way? whereas many who are younger and have kept their communion with God, know more of God, and are able to ſpeak more ſweetly of the goodneſs of God than they; and you who thus know God in your youth, bleſſe God that He hath entered you into this light, and make much of it; for as Chriſt ſaid to Nathaniel, *Joh. 1. 50. Doſt thou believe, when I ſaid I ſaw thee under the fig tree? Thou ſhalt ſee greuter things than theſe.* So do you bleſſe God for what you do know, and God wil reveal more.

Obſ. 8.

*Thoſe who follow on to know the Lord, may be encouraged that they ſhall know more of Him.* The diligent hand maketh rich; it matters not though thy parts are weak, thy abilities mean, thy failings many, if Chriſt be thy Teacher it matters not, thy weakneſſes ſhall not hinder his inſtructions; Chriſt teaches the weak as wel as the ſtrong, nay Chriſt accounts it his glory to teach ſuch; nay, the Father Himſelf is not aſhamed

Obſ. 9.

to instruct them; nay, Christ gives thanks to his Father that He hath revealed these things to babes and sucklings, Christ is a meek, gentle, lowly teacher, very mild and loving, he will neither upbraid them with their weaknesse, nor discourage them in their dulnesse; Christ here speaks to poor, weak, burdened sinners: Who would be discouraged? Did not Christ teach thus mildly? I will not upbraid for thy ignorance: No, to thy soul will he give wisdom liberally, and infuse the principles of saving knowledge into thee: *Col. 1. 10. Being filled with every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.* Great are the treasures of knowledge which a diligent Christian may obtain. *Psal. 36. 10. Draw out thy loving kindness O Lord, unto them that know thee.* Thou hast some glimmering knowledge of God, some spark of Divine light; blesse God for it, go on still, and follow on to know the Lord, and then thou shalt know more. It is a heavy curse upon those women in *Timothy*, that they are alwaies learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth.

2Tim. 3. 7

Object.

But many a poor soul may here object: *That if this be thus, I fear it is my condition, that the means aggravates the sins that I commit, and leaves me inexcusable.*

Answ.

To answer thee, If thou art not one who follows divers lusts, and makes them thy practice, thou art not the man who art ever learning &c. if thou followest on to know God, God will follow thee on with mercy.

Obs. 10

*One meecy makes way for another:* a lesser prepares for a greater: God beholds all things at once with one view of his providential eye, and 'tis his happiness so to do. But the Saints cannot do this, they must know a little now, & more at another time: And doth not our times make good this text? The Lord will grant one deliverance now, and another reviving the next day, and all to usher in a greater: The Lord first smote us, and within two daies he did revive us, and the third day we lived in his sight, and since that deliverance we have followed on to know the Lord, and God hath revealed himself more in his power, wisdom, and faithfulness; the vanity of an arm of flesh, and the outward glory of the creature, and

if

if it be not our fault we may know more of his workings, if we would follow on to know the Lord. O that we had hearts to follow on the Lord in repenting, believing, and turning to Him, He would follow us on with mercies, and all the good that we can wish for one after another: God makes wicked men to know more wrath; and the drops of his anger here, are but the beginning of the deluge of miseries which are their portion, they sink, and sink, and their sinking must be to all eternity: Oh the difference which there is between Gods dealing with the Saints, and with the wicked! Though the Saints may be under a cloud for the present, yet they shall know the Lord, the Sun will appear again, the Lord will follow on his work, though we neglect ours, and glorious shall the issue of things be in the conclusion; were it not a glorious thing if a man had lived from the beginning to this day and might live to the end of the world, to see what God did in former times, what God doth now, and what he will do to the end of the world for his poor Churches? The Saints shall live to all eternity to see these glorious things; God did glorious things in the first six thousand years, and surely the next six thousand years shall be most glorious, but in eternity God will do most of all, then the Saints of God those which follow on to know the Lord shall be put into the real possession of all those glorious things which God hath been a doing from all eternitie. Eternity.

I come to the next words.

*His going forth is prepared as the morning.*

Hierom conceived these words to be meant of Christ; he shall come as the morning, being cald the *Son of righteousness*, the *morning-star*; and he conceives that it may have reference to the title of the 22. *Psal.* A Psalm of David, to the chief Musician upon Aijeleth Shabar, that is the morning hind, to wit, Christ, who was sent forth as the morning hinde, and hunted in his infancy and in his life, as the hinde is pursued by the hounds. *Hierom.*  
in loc.

Expos.

נכרו

If we take the words as they lie before us, they are an expression of Israels confidence in God after a night of trouble, the word [*prepared*] signifies also *decreed*, it is decreed upon as the morning, and the evening, and as the day follows the night by a decree: Children when they see the Sun a going down will many times cry because they think the Sun will never rise again; but if a man should do so, you would think him very simple. Even thus it is with us, 'tis no wonder to see wicked men in their straits crying out, we are undone, this darkness will never be over, yet such is the baseness of our unbelieving hearts who think when the clouds of sorrow begin to arise, and blackness begins to cover the sun of our prosperity, mercy will never break through, that we are undone, past remedy, and there is no help for us, light will no more appear. But more particularly; observe.

*That the times of the afflictions of Gods people are night-times.* This is implied here; we may have a long time of sorrow and misery, a dark tempest may overtake us, yet know, that a morning will come. They are called night-times for three reasons.

Because of the uncomfortableness of those times. Darkness is very terrible. *Drexelius* tells us of a young man, who being very fearful of darkness, God striking him with a dangerous sickness in so much that he could not sleep, tumbling up and down in his bed he uttered these words, *If this darkness be so terrible, what is eternal darkness?* and this proved the means of his conversion. Well therefore may affliction-times be called night-times, times of darkness.

Obl. I.

*These are times that often take off men from service, from publick and private service.* The night is the time in which the brute creatures which in the day time keep close, then come forth for their prey. Therefore the Apostles exhortation is seasonable, *Let us work while it is called to day, before the night comes when no man can work.*

*Night-times are times of danger.* Many of our brethren can speak this truth in these times: When is the time that wicked men prey upon the Saints, and the wild beasts go out to devour

deavour



devour, but in the dark? So, when do men meditate upon terror and create fears to themselves, but in the night of their afflictions and sorrows?

*The time of Gods delivering his people is the morning; the morning after the sad and dark night. As light is comfortable in the morning, after a sad, dark, and stormy night; so is deliverance after trouble. The morning is very desirable, as appears Psal. 130. 6. My soul waiteth for the Lord, in the morning watch.* Gods mercies after afflictions are very sweet, as the light approaching in the morning is to the laboring-man going to his work. When God hath work for men to do, he expects that they should go forth to it, and shew themselves in it: as the Sun when it riseth begins to shew it self in its brightness and glory, so ought every Christian to shine in the work and service of God after deliverance. In a sickness, or when some strait is upon thee thou art hindred in Gods service, and in thy work; well then, when God shows thee, and bestows upon thee the morning of a deliverance, go forth and manifest thy working for God, be not ashamed of his Cause under the shine of such a mercy.

*The Church hath no such afflictions upon it, but there comes a morning after them: the morning wil come either to Churches in special, or persons in particular; and we hope this time is a coming unto us, therefore let dominion be given unto the Lord in the morning, yea and let dominion be given to the righteous in the morning, and this seems to be the meaning of that place, Revel. 2. 28. To him that overcomes will I give the morning-star: there may be great contentions, grievous miseries in this night of afflictions, but be encouraged, To him that overcomes wil I give this morning-star of comfort, and deliverance.*

*It is Gods presence which makes morning to the Saints, all natural helps cannot do it: as all the stars cannot make one day light, some light they may give, but not day light, but when the Sun arises there is day presently, so God may make some comfort to a arise to soul by secundarie and inferior means, but 'tis Himself alone by the shining of his face and*

the smiles of his countenance which causes morning.

Obf. 5.

*Gods mercies to his people are prepared and decreed mercies.* They are set and determined, thy going forth is prepared as the morning, the word I shewed you in the Original signifies decreed, *Jer. 33. 20. Thus saith the Lord, If you can break my Covenant of the day, and my Covenant of the night, then also may my Covenant with David be broken.* Here we have both the text and the note from it, the Covenant of Gods decree with day and night, morning and evening, cald a Covenant because it is sure and certain, so also is the Covenant which God hath made to Christ and to his Church, firm and sure, and this is a ground of strong consolation to the Saints to consider, that mercies which they want are set and decreed mercies, therefore with patience wait for them.

Obf. 6.

*The Saints in the night of their affliction can comfort themselves in this, That the morning is a coming.* It is night yet, but the morning will come, 'tis approaching; the assurance the morning is coming upholds the Saints spirits in the night of their sorrows: the Marrener in tempestuous storms in the dark night, the traveller in his wearisom and dirty journey comforts themselves with this, the morning light is a coming; 'tis far better to be in darkness, and know the morning light is a coming, than to be in the light, and to know or fear that darknesse is a coming, and light never to returne more.

Obf. 7.

*A little before the Saints deliverance out of their greatest disturbances of miserie and trouble, the darkness of their night is the greatest.* As a little before the dawning of the day, the darkness is the thickest, and the most terrible; thus it was in Egypt a little before Israels deliverance, and their return out of captivity, and this should mightily encourage us, not to be disheartned in these times, though our miseries should encrease, for the darker the cloud is and the bigger it grows the neerer it is to its period, therefore wait with patience.

Obf. 8.

*Gods delivering of his Church is gradual, by degrees, not all at once; as the day breaks by degrees, so the Saints shine gradually in their lives, answerable to the light which God hath*  
let

let into them. We would have deliverance at an instant, light, and perfect noontime preſently; but this is not Gods way of dealing with his people: a child does not know that it is day till it be very light indeed; but wiſe diſcerning men can ſee day at a little hole (as we uſe to ſay,) Oh that we were ſo wiſe to diſcern Gods dealings, in the workings of providence towards us. It follows.

*His going forth is prepared as the morning. And he ſhall come unto us as the rain.* Text

God glories much in this creature of Rain, in ſo much that he wonders when men do not fear him who is the giver of rain: They did not ſay in their hearts, let us fear God who gives rain: there is ſo much of my glory in this very one creature, that mens hearts muſt be very hard that will not give God glory for it; Jer. 5. 24. God is ſtil'd the *Father of rain*, this ſpeech, the mention of it here hath reference to that country in which the Prophet ſpake; to *Canaan*, where they had rain, not ſo frequently as we have, but twice a yeer eſpecially, viz. at ſeed time, to ſoften the ground, and a little before harveſt, to plump and fill up the Corn in the ear. The Apoſtle James ſeems to allude unto this. Jam. 5. 7. *The husbandman waiteth patiently for the fruits of the earth,* (ſo ſhould we for Gods time of delivering his people, Gods deliverances to his people ſhall be as ſeaſonable as the former and the latter rain) The Notes of obſervation from theſe words are.

*Look what the rain is to the Corn, ſo is Gods bleſſing to his people:* Obſ. 1.  
We have the ſame dependance upon God for bleſſing & mercy, that the ſeed hath upon the rain for growing and encrease, without the rain the Corn will be but as the parched ground in the wilderneſs, which is the curſe and brand upon wicked men, Jer. 17. 5, 6. hence we may ſee what poor creatures we are, having our dependance upon ſuch a poor creature as the rain is, in its ſelf, and by the dependance which we have on this creature we ſhould learn to conſider, what dependance we have upon the infinite God for all the good things which we enjoy.

- Obf. 2. *As the Church is parched and dried up without the rain of Gods blessing, so on the other side, all the earth and flowers in the field are refreshed and a beauty there is put on them; by the rain that comes from the Heavens, it makes them to encrease. And as the earth is not unthankful for the rain, but sends forth Corn, Grasse, and Flowers, so should we alwaies after the receiving of mercies, return unto God in duties; we would think it strange if the earth after all the cost man hath bestowed upon it, and after the sweet and seasonable showers of rain it should be barren and fruitless; Oh man condemn thy self: the word is compared to rain; and how many times hath the sweet showers and droppings of the word lighted upon thee, and yet thou barren, all cost hitherto being lost upon thee? Deut. 32. 2.*
- Obf. 3. *Gods mercies to his people, are both seasonable and sutable: this promised in the text, They should come as the latter, and former rain. The Lord comes to wicked men in a general way of providence; but to the Saints as rain in seed-time and harvest, with much fulness; how should this teach us our duty to wait with patience upon God with the husbandman (Jam. 5. 7.) for the appointed weeks of harvest? so should we till mercies come seasonably; if mercies should alwaies come when we would have them, they would prove judgments to us; that which in its self is a mercy, coming untimely proves an affliction, God sent his people Israel a King, but he proved a heavy judgment to them: if a woman should be delivered upon every pain and throwing she feels, what mishapen birth would she have? It is Gods mercy unto you to prolong your birth still the full time: we cry out, Oh our troubles are great and continue long, we had thought to have seen a period to these times, our wars at an end and peace settled in our Kingdom; Oh know, that if they had ended sooner when we would have them, what a plague would it have been to us? how many that observe Gods dealings can say, that if such a mercy had come when they desired it, they had been undone by it, it had ruined them; therefore Gods time is the best time: hence we find that the Saints have often blessed*
- Use
- Obf. 3.
- Israel.
- simile
- Saints experience in this,
- God.

God when he hath croſſed them in their deſires, and hath denied them the thing which they ſo importunately deſired: The Lord hath ſent us the former rain, at the begining of the ſummer in its ſeaſon to prepare the earth for fruit; but now there are ſcorching heats in the Kingdom, heats of diſpleaſure in the Country, in the City, nay almoſt in every family: Now let us with patience wait, and the latter rain in its ſeaſon will aſſuredly come.

Is God ſo ſeaſonable in his mercies for us? Let us be ſeaſonable and ſutable in our duty, let us bring forth fruit unto God in ſeaſon; as the godly man in the firſt *Pſalm* is ſaid to do: herein conſiſts the excellency of ſervice, when it is in its place: Therefore it is no other but a temptation of Satan that when men are cald to exerciſe in their callings, they are then ſtirred up to prayer, or hearing; but theſe are not the motions of the Spirit, for they are ſeaſonable; for God never puts the ſoul upon extreams, the performing of two contrary duties at one and the ſame time. It is an excellent ſign of a gracious heart, to account a ſeaſon for ſervice, a mercy; and a miſery to want an opportunity. Certainly it is a great judgment of God upon a man, to be unſerviceable in a ſeaſon of ſervice. *Jude, 12.* *Jude* deſcribing thoſe corruptions of the Gopſel by life and doctrine, in his time, ſaies, *they were trees withered, twice dead, plucked up by the roots*: trees corrupt in the time of autumn, then when their fruit ſhould come in. Even thus it is with many men; at that time when God expects the moſt fruit from them, ſhow themſelves moſt corrupt and vile. Theſe are ſuch as mightily provoke God: and how many ſuch have we among us at this day, who when God cals them to ſervice, manifeſt the rottenneſs which is in their ſpirits. Many when they are in a poor condition think, Oh had I ſuch a mans eſtate, what a deal of good would I do with it? had I ſuch parts and abilities as ſome have, and ſo much time, and many oportunities given as they have, how would I lay them out for God? Many that are now ſervants have many good reſolutions, Oh what will they do for God, when God calls them to it? O fooliſh hearts, who when they can do nothing

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A note of  
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of ſervice

Reproof.

would do most, and when they may do most, do nothing at all.

Obs. 4. *Gods mercies to his people, are according to the variety of their necessities, the former and the latter rain.* Towards the seed time, they wanted rain, and God sends it them; now let our duty be according to the variety of mercies, God may call us to variety of service; let not us content our selves in that we have don something, in such services we have had our heads, hands, and purses, such and such have been idle, let them now appear; Oh say not so, be not weary of wel-doing, God hath employed thee this day in one service, he hath another to do the next; be willing and ready to be set on work, and blesse God he will employ thee in service.

Obs. 5. *When God hath begun in mercy with his people, he will go on with them, and will not leave them.* If God should give only the former rain, it would not bring up the seed, the seed would not fructifie and increase without the latter rain: Faith will believe that God will not lose the glory of former mercies, for want of succeeding mercies; Faith beleeves that God wil never begin a work, and there leave it.

Use Now let not us begin in waies of obedience with God, and then leave off and lose all that we have done, let us consider that the vows of God are upon us, and many prayers we have put up, now let us not lose the return of them. How many in the daies of their youth followed on to know God, and they found the sweetness of the Word to be as the former and the latter rain unto them? Do not now lose all which you got in your youth, by denying him service in your age, let not slothful age lose the sweetness of those things which in youth through christian diligence we found sweet.

Obs. 6. *Gods mercies to his people procure much good;* They are not empty shels, there is that good in them to the ful, which they promise to have: these Notes are observable from the words thus understood; but now put al the sense of them together, and then they afford us two or three usefull Observations more.

Obs. 7. Note, *That Gods peoples deliverance comes from Heaven.* They  
spring

ſpring not out of the earth, if ever Gops people are delivered there muſt be a Divine, Almighty power put forth, elſe it will never be a deliverance in mercy.

*Gods peoples deliverances cannot be hindered; no not by all the powers in Hell or Earth.* Why? becauſe they come from above, they are as the light of the Sun, and as the rain that comes upon the earth: who can hinder the Sun from ſhining the rain from falling? who can interrupt night and day? ſo who can hinder the rain of mercy from a people prepared for it? Obſ. 8.

*We ſhould make a ſpiritual uſe of Gods works, in his creatures:* We ſee after the coldeſt winter there comes a ſummer, after a drought a ſpring-tide, they take their turns; let not us in the times of cold and dark afflictions which God may bring us into, conclude, that mercy is quite gone, that God hath ſhut up his loving kindneſs in forgetfulneſs; No, but reſt aſſured that there will be a return of mercy for thee again which ſhall revive thee. Obſ. 9.

## V E R. 4.

*O Ephraim, what ſhall I do unto thee? O Judah, what ſhall I do unto thee? for your goodneſs is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.*

**L** U T H E R upon this place, carries on theſe words as a further expreſſion of mercy to this people Iſrael, and not in any way of reproof to them; as if the Lord had ſaid to them thus: Oh Iſrael, my people, I have been very good and gracious to you in the Land of *Egypt*, and delivered you from that tyranny and oppreſſion which you were under, and I have been with you in the wilderneſs, and I have brought you into the Land of *Canaan*, but what are theſe? all but temporal mercies, I have greater mercies than theſe to beſtow upon you, the Goſpel it ſhall reveal other manner of things to you. He carries it all along as in a way of mercy, but if this be the meaning, then this objection will ariſe. Luthers Expofit.

What ſhall we underſtand by the next words? your good.

goodness is as the morning cloud? how can this be said? *Luther* to this answers thus; *Your goodness*; that is, the goodness of God which is yours by Covenant and purchase prepared for you, this mercy of God shall refresh your parched souls, as the morning cloud doth the earth after a long drought; thus he carries it.

declined. But the words, *passing away*, and their goodness being but as the *morning cloud*, taking these together, the sense runs another way, *viz.* to a breaking off from the discourse about the promise of mercy, to a convincement of the generality of Ephraims and Judahs formality in their greatest pursute of reformation, they al passed away, as the morning cloud which vanisheth away, and as the early dew that comes to nothing.

And Jeroms. *Hierom* thinks that it is Gods mercies towards them which doth thus pass away; he would not leave them quite without hope, they should have some mercy, but it should not abide nor stay with them. But the genuine sense of the words I conceive to be, the generality of their formality in their pursute of reformation, therefore, *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?* As if the Lord should say, you put me to a stand you even *non plus* me in this thing, what therefore shall I do unto thee?

Obler. Here in the general, we may observe the change of the Prophets voice, in the beginning of the chapter it is all mercy, and their repentance sweetly joyning with the mercy promised them; but now he falls to upbraid them for their hypocrisie, incorrigiblenels, and unconstancy in the waies of God; a very good pattern for Ministers who have to deal with varieties of people.

For Ministers

Expos. i.

But now, to open the expression of the words more particularly: [*What shall I do unto thee?*] The manner of the expression is, either in a way of compassion or expostulation; compassion, as if he should say, Oh Ephraim, it is in my heart to do thee good, but nothing will work upon thee, therefore O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? Like that expression in *Isa. 5. 4.* *What could I have done more to my vineyard that I have*



not done? were there any other courſe further to be taken, any thing elſe to do I would do it? Now from this ſenſe thus taken of Gods compaſſionating of them we may note.

*That God doth not willingly grieve the children of men; he is even* Obſ. 1.  
 forced to it, at that very time they are grieved by afflictions, at the ſame time is God troubled for their miſeries. Can any tell me, men or Angels, nay I appeal to your ſelves, can you tell me what I ſhould do more to you than I have done? If you can, I would do it, God expoſtulates with them, he comes not ſuddenly upon them, puniſhment is the laſt way God takes with his people.

And ſo it ſhould be with us, to thoſe that are under us, as Uſe all  
means  
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correctiō.  
 to children or ſervants, all means muſt be tried to prevail with them before correction, exhort, adviſe, reprove, and pray for them, have you firſt taken this courſe? elſe you can have little comfort in correcting them: this is Gods way, though you perhaps ſee it not; God here meets with an objection which repining Iſrael might ſeem to make, we are ſuch as do beleve, to whom the promiſe doth belong, why might not the Lord bring mercy to us without uſing ſuch means of ſmiting, wounding, killing, and parching of us? no ſaith God, I could not bring about mine own ends but by this way, Oh therefore let us check our ſelves at ſuch thoughts as theſe, God brings us low by afflictions, he could do it by mercies, but then his end which he aims at would not be ſo fully accompliſhed.

*We ſhould not think much to loſe our pains in the uſe of means to o-* Obſ. 2.  
*thers.* God he hath taken pains and been at coſt with this people, and he hath loſt all, God ſeems to mourn for the loſs of his charges, I have uſed this admonition, the other counſel, yet ſtill hypocritical, Oh what ſhall I do unto thee? but yet Gods does not leave them or grow weary of his pains, he perſiſts ſtill in the means to do them good. In this ſhould the Saints imitate God: if this courſe will not prevail, uſe a ſecond; if not this uſe a third, perhaps that may, and if it does do good it will pay for all the pains. And thus much of the words by way of compaſſion.

Expos. 2. Now by way of expostulation and so they are to be taken, to humble them, or to convince them of their sin. Hence observe;

Obs. 3. *That it's a special means to humble men for sin, to put them to it, to consider what means they have had used to do them good.* Would we be seriously affected with sin, and humbled for sin? then go alone and call our souls into examination, whether means have not been used sufficient to do us good? consider what means they have been, judgments, national, domestick, and personal: Mercies, reproofs out of the word, admonitions from friends, terrors and checks of conscience &c. when you have done thus, charge conscience to speak and tel thee the truth, and when it doth tell truth, give it leave to upbraid thee thus; what, so unprofitable, so stout, and stubborn, so froward, and impatient, so unthankful, and so unbelieving for all this? This would be a singular means to shew the soul a view of sin in its colors. But alas most men put off and shun such a course as this is, and the Devil he knows the prevalency and efficacy of such a way as this, and he strives what he can to put the soul off from such a course, and puts men upon such excuses as these, Had I such and such means as others have, I should be more fruitful, I was reprov'd, but it was too open, had it been in private and with more love, by such a one and in such a place, it would have done more good. Infinite are the reasonings of a base heart, either to put it off with the want of means, or some defect in the means, and this is Satans subtilty in the soul; but when the Lord comes truly to humble the soul, that soul will charge it self home throughly for its sins, in all the circumstances and aggravations of them.

Form of  
expostu-  
latiō with  
a mans  
own soul.

And of  
mens ex-  
cuses.

Obs. 4. These words, *What shall I do unto thee?* notes unto us, that God was as it were in a straight at this time about this people, the observation from them is, *That such is the perversness of men hearts many times that God knows not almost what to do with them:* God was here even at a stand, he was fain to consult with himself about them; see in other Scriptures how God expresses this, *Exod. 33. 5. Therefore now put off thy ornaments,*  
that

that I may know what to do with thee : and Deut. 32. 5. They have corrupted their waies, they are a perverse and a cooked generation.

The words there ſignifies the way of wraſtlers, who wave up and down, that if the one thinks to have the other here, he is winded the other way : ſo did this people when God dealt with them this way, they put him off another way. Therefore, Acts, 2. 40. we are comanded to ſave our ſelves from this untoward generation, ſuch a people that none can do good unto ; no marvail then Gods Miniſters are put to a ſtand with people many times, who are ſo crooked and gainſying, like thoſe in Chriffs time, who put him to a ſtand, they were ſo difficult and croſs, that neither John nor Chriſt himſelf could pleaſe ; when John came they cryed out of him, that he was ridged and harſh, and when Chriſt came he was mild and gentle ; and of him they ſaid, he was a winebibber and a friend of publicans and ſinners, John had that which Chriſt had not, and Chriſt had that which John had not, and yet neither of them could pleaſe theſe.

עקט  
ופתל  
הל  
Contortiff.  
of פתל  
Luclori  
contorquer  
a crooked  
piece.

But it may be objected, God knew not what to do, how is that ? he could have put forth his almighty power and turned their hearts and that preſently ; how then is it ſaid, God knew not what to do ?

To this I anſwer, that God was not bound to do this, for God had uſed all means to prevail with Ephraim and Judah, which the moſt loving and compaſſionate friend could have done. Suppose a man were in ſuch a condition that for his cure there were all the Doctors of Phyſick in the Country where he lived gathered together, and theſe ſhould conſult, adviſe, and propound things for his recovery, and nothing do it, you would wonder what the matter ſhould be, would not all this aggravate and ſet forth the danger of the diſeaſe and the difficulty of the cure ? All this is in God and much more, and it is put forth for the good of ſouls ; I have put forth more power, wiſdom, love, and mercy than man can do, now ſhall this be an aggravation in reſpect of the creature, and not of the Creator ? all means to do you good have been put forth excepting my almighty power, and yet the work is not done.

Object.

Anſw.

Obf. 5. *The condition of that people is very sad, when no means can do them good, then that fearful judgment may be pronounced upon them, Jer. 6. 30. Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them. Ezek. 24. 13. Because I have purged thee and thou wast not purged; thou shalt not be purged any more, until I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.*

Obf. 6. *It is a thing that goes very near the heart of God, to see those that are nigh unto him to be perverse in their waies. What, for Judah to forsake me? It is sad to find crosses and untowardness in Ephraim, but to meet with them in Judah where my Ordinances are in a special manner, and they so near unto mee, and I so tender of them: 'tis much to behold of what knotty crabbed spirits Gods own people are? A piece of wood may be found yet full of knots and very tough. What goes neerer a man, than to find crossness in his wife, his children, or friend? 'tis not so much from a stranger, as from one in relation. Even so God takes the unkindness of his people to heart more, than the wickednesses of the ungodly.*

Obf. 7. *It is not enough to worship God better than others, if we be of perverse spirits. This was the sin of Judah, because they had the Ordinances in a purer way, and worshiped God better than*

Applicat. for Engl. *Ephraim, they thought they might continue in this their sin: Oh that this were not Englands sin at this day: Let us be humbled for it that we may escape their judgment.*

*For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.*

Expos. 1.

**חַנּוּן**  
**חַנּוּן**  
 Benignitas  
 misericordia. Also  
 Sanctitas  
 pietas vestrum vel  
 estri.  
 Vide Kim-  
 chi of Ker-  
 cher.

*Your goodness.] That is, your kindness, or your mercy, as the word signifies, in the Original it is [chesed] the same word which we have in the sixth verse, your mercy, I will have mercy, that is, your piety, and godliness in the strict signification of it, but mercy in the large sense: The Seventy Translators render the words, your mercy, your goodness: but why your goodness? yours, because either of Gods goodness towards them, or their goodness, their holiness which was in them: Gods goodness towards them, which is called ours, sometimes,*

sometimes Gods goodness, as in *Rom. 11. 31.* *That through your mercy they might obtain mercy*; by that mercy which God bestowed on you, you may encourage the gentiles to come in; 2. *Their goodneſſ*: which is double, either to their brethren, or their piety & holineſſ, both these were as the morning cloud, or as the early dew that goeth away. If the first significati- on of them be taken, then the sense runs thus.

*Gods goodneſſ to them was as the morning cloud*, that is, They by their sin had drove away Gods mercy and goodness from them, even as the wind carries the dust before it: God was in the way of mercie to them in appearances, and they by their sins put them all away from them. *Bernard* saith, that the wind of their unthankfulness did drive away the floods of mercy from them, much more the dews of mercy. Now God forbid that this should be our condition, the clouds of mercy are over us, and the dews of mercy are upon us, now should we by our sins drive these away from us, what a woful case should we be in? Therefore let us not only pray to have the dews of mercy, but also the clouds to shower down rivers of mercy. Expos. 2.  
Bernard

Though I do not think this to be the principal scope and sense of the words, yet it may be noted and afford us useful meditation; but the proper meaning of the words seems to signify their *own goodneſſe*, which may betaken, 1. more strictly for *mercy and compassion* towards one another; because in the sixth verse God calls upon them so earnestly for mercy; notwithstanding all their shews and promises of reformation it was but in hypocrisy, like those in *Jer. 34. 15, 16.* of whom God saith, *That they were turned, and had done right in his sight in proclaiming liberty to their servants, but they had polluted his Name again, by causing those servants formerly set at liberty to return, and bringing them into subjection: so that people which are for a time pitiful and very merciful, afterwards grow cruel and hardhearted.* Expos. 3.

Let us take heed of such a disposition which is so great an evil; we when together sometimes can joyn in love and unity, pitying each other, and bearing with each others infir- Applic.

mities, bearing Christian admonition patiently, but these good words and fair shows are vanished & come to nothing, where are those refreshing showers of love & friendship which you were wont to water each other withal in your Christian societies? In the room of these there now grows nothing but the lust of pride, passions, and sad dissentions among us, which parch and dry up all these good seeds of love and gentleness.

I desire to presse this the more, because the Scripture is pleased to make use of this expression of the dew, to set out the sweetness of a Christian spirit, *Psal. 133. 3. Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity: How pleasant is it? It is like the dew of Hermon, and like the dew that descended upon the mountain of Zion; as that refreshed the grasse, so is this affection of mercy and love in the Saints: He compares it not to a dew that dried up presently, but to a dew which descended down; and there the Lord commanded his blessing, even life for evermore. There: Where? Even in the communion of his Saints: This is spoken particularly of Church fellowship, Oh then take heed that your mercy and bounty in relieving your brethren and persecuted Saints, be not as the dew that passeth away; the Lord hath not made his mercie, no not his mercy in dewing the earth as a morning cloud that vanisheth away and comes to nothing; Oh let not our mercy and love be only in shows and proffers withot any truth and reality; our mercies should come like showers upon those who have been parched with the burning rage and malice of the adversary: Now the Lord expects more from us in this duty than at other times, we must not only pity them and give them good words, saying, Alas my Brother, and alas my Sister, and no more, I would I could help you, the Lord pity you and help you; you must not only do thus, but in actions and reality you must relieve them with your money, and provisions. Is it not with too so many of us as it was with those in *James, 2. 15.* who say to a brother, *Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled,* but give them not wherewith to do it? what good doth this passing cloud do them? it is but an o-  
verture:*

*Psa. 133.*  
expound.  
Church-  
fellow-  
ship.

help those  
that suffer  
for a good  
cause.

verture: but perhaps you will ſay, that you have not been as an overture, a cloud paſſing away, you have bedewed the Saints in their need, you have given ſomething; but perhaps tis but a poor pittance and that out of your abundance, know that this is not ſufficient, it muſt be a conſtant dew, and proceed on in degrees of mercy, we ſhould rejoyce that God gives us an opportunity to ſhew our love and mercy, and not think much at it, doing that you do forcedly or repiningly; therefore let not our mercy be as the dew that paſſeth away. Thus much of the words in this ſignification of mercie.

Now if we take the words in a large ſenſe, as in Scripture they are often taken, and in this place alſo, for their *goodneſſ* and *piety*; and in this ſenſe there is much of the mind of God in the words, they are ſo full of marrow and ſweetneſſ as can be deſired; Now in that God ſhould expreſſ godlineſſ and piety by ſuch a word as mercy; Note from thence.

*The neceſſity of this grace of love and brotherly kindneſſ, in regard* Obf. 1. *godlineſſ it ſelf receives its name from them; though by nature men are paſſionate and rugged, grace will mollitie them, of covetous men it will change them to liberal and make them free-hearted, for grace is part of the Divine Nature; Nothing is ſo communicative as God the higheſt good, and according to the height of any creature is the communicativeneſſ of it: as the Sun being ſublime and excellent is moſt communicative; ſo a gracious man, hath he parts? they are not for himſelf but for the Church; hath he an eſtate? he diſtributes and communicates of it to the Saints, and according as grace ariſeth in the ſoul, wil communicativeneſſ ariſe; a true Chriſtian is not cloſe handed.*

The more excellent the nature, the more communicative.

If grace hath its denomination from hence, *Then ſurely this* Obf. 2. *grace of mercy is moſt excellent, becauſe the whol frame of the new man is ſet out by it, and by this it is expreſſed.* When we uſe to ſet out the whol of any thing by a part, we do not expreſſ it by an inferior part, but in ſome thing which is eminent in it, as by prayer many times is expreſſed the whol worſhip of God, as he that call upon the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſhall be ſaved. Rom. 10.

Expof. 1. *As the morning cloud : and as the early dew.*] In these words Clouds and dew passing, what they imploy. God charges this people for three things; in which their notorious hypocrisie was expreffed. For their vacuity and emptinefs, their words were empty founds, they were clouds without water as *Jude* expreffes it; *Jude*, 12. 'tis the high commendation of Christians to be full of God, of Chrift, and full of grace and knowledg: of which Ephraim had a fhew, but it was but a fhew.

2 For their falshood and defembling, they had a heart and a heart towards God, they dealt treacheroufly with God, they were all in fhows, but in the bottom nothing but vanity.

3. For their unconfancy and ficklenefs; As rain in the clouds fhews much, but is by the wind prefently blown over, the clouds now are all black and lowring, but in a fhort time are blown over and there is a perfect cleer sky; even thus it was in their goodnefs, though they made glorious fhows in their reformation, yet were they all empty, falfe, and unconfant: Thus it was in the general, in the reformation of the Land, when things were reformed in the Kingdom it was but by halves, and in their particular turnings it was but as the morning cloud, many times there was great appearances of reformation, but they were like the early dew which prefently goeth away. The ten Tribes, and Judah did make fuch beginnings in reformation and fetting up the worfhip of God, that if God were truly worfhiped by any people in the world it would be by thefe, that they would fet God up high in their thoughts, high in their practices, and this was very burdenfom to the Spirit of God; therefore he faith, *What fhall I do unto thee Oh Ephraim? What fhall I do unto thee Oh Judah?*

We find glorious fhows of reformation to come to nothing, as appears in thefe many examples, 2 *King*s, 9. and the 10. chapters, *Jehu* made great fhows when *Jeram* asked him, *Is it peace Jehu?* he answered him, *What peace fo long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are fo many?* And in the 10. chapter, what a flaugter doth he make upon the



Prieſts of Baal? Well what came of this? reade but on in the chapter, verſes 29. and 31. it is ſaid, *That Jehu departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam who made Iſrael to ſin.* What a cloud of hopes was there in *Ahabs* time, 1 *Kings*, 18. 39. all the people cryed, *The Lord is God, the Lord he is the God,* upon the miracle which was wrought by *Elijahs* prayer, when the fire came down and conſumed the ſacrifice; but this all vaniſhed in the people, and for *Ahab* himſelf the text ſaith, he did abominably in following of Idols ſo that there was none like unto him, who ſould himſelf to work wickedneſs, 1 *Kings*, 21. 26, 27. When the Prophet comes to him, after he had killed *Nabal* and telleth him of his ſin, he falls down and humbleth himſelf, in ſo much that God himſelf takes notice of it, and upon it, pronounceth a tranſmiſſion of his puniſhment, That he would not bring the evil in his daies, but in his ſons; God bids the Prophet ſee how he humbled himſelf, & that not in a ſhow, as if his heart were not touched and affected, he did truly humble himſelf in his kind; but now, was there no reformation followed upon this? No, none at all, *'Tis very hard to bring great men to reforming*: where have we ſuch an example ſince *Theodoſius* the Emperor, who being a man guilty of raſh effuſion of blood, coming upon a Sabbath day to the place of publick worſhip and would have received the Sacrament, *Ambroſe* ſeeing him a coming goes and meets him at the door, and ſpeaks thus to him; *How dare thoſe bloody hands of yours lay hold of the body and blood of Chriſt, who have been the ſhedders of ſo much innocent blood?* Which ſpeech did ſo ſtartle him that he went away and was humbled for his ſin, and afterwards came and made his publick confeſſion and then was received in. Whence we may ſee, that Kings, yea Emperors have been kept back from the Sacrament. But did this humiliation of *Ahab* come to nothing? If we look but into the 22. chap. we ſhall find him of a proud haughty ſpirit, reſolved upon his own will, contrary to the will of God, he would go up to *Ramoth Gilead*, and when *Jehobaphat* asked him if there were not a Prophet of the Lord more that they might enquire of him, and he ſaid, there is one, but I hate him; and

great men  
not eaſily  
reformed  
Theodoſ.

Ambroſe

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peror may  
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The Prin-  
ces dis-  
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Joash.Young  
ones of  
our times.

this was in the time of his humiliation. And is it not thus with us? many times when judgments are upon us, how penitent are we and then humbled presently? but if the rod be off us we grow proud and stout again presently. So in Judah, what beginnings did that young King *Joash* make? in the 2 *Chron.* 24. 6. what care was there taken in repairing the Temple, gave commandement to the Priests and the Levites to gather mony for the building the House of the Lord, and commanded it to be done speedily, he was a very young Prince, but very zealous, in so much that he blamed the high Priest for his want of zeal, and verse 10. 'tis said the Princes and all the people rejoiced and brought in, and cast into the chest; now what did this produce? surely some glorious effect, mark in the 17. verse, *After the death of Jehoadah came the Princes of Judah and made obeisance to him (and what then?) the King hearkened to them;* they then began to get him on their side, by complying with him, for the text saith, that he hearkened to them, and then wrath came upon them; 'tis very likely they said after this manner to him; Consider who you are, a Prince, the head of a people, and you do all that the old man *Jehoadah* commanded; he was a subject to you, and you be commanded by him, and besides he is now dead and gone, therefore shew your self a man, like a Prince in your Kingdom, stand upon your own legs, be like unto the rest of the Princes about you: Now such words as these might please the King, and be hearkened to, and then they presently forsook the House of the Lord God of their fathers and served groves and Idols, they forsook their Religion; while they kept the truth it preserved them, and they followed the rule, but turning from the rule what outrages do they commit? verse 21, 22. conspire against *Zaccariah* and stoned him, the blood of a Prophets son is now nothing to them, they can down with it, and the King stood and saw him stoned; Oh what a height of sin is this young zealous Prince come unto! How many sad examples have we in these our daies which second this of *Joash*? how many young ones are there who in their youth give very good hopes but it proves to be

but,

but a morning cloud; their timely beginnings, end in apoſtacy. Another example we have in *Amaziah* in the 2 *Chron.* 25. 2. *Amaziah* in the 6. verſe had hired an hundred thouſand of *Israel* <sup>*Amaziah*</sup> to go to the war with him, and for their hire he had given them an hundred talants of ſilver, now after he had hired them, and paid them all their monies, there comes a Prophet of God & tels him, that he muſt not uſe a man of them, why ſaith he what ſhall I do for my mony the hundred talents which I have paid the Army with? the man of God answered, the Lord is able to give thee much more than theſe; he had no ſecurity for it, but only Gods word for it and that from the mouth of a man; what now? *Amaziah* obeyed preſently and ſeparated the armies of *Israel*; But what became of this? Verſ. 14. after he returned from the ſlaughter of the *Edomites* he brought the gods of the children of *Seir* and ſet them up to be his gods, and bowed down to them; and the 15. verſe, God ſends him another Prophet, and now ſee how the ſpirit of the man is changed; In the former verſes the other Prophet comes to him and croſſes his deſign and turns his mind, & he hearkens preſently unto him, and obeys the command of God in that thing which was for his preſent and eminent loſſe; but this Prophet ſpeaks as mildly, with as much love as poſſibly could be, and he ſpeaks as much reaſon to him as a man can deſire: *Why haſt thou relied and ſought after the gods of the people which could not deliver their own people out of thy hand? they could not reſcure or ſave their people from thee, and wilt thou ſerve them? yet in the 16. verſ. mark what he ſaith, Medle not with this matter, Art thou made of the Kings Council? forbear, why ſhouldeſt thou be ſmitten? Doſt thou know what a plot and deſign there is in this thing? The Prophet forbears, but what follows? I know by this, the Lord hath determined to deſtroy thee, Becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not bearkened to my counſel.* The truth is, when we ſee men unruly, ſtubborn, and wilful, rejecting counſel, and very unreaſonable in their way, eſpecially after ſome good workings and turrings, it is a fearful ſign God hath a purpoſe to deſtroy them: So that wicked King at one time could call the prophet his father, yet how

Wilful-  
neſs after  
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deſtruction

was he afterward intraged against him? Some may be friends to the Saints at one time, and bitter enemies to them at another.

And as the Scripture is full of such examples as these, so Domitiã. also are Ecclesiastical histories: 'Tis storied of *Domitian* a most cruel persecutor of the Christians, who studied and invented cruel deaths for them, that when he came to the Crown could not endure blood to be shed, no nor for sacrifices. 'Tis also reported of *Nero*, that for five years he was so pitiful and full of mercy, that when they came to have his hand to the sentence of execution of a Malefactor, *He would wish that he could not have writ, that so he might not be used in any such thing*; and yet where had the Common wealth of *Rome*, or the Church of God a more desperat enemy or cruel persecutor? Oh that God would grant this may never be our case: What had we at the first, in the beginning of the Parliament, how did they show themselves and did great things? stood against Arbitrary government, impeached great ones, executed justice upon a Peer or two? What a mighty spirit was raised in the countries to second and stand by the Parliament! now where's the man that ever thought there would be such a party of Lords and Commons found to joyn with a company of Papist, Atheists, Malignants, and *Irish* Rebels, against the Cause of God and the Gospel, and every thing that is truly good? Oh most horrid apostasie! that this morning cloud which in the beginning shined so gloriously should thus vanish and come to nothing! And for others that are not in publick places, though perhaps not so bad as others, yet how cold and flat spirited are they? slack in their moving for publick good, private interest, self, and their own ends ruling in them, more than the prosperity of the publick; nay, so we can gain our own ends though with losse to the publick we care not: Oh what shall God do with us, who are such an untoward people? Change but the name and this Scripture is ours, *O England, what shall I do unto thee?* Your spirits for Reformation are down, you care not for a deliverance, but are willing to crouch under your burdens; but let me tell you, should these

beginnings

*Quam vel-  
lem literas  
non didi-  
cisse.*

Applic.to  
the Parl.  
of Engl.

and king-  
dom

And pri-  
vat men.

*Mutatio  
nomine*

beginnings of reformation end as, and prove to be as the morning cloud and early dew, we ſhould be the moſt miſerable people in the world, loſing the greateſt opportunity to do our ſelves good that ever any people had, & procure the greateſt curſe to our ſelves, and poſterity that ever was upon a people, the generations that are yet unborn may (if we loſe this opportunity) curſe the time that we lived before them, therefore be encouraged to venture in this work, and do you ſtill own the cauſe, for God will own it, and never leave it, that ſo the work may be finiſhed, and we may ſay with the Saints, *Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he hath heard us;* Iſa. we ſhould conſider that it is a mercy the Lord hath made uſe of ſuch falſe ſpirited men in his work to do his people good by, and ſeeing the Lord is gone ſo far in the work, let us intreat him that he would follow it on, and not only bedew us, but even wet us to the root. It is Gods promiſe very remarkable in the 14. chap. of this Propheſie and the 5. verſe, *I will be as the dew unto Iſrael, he ſhall grow as the lily: they ſhall have the dew, and be like the lilly: but the lillie is a poor, weak, fading thing; but ſaith God, I will moiſten the roots of it like Lebanon, my mercy ſhall be perfected towards them: the Lord grant this promiſe may be made good to us.* And thus much of their reformation in the general, as it concerned the publick State and Church

Now touching the particular reformation of themſelves and their hypocriſie in it: The note from thence is;

*That for any man to make good beginnings and overtures in the waies of God, and let all fall again, and come to nothing, is a thing very grievous to God, and dangerous to himſelf. Pſal. 78. 36, 37. Nevertheleſs, they did flater him with their mouth, and they lyed unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him, neither were they ſteadfaſt in his Covenant: what then? ver. 58, 59. For they provoked him to anger with their Idols; God greatly abhorred Iſrael, they were as a deceitful bow, hypocritical in all their waies, which the Spirit of God cannot endure, for theſe reaſons.*

2. Reformation in particular perſons. Obſer.

Reas. of  
the first  
part. 1

The Spirit of God is a holy Spirit; but this is a slight fickle, a very vain spirit, no soundness in it.

2  
3

The Spirit of God is unchangable, and constant in all its motions; but in this spirit there is nothing but changableness: 'tis said of God, that there is no shadow of change in him; and in such a heart as this is there is no shadow of constancy in it;

4  
5

Such men as these stifle the very conceptions of the Spirit of God in them; it is accounted murder in a woman to stifle the conception in her womb, or any waies to hinder it; now if this be such a vile thing, is it not much more to stifle the conception and first breathings of the spirit in the soul? Oh take heed of such a spirit as this is.

6  
7

There can be no trust put in such men as these, they are fit for no employment, neither God nor man can trust them, or use them in any service, they are up and down fickle and wavering, we our selves cannot endure to have to deal with such a man as is so.

8  
9

They manifest by this, that there is no fear of God before their eyes; for were the fear of the great God in them it would over-awe them so, that they durst not do thus.

10  
11

This is a great pollution of the Name of God, *Jer. 34. 16.* when they had let their servants go, and in an hypocritical manner, cald them home again, in this thing God saith, they polluted his great Name.

12  
13

This is an argument that the things of God and matters of Religion are looked upon by you as things indifferent, that there is no great matter in them, things of little consequence, when thou hast a mind to them thou canst use them or thou canst let them alone; is not this a mighty dishonor to the Spirit of God?

14  
15

This shews that such people never had any good beginnings or sound Principles in them at the first; far from the life of Christ, which is said to be *a steadfast life*, and the life of every Saint should be like unto his; their hearts were not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his Covenant.

Now as it is grievous to God and to his Spirit, ſo it is very dangerous to our ſelves. For, Real. of  
of the 2<sup>d</sup>

We loſe many an opportunity, many a ſoul-ſtirring, which at our firſt awaking we have had. When the ſoul is firſt convinced, Oh the many ſtirrings and good motions which are put into it, any thing would then take impreſſion upon the heart; but when we give back there is a hard brawnineſs upon the heart. 1.

You that are ſo unconstant, ſhall never grow to any eminency of grace, and godlineſs, though there ſhould be truth at the bottom: It is ſaid of *Ruben*, *Gen. 49. 4. Unſtable as water, thou ſhalt not excel.* Men that do but very little yet go on in a constant way of godlineſs, though their parts be weak, and their performances mean, many imperfections in them, yet going on they come to ſomething; but thoſe who at the firſt do a great deal, run very faſt in their youth, and afterward grow cold again, are very bad; the cooling after heating is very dangerous, as to the body ſo more to the ſoul. 2.

This hardens the heart very much; when the ſpirit is cooled after a heating, it's like water which being hot and cold again, is more cold than it was before, or like iron heat and quenched, is harder than formerly. 3.

This aggravates all other ſinning; what, wilt thou ſin thus after God hath appeared thus? 4.

This ſpoils the acceptation of all our other ſervices, be they never ſo ſpecious; as a man that hath a child lunatick in his fits and moods he is very ſenceleſs and ſottiſh, but in his *Lucida intervalla* he comes to himſelf and ſpeaks ſenſibly and well; now if a man ſhould ſee him at this time he would think he aild nothing: ſo there are many who ſeem to be eminent Chriſtians for the preſent, but let a temptation come, or luſt ſtir, and they are overcome. 5.

There is nothing will more damp the heart when it comes before God in duty, than this unconstantcy of ſpirit; God may ſay to thee, Oh ſoul, how dareſt thou come before me in ſuch a duty as this, when thou knoweſt thou art guilty of breach. 6.

breach of promise and falsefying Covenant with me? this will be an eating corrosive upon thy spirit, God may say to thee, how canst thou expect that I should be constant in my mercies towards thee, when thou art so unconstant in thy duty to me? this unconstancy towards God, brings wavering in faith, and unsettledness in our confidence in God, the one makes way for the other; unconstancy in duty, and wavering in believing; God shews himself to us, as we carry our selves to him, *To the pure, he will shew himself pure, Tit. 1. 15.*

How should this stir us up to look to our own hearts, seeing they are so fickle and deceitful? let us watch over and daily suspect them; *John 2. 23, 24.* 'tis said of the people, that many believed in Christ, because of the miracles which he wrought; yet Christ would not commit himself unto them: *so Deut. 5. 29.* there is a people that made large promises to God, that they would walk in all the Statutes and Ordinances of their God; now saith God, this people say well, they are good words, but *Oh that there were such an heart in them!* God regards no work you do, except he find it rooted in you, *John, 8. 31. Then are you my Disciples indeed, if ye continue in my words;* no true Disciple of Christ without abiding in Christ; *all flesh is grass;* that is, whatsoever is done by fleshly principles, every duty though never so well done to the outward appearance, if it come from a principle of flesh, it is but as the grass; and as the grass withereth and dies away so will these specious outside duties vanish away; therefore look to your hearts, and above all keepings, keep it very diligently, for if the root be sound the branches will be so too, and the fruit savory which comes of it.

Means to  
persevere. *'Tis a very dangerous thing to let beginnings to die;* Therefore would you be preserved from such an evil as this is, of fickleness and unconstancy? take my counsel in these particulars.

I *Do not rest in sudden flashes and stirrings of spirit;* perhaps at a Sermon some truth or other that neerly concerns thee is pressed home upon thy conscience and it begins to stir the heart and warm the affections, now do not think the work is now  
over



over, or that the hazard of miſcarrying to all eternity is over; no thou muſt riſe higher and go further than this, or elſe thou art undone for ever; this is that rock upon which many poor ſouls ſplit, and overthrow themſelves for ever: therefore look to your hearts in time.

*Labor to get your hearts off from all earthly engagements;* 'tis not like that man ſhould ever ſtand conſtant toward God who is intangled with the ſnare and cares of this world. That man whoſe heart is conſtantly fixed upon God, though he does but little in way of duty; in compariſon of many an hypocrite, yet he ſhall hold out, when the moſt glorious hypocrite in the world ſhall fall to the ground.

*Take heed of ſecret ſinning:* ſecret ſins will undo thee, if they are loved and maintained: one moth in a garment may ſpoil the garment; one leak in a ſhip may drown the ſhip; a pen-knife may ſtab and kill a man as well as a ſword: ſo one ſin may damn the ſoul, nay there is more danger of a ſecret ſin cauſing the miſcarrying of the ſoul than open prophaneſs, becauſe they are not ſo obvious to the reproofs of the Word; therefore take heed that ſecret ſinnings eats not out good beginnings.

*Oftn take an account of your hearts how things ſtand with them;* ſay, Oh my ſoul, how is it with thee? how ſtand tearms between God and thee? Come my ſoul, there was a time that there was ſuch good ſtirrings and good motions in thee, what is now become of them? at the firſt beginning thou wert very forward and active for God, ſuch a chamber, ſuch a cloſet can witneſs the intercourſe God and thou haſt, thou didſt walk cloſe with God and his fear was in thee; this would be a ſpecial help were it obſerved to keep the heart upright: but I fear many a Miniſter may ſay of his people as Paul did to the *Galatians*, Where is now the bleſſednes which you ſpoke of?

*Never truſt your hearts after warmings with comfort and ſpiritual revivings:* when thou in any Ordinances haſt met with Gods preſence, and he hath ſhined upon thee in love, if thou haſt got a ſmile from Jeſus Chriſt at that time, have a care of your

hearts, and look for temptations and prepare for them; many when they have good desires, and hopeful beginnings in them, think that the work is past, and the danger is over, and then for the most part comes a temptation of Satan and encounters with them and they are basely foyled, and lose their peace again, great consolations usually precedes great temptations. *Mat. 3. 17.* when God testifies that Jesus Christ is his beloved son, *This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased,* in the very next chapter, how was he led into temptations? what a combate had he with the Devil? As after the greatest mercies many times follows the greatest miseries: See how Christ thinks of these temptations, all his glory and magnificence could not put the thoughts of his sufferings out of his mind: *John 12. 12.* Christ comes riding in pomp to Jerusalem, and the people they magnified him, crying out, *Hosanna to the son of David,* yet ver. 27. he cries out, *Father, save me from that hour.*

When you find any stirrings of good desires to arise, any motion of the Spirit to affect you, work them downwards to humble your hearts, making you base and vile in your own eyes, that so you may grow downward in the root; 'tis very dangerous when beginnings run upwards presently, but when they shew us our sins and unworthiness then they work kindly: If there be no moisture at the root of the tree, though there be never so many blossoms they will die, vanish, and come to nothing; so if your joyes and secret raptures of soul are not moistened in the tears of sorrow and humiliation they will blow off and be shaken down by the next temptation; but when the inward workings of joy in the heart, do as well operate to humiliation as consolation, when they work both waies, then will not your goodnes be as the early dew that goeth away, and as the morning cloud which soon vanisheth? *Psal. 110.*

*Pf. 110. 3*  
opened.

3. 'tis prophesied that in the times of the Gospel Christs people shall be a willing people in the day of his power, Christs power shall be put forth upon his people to subdue their wils to the will of God, so that if we find this effect of Christs power in us, then may we be sure that our goodnes shall not prove as the morning cloud.

*Rest*

Rest not in stirrings and beginnings, except you find them to work you to union with Jesus Christ: therefore as soon as your hearts begin to work, you should stop a little and ask your hearts what of Jesus Christ is there in those beginnings; have I more of his righteousness, wisdom and love than I had before? only such stirrings of heart as bring Christ into the soul will hold and stand fast; that is very observable which we read of concerning the *Manna*, *Exod. 16. 14.* that the dew which was upon the ground that passed away, but the *Manna* that stayed on still; so the good affections and desires which are in many are even like the dew, which as soon as the Sun is up is gone presently; now if you would not have the efficacy of them gone, try what *Manna* there is left behind, what of Christ is strengthened, is your faith propped, your love increased, your humility acted? then it's something; the Israelites could not feed upon the dew, but the *Manna* was their nourishment; so how is it with you when the heat of your desires and stirrings are over? can you then feed upon Christ this spiritual *Manna*; look what word of promise is left in your hearts after your stirrings are over, and how your hearts are affected with it; such as find the promise remaining when the dew is gone and that these promises are as sweet now as they were at the first working of the affections, such a soul will hold out, and his righteousness shall not be as the morning cloud or early dew that passeth away.

## V E R. 5.

*Therefore have I hewed them by my Prophets: I have slain them by the words of my mouth, and thy judgments are as the light, that goeth forth.*

**T**herefore have I hewed them.] We would think there were little dependance upon these words, yet there is a very fit one. Therefore, that is, because they are so fickle and unconstant, so off and on, therefore have I caused my Prophets to deal sharply with them to cut them to the quick; I would not have dealt thus w<sup>th</sup> them, but that I have no other way to

take with them, seeing that they are so vain, so slight in their spirits I deal thus with them, that if it were possible I might fit them, and they might be brought to see what a God it is they have to deal withal. The Apostle in *Titus*, 1. 13. is commanded to reprove them sharply that they might be sound in the faith; sharply, that is, cuttingly, rebuke them cuttingly. My Prophets have been as an ax, [*in Prophetis*] as an ax that cuts hard knotty wood, or as the instruments of Carvers in stone, which cuts rough things. And have slain them by the words of my mouth; the seventy Translators carry these words thus, *Have slain the Prophets*, that is, have hewn the Prophets; and *Hierom* refers it to the time of *Elijah*, 1 *Kings*, 18. 40. who slew so many of *Baals* Prophets, and unto *Jehu's* time, that slue also many of *Baals* Priests, 2 *Kings*, 10. 25. thus they carry it; and in this you have an objection answered that the people might plead thus.

Seventy  
ἀπὸ θεῶν  
τοῦ ὄρου  
ἐκείνου.

*Hierom.*

Expof. 1.

'Tis true we have been led aside and have not worshiped God as we should do, but it is our Priests and our Prophets which have led us aside, we did but as we were taught, and if we have been led aside our Prophets and our Priests have done it; Nay saith God you cannot plead so, for you have seen my hand against the Prophets sufficiently, I have cut them off. So that though I conceive not this to be the meaning of these words, yet from this sense this useful Note may be observed.

Obfer.

*That when God comes out against false Prophets, and appears against them, then God looks especially that people should not follow them, nor do as they have been taught by them.* Ezek. 13. 10. there is a woful judgment denounced against the false Prophets, for prophesying peace when Gods purposes were set against Jerusalem, for destruction. Their judgment was, That they should not come into the Assemblies of his people, and my hand shall be against them: (and mark,) you shall know that I am the Lord God. They shall then know more particularly that I am the Lord God, when my hand is thus out against them. It is a mighty convincement of people, when they see the hand of God out against their false teachers; and if so, how may the people

people of England be convinced of the evil of that way they Appli-  
 fo admire and cry up, when the hand of God is ſo heavy up- for Engl  
 on the ſuperſtitious time-ſervers and maintainers of theſe ſuperſtit.  
 waies? Minister

But there are others who carry the word unto the good Expof. 2  
 Prophets, as *Pareus* with ſome others, & ſo in a twofold ſenſe  
 they are ſaid to be ſlain.

First, *In their charge.* I have ſent them ( ſaith God) to de-  
 liver my meſſage to this people, and they have ſrown in their  
 faces and have kil'd them, and deſtroyed them, and I account  
 it as if I had done it, becauſe I ſet them about their work : and  
 this was ſpoken at that time when the Prophets were groſſy 2 Chron.  
 abuſed, when *Zaccarias* the Prophet delivered his Meſſage to 24. 1.  
 King *Joſh*, and was ſlain for it ; and ſaith the text, *Acts*, 7. 52.  
*Which of the Prophets have not your fathers murdered?* But now  
 here is their encouragement againſt al the il uſage & the hard-  
 ſhips which they meet withal in their work : I look upon it  
 ſaith God as I doing it, I had a hand in it : therefore certain-  
 ly God will not let them go unrewarded. 1 Sam. 22. 23. *Da-*  
*vid ſaid to Abiathar, Abide thou with me, fear not ; for he that ſee-*  
*keſh thy life, ſeeketh my life : but with me thou ſhalt be in ſafe-guard.*  
*David* was the occaſion of *Abiathers* fathers death, and becauſe  
 of that, what reſpect had *David* of him for this? and ſhall Conſola-  
 not God much more? So that, have you a friend, a brother, or tion to  
 a father ſlain for the Cauſe of God, or in it, ſtanding for Him? thoſe Mi-  
 ſhall not God take his part? yea He will. *Abimelech* was ſlain the friends  
 accidentally for the Cauſe of *David*, & yet he would deal wel of thoſe  
 with *Abiathar* : but ſaith God, thy friend was ſlain, ſtanding that are  
 for Me, and owning My Cauſe; he ſhall loſe nothing by it, perished.  
 for I will deal well with thee, and preſerve thee alive for his in the  
 ſake. Cauſe of  
 God.

*I have ſlain them.*] That is thus, Their Miniſtry hath been Expof. 3.  
 ſo heavy that it hath even kil'd them, I have followed them on  
 ſo wick work, that I have even ſlain them; ſo that this people  
 cannot ſay, they have not been warned, or that they have had  
 no Prophets among the n, or that their Prophets have been  
 idle, that they have had no work to do; and certainly it is  
 a good

Oportet Episcopum  
concionan-  
tem mori.

a good death for a Minister to die preaching. *Pareus* makes much use of this, saith he, How much more honorable to die in doing Gods work, than by committing sinful acts of intemperance, uncleanness, &c. they cannot spend their strength better than in Gods service: O let that people who have such Ministers look to it, that they bring forth fruit answerable in some proportion to the cost that is bestowed on them: and if you take the sense thus, then God seems to speak grievously, Oh what shall I do with this people? what means hath been used, what losses have I sustained by them? I have spent many choice Servants among them, the lives and strengths of such spirits have bin spent upon them of whom the world was not worthy, Oh what shall I do unto such a people! Surely such a people, enjoying such a Ministry had need look to their profession: May not this be said of many Congregations in *London*? hath not God sent many choice spirits among you to do you good? and have they effected the end for which they were sent among you? If not, wo to you: God hath a special regard unto this, when he shall spend the lives of his choicest and most precious servants; and if he have not a considerable vallue and return in peoples fruitfulness it wil mightily provoke and incense him against them: God hath an high esteem of his Ministers lives and strengths, they are valued more than so, to be spent and wasted upon unfruitful people, who neither care for them nor their Ministry.

Congregations  
in *London*.

Expol. 3. But to come more particularly, and according to the genuine sense of the words: This slaying refers it self to the people: Now the Word slaies in these two respects.

How the word slaies

1.

In its denouncing of judgement upon men; for what the Word threatens it is said to do, *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. At what instant I speak concerning a Nation, or concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy, and when God promises mercy & good he is said to give life; and we should look upon them as performing of it.

2.

In the operation and working of it, it hath a mighty efficacy in it, for the working impenitent sinners to ruin, it is as a twoedged sword which doth execution every way *Isa.* 11. 3

It.

It makes men of quick underſtanding in the fear of God; and God is ſaid to conſume Antichriſt by the breath of his noſtrils, and by the Word of his mouth, the Word is of ſuch a <sup>2 Theſ. 2.</sup> force that ſometimes it brings death in a literal ſenſe to ſome who withſtand and oppoſe it, *Ezek. 11. 2.* *Pelathiah* gives wicked counſel in the City, and the Prophet is commanded to prophete againſt him, and in the 13. verſe we read that when the Prophet propheteſied, *Pelathiah* died: ſo many times God makes the Word ſo powerful in the mouths of his ſervants that it ſtrikes men dead preſently: *Gualter* hath this <sup>Gualter</sup> Note from hence, that the power of the Word appears in this, that it awakens, convinces, and terrifies the conſciences of men, ſo that they go home and make away themſelves, and become ſelf-murderers, and the truth is, it is nothing elſe but the word working powerfully to the ruin and deſtruction of men.

Or the words may be taken hyperbolically; as men that <sup>Expoſ. 4.</sup> are oppreſſed and in miſery, Oh ye kill me, I am not able to endure it, you will be the death of me; the Prophets came ſo cloſe to them, that they cryed out, Oh they will kill us, we are not able to ſuffer them. *Luther* ſaith that theſe words *Thou haſt ſlain them, by the words of my mouth*; that is meant the <sup>Luther</sup> Law, by the Law thou haſt ſlain them, and by the word *Prophets* he ſaith is meant, that part of Doctrin which is neceſſary to be preached, to prevent the abuſe of the Doctrin of the Goſpel, which otherwiſe men would be ready to pervert, and he further adds, that, thoſe men which deny the uſe of the Law were not fit ſo much as to be ſuffered; I mention this of *Luther* the rather becauſe thoſe who deny the uſe of the Law urge him ſo ſtrongly for the upholding of them in their way. It follows.

*Thy judgments are as the light.* That is, paſſively, thy threatenings <sup>Expoſ. 1.</sup> upon them, or the execution of thoſe threatenings upon them ſhall break out as the light; though they have ſlain my Prophets, and think thereby to free themſelves from thoſe judgments which they threatned againſt them; no ſaith God, for all this I will make known my threatenings, which they have:

have denounced against them; when the Prophet *Jeremiah* had delivered the message of God to the Princes and the Priests they laid hold on him, and said, he should surely die, *Jer.* 26. 8. Now see what the Prophet saith in the 14 and 15. verses, *As for me, behold I am in your hands, do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you, but know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall bring innocent blood upon your heads; for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you.* You think perhaps that when the Minister is gone his words are gone and there is an end of them; no, they shall lie upon you, and shall break out so perspicuously that they shall clearly convince you; though formerly they pleaded for themselves as they in *Isa.* 58. that let them be never so well conceived of themselves, I will discover them to be but a company of base Hypocrites, I will then shew you such clear demonstrations of the waies of righteousness in which you should have walked, that all shall discern what you are, it shall then appear as clear as the light wherein you have gone astray from the rule.

Expos. 2. Again, the words may be taken actively, and then the sense is, *That my power shall so appear upon them, that their righteousness and holiness shall appear as the light.* And then though my judgments were smart and tedious at the first, yet you shall not repent it, you shall see so much good from them which will make amends and pay all charges: Or thus, I have sent my Prophets among this people for this very end and purpose, to make this people a righteous people, and that they may manifest this as clearly as the light. And thus you have the meaning of the words, the observations follow.

Obs. 1. *Unconstancy in the waies of Religion causes God to be incensed against a people.* Such men as are off and on, which make overtures in the waies of Religion had need to have cutting truths preached to them: *Therefore have I bewed them* (saith God) *by my Prophets;* and a Gods Ministers must deal thus with their people, so must every man in particular who loves his own soul, and if so be hy soul be precious in thy eyes thou wilt willingly deal sharply with thy self, say, Oh wretched heart that I have, to let such stirrings die, such motions of  
the



the ſpirit come to nothing, doſt thou know whom thou haſt to deal withal, the infinite great God? and for what thou haſt to deal with him, for no leſs than eternity, and haſt thou ſtirrings of heart about this? and doſt thou let them die? this provokes God.

*Many mens hearts are like knotty timber and rough ſtones.*

Obſ. 2.

*I have hewen them.* And the longer men continued in their ſins the knottier they are; as timber which hath lain long ſoking in the water is tough & hardened; ſo mens ſpirits that are ſoaked in their evil waies, Oh how untoward are they, and how hard a thing is it to faſten any thing that is good upon them? ſo that when we ſee mens ſpirits tough, ſtubborn and hard to be wrought upon think of this text, *I have hewen them by my Prophets.*

That this is ſpoken of a people whoſe goodneſs was as the morning cloud, and the early dew which paſſeth away: The Note is, *That many people although their goodneſs be but as the dew, ſoon off, yet their evil is hard and ſetled:* the goodneſs of many is like the \**ſofterneſs of a plumb ſoon cruſhed; but their wickedneſs is like the ſtone in the plumb hard and unſlexible;* ſo that you may here ſee grace & truth doth not conſiſt in good motions, ſtirrings, and deſires, for theſe may be where the heart is not melting, ſoft, nor tender; the heart is not changed, for were the heart kindly wrought upon, it would kindly yeeld and buckle under the power of the Word, when it comes againſt their ſins, there would be a taking part with the Word.

Obſ. 3.

\*A fit ſimile.

*Gods Miniſters are hewers.* I have hewen them by my Prophets; elſewhere they are called Gods *Workmen*, and *Hewers*, and that in theſe two reſpects: Either to prepare them for Gods building, or to caſt them into the fire, theſe are Gods ends in ſending His Miniſters, His Hewers; now they hew all, good and bad, to take them off from their own rootings and make them as beams in Gods building, or to be as an ax laid to the root of their ſouls. 'Tis recorded that in the building of *Solomons* Temple there was no noiſe of knocking with hammers or tools, the materials being prepared, fitted, and ſquared beforehand: ſo thoſe which will be men-

Obſ. 4.

bers of Gods Temple hereafter, must be hewed and fitted for it here; therefore *John* is said to be one sent to make rough things plain, to level great mountains, mountains of Lns, crabbed and rugged spirits.

*Use.* By this work you may see what a hard task the Ministers labor is, this made *Jeremiah* to complain, when he saw the dulness and stupidity of the people, resolved that he would speak no more in the Name of the Lord to this people. The work of a Minister it is more laborious than the work of a *Chrysofom* Carpenter, as *Chrysofom* expresses it; for saith he, the Carpenter when he hath wrought hard all day he goes home and comes again in the morning and finds it as he left it; but we hew and take pains and leave our people, and come again we find them worse than before.

*Obs. 5.* That the Ministers of the Gospel when they meet with such rough, croffe, and untoward spirits must deale with them answerably.

I have hewed them by my Prophets, my Prophets have done their work upon them, God seems to speak to the Prophets to bid them sharpen their tools, make their instruments keen, preach fitably unto them, saving some with fear, as the Apostle *Jude* speaks, verse 23. I wonder what people can say to this Scripture, who cry out against Ministers for preaching the Law, when the text saies plainly, and save some with fear: therefore let those that are the Ministers of the Word have a care that they sharpen their tools by the Word, putting an edge upon them that so they may encounter with the greatest oppositions.

*Obs. 6.* When the Ministers hew, God hews. I have hewn them saith God, when as it was the Prophets that did it. Is the Word sharp, and doth it come close at any time? then look to God which makes it so. Is the tool sharp, and doth it smart? then look to the hand that directed the stroke, and know that if God hew thee, he will have his will upon thee, he will accomplish the end he aims at; when God hews thee, if thou dost not work under his hand to make something of for use, he will throw thee into the fire, as a workman in an angry fit of passion throws away the piece he is at work upon into the fire;

fire; ſo ſaith God, this man or this woman they are good for nothing, I'll throw them into the fire: take heed, you who have ſtirrings and motions unto good, and yet have your ſecret luſts, beloved boſom-corruptions, know that God may cut you down for the fire, and thou mayeſt be already cut down for the fire, though thou liveſt in the boſome of the Church under the Ordinances; before thou art cut down by death, as we may ſee, the figtree was cut down, yet had leaves for a while, green and flouriſhing; know, 'tis poſſible that a man which makes a glorious profeſſion and performs many duties, yet may be but a veſſel of wrath, one cut down by the ſtroke of the Word by wrath, this cutting down, is like unto that which we find in *Luke 14. 24.* For I ſay unto you, that none of theſe men which were bidden ſhall taſt of my ſupper; and yet theſe men had ſtirrings and motions in them. Oh! the conſideration of this ſhould make ſinners to tremble, that it is poſſible for men, yea for men profeſſing godlineſs to be cut down by the Word of wrath, and that while they are living and well; now God may be ſaid to cut a man down for vengeance when he in judgment determines and ſecretly reſolves againſt him, that no means nor mercies ſhall do him good, now wo to that man againſt whom God is thus reſolved and determined. But that none may be diſcouraged and diſheartned by this, but awakened, know, that ſo long as God ſtill ſtrives with thee, and is yet working upon thee by his Word, and by his Spirit, he hath not yet determined againſt thee, thou art not paſt hope of cure, therefore improve the ſeaſons, and do not abuſe this that hath been ſaid, let it ſupport you from diſpair, but not encourage you to preſume.

*Gods Miniſters are Gods Tools;* and as tools by working are worn out, ſo are Gods Miniſters worn by working; but when the work goes on though the tools are worn, the laborer thinks not much: ſo God when he ſees people come in and accept of mercy, he is content to bear the loſs of the wearing of his tools; and as men reckon not only for the work done, but alſo for the wearing of the tools, and the more precious the tool is, the more he accounts of, and reckons for the

When a  
man is  
cut down

when not

Obſ. 7.

wearing of it, so will God also, not only reckon for the lives of his servants but also for their strength and the weakening of their bodies by sweating and labor. Therefore people had need to look to it, that their fruit may answer the cost God is at with them; for know, that God sets a high price upon His choice servants lives, and he will have a valluable consideration for them, either in you or upon you; and wo be to you if God forceth the price of such blood as theirs is in your ruin.

Obj. 8. *Gods Ministers are Gods mouth to His people. I have slain them by the words of my Mouth: Jer. 15. 19. If thou take forth the precious from the vile, then shall you be as my mouth. And look what is threatned by them, is threatned by God; and what promise they open and press upon a soul in distress, is done by God Himself, and it is to be looked upon as God speaking to thee in particular.*

Obj. 9. *The Word of God is of great power, and full of efficacy. I have slain them by the words of my mouth. The word is like a two-edged sword which smites every way and doth execution: every time men hear the Word it is for life or for death, Dent. 32. 46, 47. Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify unto you this day, for it is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life; it is your life which lies upon it, therefore look ye to it; so in Revel. 11. 5. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouthes, and devoureth their enemies: Though the witnesses be as Olive branches, yet if any wrong them they must be killed by devouring fire.*

Object. *But if the Word be of such efficacy, of a slaying nature, why should we hear it?*

Ans. *We are bound to hear the Word as our duty: and when we come we should present our lusts before the edge of the Word: were sin presented before it, it would only slay the sin and not the person. When the Word comes, it will slay the one, either your sins, or your souls; therefore if you would have your souls saved, put your sins to death: the upright man need not fear comming to the Word; but such as are resolved to keep their sins, the Word will slay both them and their sins too. It follows.*

The word  
slaves ei-  
ther the  
sin, or the  
soul.

And

*And thy judgments ſhall break forth, as the light that goeth forth.* Text.

Hence obſerve: That Gods judgments, while men go on in a *Obſ. 1.*  
 prosperous way of ſinning, lie in the dark, they ſee them not, they  
 ſin and judgment appears not, and therefore they take liber-  
 ty and embolden themſelves in their ſins.

*When judgments do come, they break out.* Judgments were *Obſ. 2.*  
 working their ruine before, they did not ſleep: Judgements  
 when they come they break out upon finners: as mighty wa-  
 ters being ſtopt in their courſe of running, when they work  
 over the interruption they run the faſter.

*God hath His time to puniſh ſins openly by His judgments;* as *Obſ. 3.*  
 they ſin ſecretly in the dark, God will puniſh openly in the  
 light to make them aſhamed.

*God will have His time to convince men by His judgments;* then *Obſ. 4.*  
 their filthineſs ſhall be puniſhed.

Now Gods judgments may be ſaid to break forth (to con-  
 vince men, and) as the light, three waies. *How judgment convinces,*

1. When the ſame thing threatened in the Word comes to  
 paſſe.

2. When the judgment inflicted is ſutable to the ſin com-  
 mitted.

3. When it is executed by a remarkable hand upon the ſin-  
 ner, then that judgement breaks forth upon a man as the  
 light.

*Gods judgments are gradual.* They break forth as the light, *Obſ. 5.*  
 not all at once, there is the morning light, and the mid-day;  
 as mercies to the Saints are gradual, ſo judgments upon the  
 wicked are but by degrees, dropping at the firſt.

*There is much to be learned by the breakings out of judgment as the* *Obſ. 6.*  
*light. Iſa. 26. 8. When thy judgments are abroad, the inhabitants*  
*of the world will learn righteousneſs. Mic. 6. 9. The man of wiſdom*  
*ſhall ſee thy Name: Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it. Pro.*  
*28. 5. Evil men underſtand not judgment: but they that ſeek the*  
*Lord, underſtand all things: they ſhall learn much. Examine*  
 your

your hearts by this, what you have learned by these judgments that are broken out so cleer upon us, that the greatest Atheist in the world may learn this, *That the Lord He is God,* as the people cried out in 1 King. 18. 39.

Obf. 7. *When God sends a Ministry to a people, it is to discover the way of God, and of His Worship to that people; The Lord makes their righteousness to appear and break forth as the light, and He will have His way and Worship to appear as cleerly as the light, His way shall not be in the dark to them.*

Obf. 8. *When God brings a powerful Ministry to a people, the more powerful and sharp that Ministry hath been, if they do not turn, the more terrible and sharp shall judgement be upon them. Your consciences shall eccho upon this ground in your ears, The Lord is righteous in all His waies, justly am I punished. Oh the sad cries of many people in their licknesses and death-beds! How many times have I been warned by the Word? but I slighted warnings, I did not regard them; warnings have been no warnings to me, therefore justly am I in misery.*

Use. *Oh that the consideration of this might be more prevalent and work more upon us, than ever Gods quikness in His judgments wrought towards those that stand out against a quick, searhing Ministry.*

VER. 6.

*For I desired Mercy, and not sacrifice: and the knowledge of God, more than burnt offerings.*

**T**His being a great Scripture, having much of the mind of God in it, and much difficulty in the understanding of Connexio. it. I reade no further at this time. Here we have a reason of Gods severe expression in the former verse, where it was said that God had hewed them by his Prophets, and slew them by the words of his mouth. Why was God so severe against them? it was, because he would not be put off with their sacrifices, they bouldered up themselves with these, objecting against the Prophet when he pressed them to mercy and to the knowledg of God: Why, are not we abundant in serving of God?

God? burnt offerings are not neglected by us; and why should not we be accepted? No saith God, *I desired mercy, and not sacrifice*; never tell me of your sacrifices and burnt offerings, so long as there is no mercy among you; *Therefore have I hewed them by my Prophets, & slain them by the words of my mouth*; you are so glued unto these outward things, that I must hew you off from them. This sentence is most famous, quoted twice by Christ himself in the new Testament, which we do not find of any place again, which notes the eminency of it; the first time it is quoted you shall find in *Mat. 9. 13.* and the second, in *Mat. 12. 7.*

For the meaning of the words: *For I desired mercy*] the word signifies to desire and to will a thing with a great complacency, or delight; as if God should say, mercy is a thing so pleasing to me, that I desire it at my heart; the word in the Original is fuller than is expressed in our English translation, nothing in the world is so pleasing unto me as mercy. There is Gods great mercy in reconciling the world unto himself by Jesus Christ, and this is more worth than all the sacrifices in the world; but this is not the mercy meant in the text, *Heb. 10. 5, 6. Burnt offerings, and sacrifices thou hadst no pleasure in, but a body hast thou prepared*: there is no mercy like this, the mercy of God in his Son Jesus Christ. But the mercy here meant in the text, it is the mercy of man, and the word here, *mercy*, is the same word in the Original with that in the 4. verse, your *goodness* is as the morning cloud that passeth away; so that I desire mercy, that is not the mercy of God, but mercy to Man, and that mercy to our selves, so Christ interprets it, in *Mat. 12. 7. If ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless*. As if Christ should say, God in some cases would have men provide for themselves, though they neglect the keeping of the Sabbath, *I will have mercy*, as to our selves so to others, *mercy to men*, either to their bodies or to their souls; mercy to the body every one will grant, but it ought to be especially to the soul: warranted from Christs other quotation of these words, *Mat. 9. 13. Goye, and learn what that meaneth, I will have.*

Expōsit.

רַחֲמִים

רַחֲמִים

Mercy  
goodness  
and right-  
teousness.

Mercy. *have mercy and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous,*  
 Sacrifice. *but sinners to repentance:* This word *mercy* is a synecdoche  
 comprehending all the duties of the second Table under one,  
*I will have mercy, and not sacrifice;* by sacrifice is meant synec-  
 docically all instituted Ordinances and Worship, all the af-  
 firmative precepts of the second and fourth commandments,  
 all Ordinances commanded them then, or that ever should  
 be commanded them hereafter are included in these com-  
 mands; and this appears to be so by Christs applying of the  
 text in *Mat. 12. 7.* where it is applied to the sanctification  
 of the Sabbath, and in *Mat. 9. 13.* there Christ applies it and  
 quotes it under an Ordinance, whether true or not, humane  
 or divine, it matters not, the separation of the Jews from  
 publicans and sinners, it being unlawful to eat with them, yet  
 in a case of mercy they might, having thereby an opportunity  
 to do good to their souls; so that from these two texts you  
 see a cleare warrant for the interpretation of this text.

Now in the further clearing of it, I shall answer some ques-  
 tions, satisfie some objections, and lastly, raise certain ob-  
 servations.

Quest. 1. *What is an instituted Ordinance? There are natural Ordinances,*  
*and instituted Duties: Now what is the difference between them?*  
*for natural worship, God stands so much upon it, that He will have it*  
*before all kind of mercy; inform us therefore of the difference of these*  
*two.*

Answ. For the unfolding of this, know, that by *Natural Duties* we  
 understand, such Duties as we ow to God, as God, and to be  
 performed by us as to a God: Then there are other duties, to  
 be performed by men, as unto men, which if there had been  
 no law to bind them to the performance of them, yet they  
 would be performed by men, & they were bound to perform  
 them, they are radicated in the heart, such Duties as the first  
 Commandement binds us unto; To have no other Gods but  
 the Lord, to fear this God, and Him alone, to love Him be-  
 fore all, and above all, to trust in Him for help at all times:  
 these are Duties to be done as unto a God, Nature it self tea-  
 cheth a man to perform these Duties.

Then



Then there are Duties to be performed unto men, As honoring of parents, ſpeaking the truth, not deceiving one another, defiling mens bodies, theſe Duties are radicated in the heart, that were there no Law of God to bind men, yet it were in mens hearts to do them: Now theſe Duties muſt not yeild to mercy. But for inſtituted worſhip, ſuch which if God had not revealed had not been duties, neither could men be bound unto them: As for their ſacrifices under the Law, by Bulls and Goats, theſe kind of ſacrifices, were they not revealed by ſome Prophet to be the mind of God they had not bin bound unto them: So for our Church Ordinances of Sacraments, Chriſtian Admonition and the like, are ſuch as flow from Gods Prerogative, and not ſo much from Gods Nature; the other duties lie in Gods Nature and Holineſs, and are to be performed unto Him as to a God ſo holy.

*But how did God ſay here, mercy and not ſacrifice? did not God require ſacrifice as well as mercy?* Queſt.

*Yea, God did require ſacrifice as well as mercy: But we muſt underſtand this with theſe limitations.* Anſw.

1. *I will have ſacrifice, but not without the ſpirit:* Sacrifices without the ſpirit joyned with them are nothing worth; when ſpiritual worſhip is joined with their outward ſacrifices then they are accepted of, inſtituted worſhip ſeparated from natural worſhip is regarded.

2. *Not ſacrifices to make atonement for their ſins.* The people thought by their ſacrifices to make atonement for their lives though they were never ſo vile and baſe; but ſaith God, I will not have it thus, I will have it only typical, in relation to Chriſt; but they left out Chriſt in them: therefore ſaith God in this ſenſe, *I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice.*

3. *Not ſacrifice.* That is, of your own; They had many ſacrifices of their own, which God did neither require, nor would He accept them from them. *I will have mercy, and not* &c.

4. *Not ſacrifices.* That is, ſuch as are injuriouſly gotten: the Jews were a very oppreſſing, grinding people, they would be much in ſacrifices, but it was out of the rights of the poor,

they would oppress and grind the poor and then think to make up all again by their sacrifices, in this case I will have mercy and not &c.

5. *Not sacrifices*; that is, comparatively, mercy rather than sacrifice; this negative in Scripture is often set out for half the thing it self, as in *Prov. 8. 10. Receive instruction, and not silver, and the knowledge of God rather than fine gold.* Receive instruction, not silver, that is, rather than silver, Gods requiring of knowledge does not forbid men seeking estates, but it shows us rather that knowledge is to be chosen before it. So *Paul* is sent to preach the Gospel, and not to baptize; that is, rather than to baptize; for *Paul* did baptize in some places: so saith God here, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*: that is, let me have both, but if both cannot be had, let me have mercy of the two, I do so much delight in it that if I cannot have mercy and sacrifice together, let me not miss of mercie.

Quest. 3. *Why should God require mercy rather than sacrifice?*

Ans. 1. Because mercy is good in it self, but sacrifice is good only in reference to something else, the good of sacrifices are only in their references to Jesus Christ.

2. Mercy is good in it self, but sacrifice is good because commanded by Gods Prerogative, Gods command puts its goodness upon it.

3. Mercy is part of Gods Image in man, but sacrifice is not, and by how much more excellent Gods Image is in man, above any other excellency, by so much is mercy more excellent than sacrifice.

4. All instituted worship was made for man, not man for it; but for natural worship man was made for it, and not it for man; therefore must needs be more excellent. Christs reasoning thus warrants this reasoning, saith Christ, *The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath*: Now this cannot be said of Natural worship, of the duties of fearing God, loving of God, trusting in God.

5. There is more self-denial in a duty of Mercy than in any Sacrifice; to do good to the poor, and that in obedience to Gods

Gods command argues more ſelf-denial than to be offering up to God ſacrifices, it puts a great honor upon the creature to offer up ſacrifice to God, becauſe then man hath to do with God in an imediate manner.

Mercy is, *Æterna veritatis*, it is an eternal everlaſting duty, it was alwaies, and ſhall be ſo, and the habit of it ſhall be ſo to all eternity; though in Heaven there be no objects to be deli- red out of miſery, yet this diſpoſition of mercy remains in them. 6.

Sacrifice is a typical duty for the obtaining of the pardon of ſin, but mercy is a moral duty; now that which is a moral duty is better than that which is but to further us in the getting of pardon for a moral offence committed againſt the great God. 7.

Becauſe ſacrifices are but to further us in natural duties: to what end ſerve Sacraments and why do I receive Sacra- ments but to ſtrengthen my faith, encrease my love, and to further my appetite in hearing Gods mind? why do I hear the Word of God, but that it may turn me unto God? Now the end of a thing is better than the means, for the attaining of that end, therefore upon theſe grounds God may be ſaid to deſire mercy rather than ſacrifice. 8.

*What are theſe caſes in which God will have mercy and not ſa- crifices?* 9. Queſt. 4.

The principal caſes are theſe ten. Anſw. in

Sometimes in the caſe of a beaſt he will have mercy and not ſacrifice; if a beaſt ſhould be in danger of loſing its life by any casualty upon the Lords day, God doth allow us to forbear all Church Ordinances at that time rather than let the beaſt periſh; but becauſe this liberty by God is allowed to men in this caſe, yet you muſt not think that a beaſt is better than all Gods Ordinances. 10. Caſes

In caſe of mercy to the poor; and that I conceive to be the principal ſcope of the words of this text; theſe people here they wronged, oppreſſed, and tyrannized over the poor, and then they thought to make amends to God by their ſacrifices and offerings; men muſt not lay out ſo much of their eſtates 1.

either in superfluities, or for the maintainance of Gods true worship, as to hinder them in their benevolence and charity to the poor, no Ordinance of God should hinder us in shewing mercy to the least member of Jesus Christ; although those which are next us ought to be first relieved, yet know, 'tis a shame that others should be neglected and forgotten, yea it is a reproach to the waies of God, that prophane men should be more liberal to the poor, that more hungry bellies should be fed & naked backs cloathed by them than by those which profess Religion and would seem to honor God most; do not you think this will be sufficient to excuse you before God, when the cry of the poor shall come up before him, that you have been at such and such charges for the Ordinances, and for Gods worship: no in this case God will have mercy.

3 Mercy to parents, to relieve parents in their necessity, is a case in which God will have mercy and not sacrifice; if providence so cast it, that parents should stand in need of our help, if we are able to help them in their decay, it is our duty to do it, though by this means you are deprived of Gods Ordinances, you ought rather to regard the releif of parents than the observation of the Sabbath if the case should so fall out: you are ready to think thus, Were not I better to let my parents alone, I must obey the command of Christ who saith, *That he which forsakes not father and mother for my sake and* the Gospel, and follows not me, is not worthy of me. Here now is a mistake in this, *Is not worthy of me*, that is, if your parents should counsel, advise, perswade, intice, or command you to the practice of evil to the omission of any good, to the breach of any command, and upon your refusal they should be angry with you, that you will not obey them, but follow the command of God and not go out of Gods way, in this case father and mother is to be forsaken for Christ and the Gospel, but in no case if they stand in need of your help; this is grounded upon that text in *Mark*, 7. 11. which text I shall open to you, but ye say, *If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.* Now what is the meaning of this word *Corban*?

Matt. 10.  
37.  
Christ's  
speech of  
neglect of  
parents  
expounded.

by Mark,  
7. 11.

*Corban*? The word ſignifies a gift conſecrated to God; now the Jews thought that if they could ſay the word *Corban*, they were exempted from all duty to their parents in this kind; 'tis true, I had an eſtate, but I have conſecrated it to God, and Church ſervices, and though I owe duty and reſpect to you as my parents, yet more to God, as my Creator: this is moſt vile and abominable, and 'reproved by Chriſt himſelf, *Poſſidonius* in the life of *Auſtin* reports that *Auſtin* condemned parents, who uſed to give their eſtates away to Monaſtries, and pious uſes as they thought, and neglected their children: ſo for children to neglect and ſlight parents in the time of their neceſſity, and think to excuſe it with this they have given to the Church, and now they are not able to do any more, this will not do it; and this was the old way of Pa-piſts, to get people to give to their Mother, the Church. I find cited a tradition by ſome of the Jews uſed by them, when they fell out and were throughly angry one with another, they would tell him he ſhould never have any benefit in any thing which they had, and this they called *Corban*, and this in *Mat.* 15. 5. is called a gift, *The gift of the Altar*: therefore ſome of the Heathens forbad this Oath *Corban*; and yet this was the Oath that theſe did ſwear by, and by ſome is uſed (upon the matter) even at this day as an Oath, as thus, when any that we have relation unto, having throughly angered us, we uſe to ſay, well, you ſhall never be a peny the better for me, this is no other than this oath *Corban* which they uſed to ſwear by in this place.

In the caſe of the good of ſouls, and this is Chriſts caſe, *Mat.* 9. 13. *Go ye and learn what that meaneth; I will have mercy and not ſacrifice, for I am not come to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*: though men ought to prize Ordinances, and to ſet a high eſteem of Gods worſhip, yet if it ſhould ſo fall out, that inſtituted worſhip and mercy to ſouls come together, and both cannot be done together, inſtituted worſhip may be left undone ſo not ſlighted, and the work of mercy to the ſoul muſt be vallued before it: we are ready to think that nothing muſt give way to inſtituted worſhip, but certainly immortal ſouls

Corban.

Auſtin.

4

souls are of more worth than Ordinances. *Paul* was of such a disposition, that he could wish himself out of Heaven and become an Anathema for his brethren, that souls might be saved.

5. In case of humane societies, and for the quiet state of Kingdoms, and yet this no prejudice to Gods Ordinances: God hath allowed to men the art of Navigation; we reade *Solomon* sent ships to *Tharshis* to fetch gold, which were it not for this text I could not see any warrant there were for that employment of Navigation; when men shall be three or four yeers out perhaps and never hear Sermons, nor receive Sacraments; and yet it is lawful upon this ground, that God will have the peace of Sates and quiet of Kingdoms preserved and maintained, he will rather suspenche with men in the use of his own Ordinances, for the prosperity of Civil States: therefore *Solomon* is not reprov'd for sending Ships to *Ophir* for gold.

Navigation.

6. In the case of Church societies, when the People of God are scaterred, and cannot meet together, God is content in such cases His people should be without Ordinances, and yet no sin to them: as is cleer in the case of the children of *Israel* all the time the Church was in the wilderness even for forty yeers together they wanted Circumcision; but when they came into *Canaan*, that they enjoyed any settlement than they were circumcised again, and had the Passover which before they could not partake of; so that in some cases and upon some grounds the people of God may be without Ordinances, and that for a long time, and yet without sin to them; and upon this ground in the text, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*: therefore this may be the reason of those words which *Christ* spake to His Disciples; *I have many things to say unto you, but you are not able to bear them*: so may we say, *Christ* hath many truths to reveal which yet people are not able to bear, therefore he with-holds the revelation of them until that time.

7. In case of mercy to our bodies: And this is *Christ's* case in the 12<sup>th</sup> of *Matthew*, 7. verse, *If ye had known what this meaneth, ye would*

would not have condemned the guiltleſſ: yet, I will have mercy, and not ſacrifice. Gods care of the bodies of men is ſuch, that he will rather have men do the one than the other, He wil rather have mercy than the duty: Chriſt doth not plead here for the Diſciples, that this was not a breach of the Sabbath; but the caſe was ſuch that their bodies required it, it was a caſe of mercy, and now God would rather have mercy than the duty: A ſervant perhaps thinks much to ſtay at home to tend a child, or look to the houſe upon the Lords day, he objects, Why ſhould not I go to the Church? Is not my ſoul of greater worth and price than this child, or this houſe? Now theſe people go upon a good principle; yet here they er in their acting of it: as to inſtance; A father commands his child to do two ſervices for him, the one to wait on him at the table, the other to make clean his ſhoos; to wait upon his father at the table he is willing to do, becauſe this is creditable, but the other he grumbles at and is diſcontented: now in which doth he ſhew moſt obedience in? Surely in obeying of the meaneſt command. So God requires of us two ſorts of Duties, one the more honorable, the other more mean, yet perhaps the meaner, a work of mercy: God is wonderful careful of our bodies, and would have us alſo careful of the bodies of others, men ought not to maſſacar their bodies, God doth not require weak ſickly bodies, to ſpend whol nights in faſting and prayer: God in this caſe will have mercy, and not ſacrifice of us.

ſimile

God care  
ful of the  
body.

Mercy in caſe of our own eſtates. But here ſome may ſay, What, may we regard our own particular eſtates before the ſervice of God? Yea, in ſome caſes we may; as thoſe, Suppoſe we were in the Aſſembly at publick Ordinances, and there ſhould be a fire in the Town, or theeves breaking into a houſe, we might lawfully leave the Ordinances to quench the fire, or to apprehend the theeves, and ſave our goods. *Numb. 9 13.* If a man were in a journey, and in the mean time the Paſſover were to be delivered, he might go on in his journey, and do his buſineſs, and yet no ſin to him. So may we, if in a journey or ſpecial buſineſs, if not on purpoſe we go about this in

8.

ſlighting

slighting or contemning of the Ordinance, we may go on in our business without sin, God will have mercy.

9. In the times of persecution, God doth allow his people the forbearing of some Ordinances; as is cleer in *Acts*, 8. 1. There was at that time a great persecution against the Church which was at *Jerusalem*, so that the Church was scattered and could not be together to enjoy Church-fellowship, and yet it was no sin to them; it had been an unjust charge if any should have come and said, What, do you prize your lives so highly, and fear the losse of them, more than the Ordinances of God? will not you joyn together in Church-fellowship and constant assembling your selves together, because you think you shall suffer by it? No, in such case, God will have mercy, and not sacrifice.

Church  
assemblys  
not al-  
waies safe

10. In the case of some eminent service for God. As in the case of *Nehemiah*, he being the Kings Cup-bearer he must attend it, and when he was to go up to *Jerusalem* by the Kings leave, when he had finished his work he returns to the King again to serve in his place, though he wanted the Ordinances there in the Kings Court, which he might have enjoyed at *Jerusalem*, yet that he might be more serviceable in the Churches Cause he is contented to deny himself in his own comforts. These are the cases, with others of the like nature, in which God will have mercy, and not sacrifice.

I shal answer some *Objections* that may be made against this.

- Obj. I. *But mens hearts are deceitful, and they may pretend cases of mercy when there is no such thing in hand.*

Ans. Know, though in such a case thou couldst not do it, yet do not thou judge another man that may or can do it; the rule is difficult, that's true, yet do not thou envie another mans grace, to whom God hath given power to mannage his business with Christian wisdom; thou thinkest that if thou wert in such places and hadst such temptations as others have, thou shouldst miscarry, and aim at self in them; yet do not thou judge another man, that may do it in sincerity, do not thou judge another mans duty through thy weakness: Gods servants in this world are as his stewards; now we know that a steward



ſteward hath not every thing given him in a particular command by his Lord, but only general rules given him to order particulars according to prudence, faithfulneſs, and zeal, for the exerciſe of theſe three graces are required in a ſteward: Prudence and wiſdom, faithfulneſs and truſt, care and zeal, in all theſe. So doth God give general rules for the ordering of a Chriſtian life, and theſe general rules being obſerved, particular caſes are to be ordered, in prudence, faithfulneſs, and zeal; wiſdom to judge, faithfulneſs in doing, zeal to keep up life and ſpirit in action, and where there is a miſcarrying through frailty God will have mercy.

But it may be asked, *Can any duty of the ſecond Table be more excellent than the duties of the firſt Table? of the one God being the object; of the other man is the object.* Obj. 2.

The duties of the firſt Table, are to be underſtood, either for the ſubſtantial and internal duties of the heart, or ſome ſuperadded duties of the firſt Table, joyned with the internal and ſubſtantial duties; then there are duties of the ſecond Table, ſome more ſubſtantial ſome ſuperadded; now if we compare the internal and ſubſtantial duties with the ſuperadded duties, there the ſubſtantial are above them, and to be preferred before them, they having God for their immediate object, yet in ſome caſes God is pleaſed to indulge with men ſo far, that he wil let the duties of the ſecond Table, duties of mercy towards men go before the more ſubſtantial duties of the firſt Table; ſo in the duties of the ſecond Table to men, ſome duties which are but circumſtantial and not ſo neceſſary God allows ſhould be done when others more fundamental ſhall lie ſtill omitted, yet without ſin. Anſw.

*But if Gods Ordinances are duties, can they be omitted at any time and that without ſin? Are they duties or not duties?* Obj. 3.

For anſwer, Take notice, there are two ſorts of Precepts, Negative and Affirmative; a negative binds *ſemper, & ad ſemper*, alwaies and at all times, but an affirmative doth bind only *ſemper*, but not *ad ſemper*, alwaies, but not at all ſeaſons; at one time we may omit a thouſand actions which are to be done, but we cannot do many actions at one and the ſame

time, therefore for affirmative duties, if they be done in their season, God accepts of them as done continually; as for that command, *Pray continually*; if it be done in its season God looks upon it as done continually, and alwaies done; if providence should so order it, that another duty be brought to be done at this instant, that duty which I was going to perform ceaseth then to be a duty to me at this time; if two good things come together, the one can be done but at a time, so that the other is not a duty at that time to you, which otherwise is a duty, else if this were not, man would be necessitated to sin, and all the grace and mercy and assistance of God could not help in this case, if that two affirmative precepts must bind at the same time, to be done, therefore this must be remembered for a truth, that when two affirmative precepts come together, the one is a dutie to be performed, the other not.

Instance. But what say you to the case of *Daniel*, when he knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house and prayed more earnestly; *Dan. 6. 10.* Might not he have saved his life according to this rule? *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*; yet his was a sacrifice that he tendered up to God, it was more than a prayer.

Answ. *Daniel* at this time was cal'd to manifest *Jehovah* to be the true God, for he was forbid at this time by a Decree, to pray to any God, or ask a petition of any man save of the King, in thirty daies: now had he done this he had denied the true God, and acknowledged *Nebuchadnezzar* to be God; the thing he had to profess was higher than the sacrifice, it was a duty of the first commandment, a manifestation of God to be the true God, and the case coming thus, who is the God that must be praid unto? *Daniel* resolves the case saying, Ple pray to no God but the true God. And surely in this high case, profession is to be made whatever becomes of mercy, yea in a lesser case of sacrifice than this, if it comes to profession, it is turned from a duty of the second Table, to a duty of the first, and must be done as a duty of the first; as thus, Suppose a man be forbid the doing of such a duty which formerly he hath constantly

ſtantly performed, and held lawful, and his forbearing of it ſhall be to them a teſtimony of his denial of that truth which he formerly held, in ſuch a caſe he is cal'd to ſuffer the hardeſt things that can be, yea life it ſelf, if it come to it, rather than to omit that duty, or to do the leaſt thing that may be, which to the enemies of the truth may interpretatively be a ſign of denial, the doing of ſuch a duty againſt ſuch a command is a witneſſing to the truth, and not offering up of ſacrifice; it is not alwaies that a man is cal'd to this; but if it ever come to this caſe, interpretatively to deny a truth of God, then muſt we ſuffer, rather than obey in ſuch a thing, though never ſo ſmal: and this was the caſe of the Primitive times, they would rather ſuffer the loſs of life, eſtates and all, than do that which interpretatively ſhould be a profeſſion of the denial of any of the leaſt truth of God. *Turtulian* reports of a Soldier who when all the reſt of his fellows carried Baies on their hats, in teſtimony of their worſhip to the falſe god, he carried a ſprig in his hand, and being asked the reaſon why he did ſo, he answered thus, I am a Chriſtian, and this manifeſted him to be ſo, and being further queſtioned about it, he at the laſt ſuffered for it rather than he would yeild. How many among us would think this a ſmal matter, and had it been their caſe they would have done it, yet this man conſidering it was a note of diſtinction, choſe rather the loſs of life than yeild to do it; and this act of his was approved of by learned and godly men, to be lawful; if we ſhould have lived in thoſe times as many of our forefathers did, that the queſtion ſhould be, who is a Chriſtian, or who is not? and this by way of diſtinction the caſe is different changed from a ſacrifice to a precept and duty of the firſt commandment: there was a time that the Saints would not aſſemble together becauſe of the perſecution, *Acts*, 8. 1. but at another time they would not forſake ioyning together, whatever become of them; when their aſſembling was made a note of diſtinction, who was a Saint, who not, who held for ſuch a truth, who would not, in this caſe for them not to have aſſembled together had been a great ſin in them, and interpretatively a denial of the truth.

*Tertuliã.  
De Coronã  
militis.*

Obj. 4. *But if God will b.ve mercy in case of outward things, saving our estates and preservation of our persons, rather than his own Ordinances; Is not this to prefer the body before the soul? &c.*

Answ. The preservation of a mans outward estate and condition is to be considered in a threefold respect.

1. As it is in itself, and when a man shall love his estate only in reference to its self, certainly it is sin, to regard it before sacrifice.

2. It is to be considered as it enables us to do service for God and our brethren; and this is in a higher respect than the other, of loving our estates for our selves.

3. It is to be considered as a duty in such and such cases, that so I may be made more serviceable for God, and for his people: Now in this case it is an act of Religion, the saving of our estates, as well as praying or hearing of a Sermon, in this case it is act of sacrifice, for I do it in obedience to God, for Religious ends; though the thing it self be an outward act, yet thus done it is an act of Religion, for by this I manifest both my love to God and Religion.

Obj. 5. *But is not a man bound to part with much of his estate, yea and to suffer much for the enjoyment of the Ordinances?*

Answ. Yea certainly very much, we ought both to give and to suffer much for the enjoyment of Ordinances, yea we should chuse rather to live in a poor condition so we may enjoy the Ordinances in their purity, than to be in a rich condition and want the Ordinances; we are to be liberal our selves and careful in putting on others to be so, even till it come to the case of unmercifulness, and then God will have mercy and not sacrifice.

Quest. *But when may it be said to come to a case of unmercifulnes in which God will have mercy and not sacrifice?*

Answ. 1. When a subsistence is so denied, that the subject would be destroyed; in this case God will rather have mercy than instituted worship performed to him.

2. When a greater opportunity is denied, to do good to our own souls and brethren, than this is of enjoyment of the Ordinances, then surely God will have mercy and not sacrifice;

it is impoſſible, to give particular rules in every thing, this is left to the ſanctified prudence of the Saints.

*But is not this the juſtifying of, and conſenting with thoſe that took up Innovations, and read the Service book?* Obj. 6

I answer, No; This Scripture gives no warrant for any ſuch, for there is a great difference between the yeilding to that which may pollute and defile the Ordinances, and to forbear an Ordinance; we muſt not do any thing to pollute an Ordinance, though it were to ſave our lives, but the forbearing of an Ordinance and that for long time may be, and yet without ſin. *Anſw.*

*But is it not a greater mercy to enjoy Ordinances, than eſtates, we think it a great mercy, yea and we have many mercies in the enjoyment of them, though we ſuffer many hard things, in the mean time we enjoy communion with God and Jeſus Chriſt in them.* Obj. 7

Certainly the mercy is very great, and much communion is there to be had with God in his own Ordinances rightly adminiſtred, and happy are thoſe ſouls which find this effect by the Ordinances and Communion with God. *Anſw.*

But yet know that the maintainance of the ſubject is to be more regarded than the comfort of it, though it be ſpiritual: but now have a care of turning what I have ſaid into poyſon, do not ye ſay that you may now do any thing for the preſervation of the ſubject, we muſt not do the leaſt thing that can be, by which an Ordinance may be polluted and defiled. 1

To be ſerviceable in publick uſe is more than to enjoy Ordinances; as for a Miniſter to preach Jeſus Chriſt to a people is a greater mercy than his particular good can be; and this hath been the judgment of all the Churches, yea it hath been the practice of the Churches to ſend forth men to preach the Goſpel, and to open the things of the Kingdom to them, in which time they could not enjoy the Ordinance of the Sacrament: *Paul* would have been content to have been *Anathema* for his brethren, the being of publick uſe for the Churches good was a greater good to him and more in his eſteem than private. Thus far of the objections, the obſervations follow answerable to theſe, Ten. 2

Obs. 1.

That carnal hearts who make little conscience of their duties towards men, and are very cruel in their dealings towards them, yet may be contented, to submit to instituted worship: This very Scripture, *I will have mercy, and not sacrifice*, is a secret rebuke unto such people as these; such were those in *Jer. 7. 4.* who cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, yet very wicked in their dealings, *Isa. 58.* those Hypocrites they could be content to submit to instituted worship, frequent in solemn duties of fasting and prayer, yet were such as did smite with the fist, oppress, and grind the poor. *Ezek. 24. 21.* the sanctuary was accounted their strength, the excellency of their strength, and that which their eyes did pitie, and yet these very wicked, and in the 28. verse their minds were on it, their hearts did love it, yet themselves carnal.

Ezek. 24.  
21.  
opened

Reas.

Because men may be exercised in instituted worship without any power of godliness, it is a very easie work to flesh and blood there is little difficulty in it, in respect of the outward act of performance.

2.

Because it hath the most shew of the power of godliness, they seem to be as sincere as any in their worship, there is a great shew in the flesh, in the outward man; whereas Gods worship is inward, soul worship, which carnal hearts cannot endure, nor do they desire it, 'tis outside worship which they prize; now God forbid that any should have low concepts of Ordinances because wicked men joyn in them.

Obs. 2.

Carnal men by joyning in outward Ordinances think thereby to satisfy their consciences. Thus did they in this place, think to put off God and their own consciences by living in the external acts of worship, and yet live in the love of known sinne; what a deal of stir had the Prophet to convince these Hypocrites of this their wickedness?

Obs. 3.

God and mens consciences will not be put off with this; God will despise both it and them: the Heathen gods would not be put off with such outsides, even the Heathens had such a conceit of their gods: one saith, What a vile thing is it to think, that the gods will be put off with gifts? no, these are despised

Plato in  
Alcibiade

ſed by them, they look that the ſouls ſhould be juſt: And another ſaith, It is not fat ſacrifices, but inward performances that God looks at. Seneca

*The Lord hath a high eſteem of mercy; and it appears in this,* Obſ. 4.  
that he will have it preferred before ſacrifice; and this is called, *an acceptable ſacrifice, and a ſweet ſavour in Gods noſtrils.* Phil. 4. 18  
*Chryſoſtom ſaith,* That he had rather work a work of mercy, Chryſoſtom  
than a miracle: and ſurely that muſt needs be high in Gods eyes and eſteem which he paies ſo dear for.

Oh Chriſtians! immitate God in this, let your eſteems of mercy be raiſed higher than ever before, from this that you have heard concerning the excellency of it. The works of mercy are glorious works, there is more in ſuch acts of mercy, than in thoſe acts of religion which men think are more ſpiritual: I ſpeak the more of this, becauſe it is a ſcandal which is laid upon godly men by the men of the world, that they are miſerable and cloſe handed; now in this we ſhould labor to convince the world by the practice of mercy. Uſe Exhort. to mercy

*It is the Chriſtians ſkill, when two Duties come together, which to chuſe:* This is a ſnare in which many Chriſtians are caught and foiled, they think both muſt be done at the ſame time, when as the one is the duty, the other not. Obſ. 5.

*Though the object of an action be ſpiritual, yet it is not a ſufficient ground to prefer it before another action whoſe object may be but natural.* The Ordinances of God have God for their object, and the enjoying of communion with him, yet in other actions which may be only natural I may ſhew more obedience to God in the doing of them, than in offering up of ſacrifice. Obſ. 6.

*If Gods own Worſhip may be forbore in caſe of mercy, how much more mens institutions and inventions?* Oh what a vile ſpirit is there in thoſe men which will not ſuffer their ſuperſtitious vanities to give place to mercy, men muſt be undone in their bodies and eſtates rather than their wills be diſobeyed; the Prelates faction have confeſſed themſelves, that the Croſs, the Surplice, and the reſt of that traſh were their own institutions; yet Miniſters muſt be ſilenced, bodies impriſoned, families Obſ. 7.

milies starved, and thousands of souls destroyed rather than their wills should not be fulfil'd; Oh the intollerable pride of these men, had they been Gods institutions, yet in this case they might have been forborn, what did these men say in plain English but thus much? Let Christ never be revealed to millions and thousands of souls, rather than these ceremonies shall be omitted or neglected.

Obj. 8.

If God will have mercy rather than sacrifice, *Certainly he will have mercy rather than disputing about sacrifice.* Suppose there be a truth in that which is disputed about, yet God in this case will have mercy rather than sacrifice, rather than mercy shall be neglected he will have sacrifice omitted; we have Ordinances and plenty of preaching, but the Lord knows how soon we may be deprived of them, let us not dispute and wrangle away our mercy.

Object.

*But must we not enquire after truth, and at this time also?*

Answ,

God forbid we should deny or speak against any which shall search into, or enquire after truth, yea at this time, when it is a case of mercy: as thus, when young converts are taken off from fundamental truths, and led into errors, and souls hindered from coming in to Christ, in this case we should abstain from contending.

As in  
young  
converts

Instance

*But young converts must abstain from all appearance of evil, and labour to come to the knowledge of Christs will in everie point.*

Answ,

It is true, they must, but this must be orderly, they must first be established and grounded in fundamentals, and then they have liberty in this; that rule is perpetual and holds in this case, *Rom. 14. 1. Him that is weak in the faith, receive you,* urged, *but not to doubtfull disputations:* Now let no man say, the point was a case of indifferency, some would eat herbs out of conscience, others would forbear; now certainly it is a sin to do that out of conscience which God doth not regard, nor command; the thing it self here was indifferent, yet in this case they must not receive them to doubtful disputations: now, if not to doubtful disputations, then surely not to dis-

Rom. 14,  
1, urged,

putation



putation to hold up error, and to enſnare and betray young beginners in godlineſs, *Acts, 15. 24.* *There were troublers crept in among them, who were formerly of them, and they laboured to ſubvert their ſouls:* The word in the Original ſignifies, as if a man ſhould have been packing up wares in a ſat to ſend beyond the Seas, and there ſhould come another and ſcatter and undo all again which was packed up; or as Soldiers who have packed up their artillery, their bag and baggage, and all forced to be undone of a ſudden again; ſo did theſe falſe teachers, that did unweſſel them, ſcatter, and bring them all into a confuſion, ſo they labored to ſubvert them from the faith.

*If the duties of inward worſhip and mercy to men be preferred before ſacrifice, then ſurely before our own wills, and luſts:* God is contented, that we may perform our duties to our brethren, to forbear his own Ordinances; and what ſhall we ſtand upon our wills and humors? Oh proud ſpirit that exalterth thy ſelf againſt the Lord; we muſt be content to deny our ſelves very far for the publick good, and our brethren, becauſe in this caſe God is pleaſed to indulge with men ſo far, as for a time to be without that honor which he ſhould have from men in their acknowledgment of him in publick ſervice.

*As God is contented to forbear his Worſhip, let men alſo be contented to forbear their Inſtitutions with thoſe which cannot yeeld in their conſciences to them;* but let there be peace and quiet maintained by us, we ſhould indulge and bear each with other in ſuch caſes, of mercy eſpecially, there ſhould not be the urging of leſſer things upon tender conſciences with that ſeverity as to undo them, though they be Gods Ordinances.

*But if this be ſo, then what binders but men may do what they liſt?*

No. What hath been ſaid hath been limited only to inſtituted worſhip, and ſo it be not to the undoing of men, puniſh them they may, but not to the ruin of them; nay in theſe controverſies in which men are ſo divided, many ſitting in conſultation, ſome thinking this to be the way, others thinking another to be the way of Chriſt, things ought not ſo to

be urged, as to undo the other party that oppose; certainly such a practice as this, is contrary to the rule of mercy in this text; but men must unsatisfie themselves presently, and lay down their opinions upon such a day as shall be appointed them: Is not this cruelty?

Instance But you wil say, *It is sufficient that learned and godly men hold this opinion, they find sufficient to satisfie them, and we may mistake.*

Ans<sup>w</sup>, To this I answer: That those who are ignorant in this kind must understand the grounds of those men upon which they hold their opinion, and if their grounds can satisfie you, then it is something, but to say, I must hold such and such things because others do & I ignorant of their grounds, this is folly; for as we must not have an implicit faith, so we must not have an implicit judgment, to hold an opinion because others hold it. And thus I have given you the mind of God in this Scripture, so far as God hath revealed it to me for the present. It follows.

Text. *And the knowledge of God, more than burnt offerings.*

Expos. For the understanding of these words, I shall, 1. Answer some Questions, and then give you the Observations.

Quest. 1. *What knowledg of God is it that is here meant?*

Ans<sup>w</sup>. Certainly, not a knowledg barely notional, but such as is joynd with faith, and obedience, a practical knowledge which brings the heart to love and imbrace the truth; *Isa. 53. 11. By his knowledge, shall my righteous servant justifie many.*

Quest. 2. *Why is the knowledge of God joynd to mercy here? was it not full enough before, Mercy, and not sacrifice?*

Ans<sup>w</sup>, Because as God accepts not mercy without sacrifice, neither doth he regard knowledg without mercy; men are here in the extreams on both sides; some are very merciful, as the Papists, but withal very ignorant of the knowledg of God and his waies, that as the Apostle saith of love, *If I should give all my goods to the poor, and my body to be burnt, it were nothing: so if*

we be never ſo merciful and ignorant it availeth nothing; others have much knowledge yet very rugged and hard hearted, now when theſe are ſeparated God regards them not, but when mercy and knowledge meet together then are they pleaſing.

*Why is knowledg only named here, when as there are many duties* *Queſt. 3.*  
*of the firſt Table, as well as this?*

Because both of the excellency and neceſſity of the know- *Anſw. 1.*  
ledg of God, the knowledg of God it hath an influence into all the duties of Gods worſhip.

Because many are very much exerciſed in inſtituted wor- *2.*  
ſhip, yet very ignorant in the knowledg of God, it was ſo then and is ſo now in our daies, many who contend for Ordinances and Chriffs Government in his Church, yet are very ignorant of Chriffs redeeming the world, the way of God in reconciling himſelf and ſinners together, ignorant of the Attributes of God and their working for his peoples good, therefore he requires the knowledg of himſelf to be in men principally.

*Why is the knowledg of God put after mercy, it being better than* *Queſt. 4.*  
*mercy?*

The knowledg of God is not ſet after mercy, becauſe mercy *Anſw.*  
is to be preferred before knowledg, but becauſe mercy is more apparent and moſt conſpicuous, it is moſt convincing to men, now when people are convinced of one duty, they are the ſooner convinced of another, conſcience will eaſily convince them of what is Gods mind.

*But why is it ſaid burnt offerings, rather than peace offerings, and* *Queſt.*  
*ſin offerings which we read of?*

Because theſe have more reſpect unto God than other offe- *Anſw.*  
rings have (as hath been manifeſted to you at other times, with the differences between burnt offerings and other offerings) as if the holy Ghoſt ſhould ſay, I require mercy and not ſacrifice, and the inward worſhip of God, faith and knowledg rather than any natural worſhip. The Notes from hence are theſe.

*The duties of the firſt and ſecond Table are to be joyned together.* *Obſ. 1.*

Mercy, and sacrifice, knowledg of God, and burnt offerings when in their place are acceptable, therefore let us take heed of separating that which God hath joyned.

Obf. 2. *The knowledg of God is a most excellent thing.* This is that which sanctifies Gods Name, and manifests him to be very glorious in the world; *Paul* accounted all things but loss and dung in comparison of the excellencie of this knowledg of Christ.

Use. Instruct your children and servants in this knowledg, else how can God have his glory from them; how few are there which glorifie God as God, and the reason is, because of the ignorance which is in their minds. *Eph. 4. 18.*

Obf. 3. *Men may be very diligent in instituted worship, and yet very ignorant: none so acted in their instituted worship as these people, yet none so ignorant as they.*

Use. *That you are forward in instituted worship it is your commendation, but take heed this be not your sin, to be ignorant of fundamental things.* It is the great design of the Devil to set up the man of sin, to keep men in darkness and ignorance; many who think themselves, and would be thought to be opposers of Antichrist, even in this, by their questioning of fundamentals of Religion, and disputings about their new Opinions, they raise him up; when as the truth is, it is the way the Devil useth to darken the truth of Christ and Religion, by casting a vail over it, therefore you that are guilty of this distemper, take heed though you have light in some things, yet take heed that a vail be not drawn over those things which do more neerly concern you, and are of greater consequence.

Obf. 4. *Soul-worship must be preferred before all other worship: we must not give God a carrion service, a carkeise without a soul; strong are the expressions in Scripture which are used against such outside, formal worship, Isa. 1. 11, 12, 13.* God professes of them, that he regards them not, he is full of them, his soul loaths them, they are iniquity, and a trouble to him, they are looked upon as a burden to him, such as God will hide his eyes from, and when they make many prayers, he will not hear them; in this one Scripture we have fourteen expressions

expressions againſt outside, formal duties, besides those four *Isa. 1. 11*  
 which we find in *Isa. 66. 3.* Thus you have the mind of God *12, 13.*  
 in this short, but full sentence. there are

Now God forbid that what hath been said out of this Scri- *14. ex-*  
 pture should be abused to liberty in a sinful way. *pressions*  
*against*  
*formality*

## V E R. 7.

*For they like men have transgressed the Covenant.*

**H**ere is an argument, that mercy in the former verse is to  
 be understood in a large sense: Why? Because it is the  
 very substance of the Covenant; they have been hard-hear-  
 ted, cruel and unmerciful, and thereby they have transgressed  
 the Covenant: I am merciful in the Covenant, and my grace  
 is free and full to sinners there; but they have transgressed the  
 Covenant by being cruel and unmerciful, *for they like men*  
*have transgressed the Covenant.*

*Like men*] That is, like *Adam*, these men have sinned after *Expos. 1.*  
 the similitude of *Adams* transgression; *Rom. 15. 14.* speaks of  
 those who had not sinned after the similitude of *Adams* trans-  
 gression: But these, as they have old *Adam* in them, so they  
 have dealt with me as he did; and as he for his sin was cast  
 out of Paradise, so these men have deserved to be cast out of  
 the good Land. But *Vatablus*, & *Tremelius* and others, read *2*  
 the words thus; *They have broken my Covenant as a man*, they *Vatablus*  
 thought that I had been as their fellow creature; as they made *& Tremel.*  
 it their practice to break covenants with men, so they thought  
 to do with God: so they have transgressed my Covenant. This  
 sense may be taken, and so the note of Observation would be  
 reasonable.

*That the cause of breach of Covenant with God, is, because we con-* *Obfer.*  
*sider not that it is with God that we make our Covenants.*

But the words are more usually read, as in our books, *But* *Expos. 3.*  
*they like men have transgressed my Covenant*: that is, Not as I,  
 who like a God have kept Covenant: but they like such men  
 as themselves, *i. e.* weak, unconstant, frail, unfaithful crea-  
 tures have transgressed, *Job, 31. 33.*

But

Object. But may not this seem to be an excusing or diminution of their sin, to say, *They like men*, (implying the common frailty of humane nature) *have transgressed?*

Ans. No, 'tis rather an aggravation of their sin. Therefore the word here translated *Men*, is used for man in his corrupt estate, for weak men, frail men, not men at their strength, but weakness, and so distinct from that which signifies, generous and strenuous men; and so the comparison is not only between God and man, but between the several degrees of men.

אוֹשִׁים  
4. Or thus: *They have transgressed my Covenant like men*. That is, not like my people. Saints that are of my Church, they have not transgressed my Covenant so. Their waies have been the waies of ordinary men, and as such they have transgressed my Covenant. The two last senses are principally meant here.

Covenant with God  
3 fold.  
1. with Adam.  
2. with Abraham.  
3 with Israel

*My Covenant*] The Covenant of God we usually divide into two parts; but the Scripture to me seems to hold forth a threefold Covenant: the one of Works, that which was made with *Adam* in *Paradise*. The other Covenant is that which was made with *Abraham*, the Covenant of Grace, the tenor of which is this, *I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee*. Then there was a Covenant which was made with them upon mount *Sinai*. Now the Covenant here cannot be meant immediatly of the Covenant of works, nor of the Covenant of grace, for this Covenant here implied, is one especially made with them, and therefore must be understood of that at mount *Sinai*, made many hundred years after the others, yet it hath reference to that of Works, and of Grace.

And were this knot rightly understood and untied, the *Antinomians* and we might easily be reconciled; for we grant that Believers are delivered from the Law in respect of the power of it, as condemning; from the riger of it, but not from the duties of the Law; for the things commanded in the Law were duties before the Law was given, the Law was written in the hearts of the Saints from the beginning. But the opening of this point would require a whol Exercise, and I shall reserve this to some other time.

Now

Now then the Covenant which they tranſgreſſed, was the Covenant at large, but eſpecially that Covenant which God made with them when they came into the Land of Canaan. Expoſ.

*They tranſgreſſed*] the word is, They went over it, the Covenant was betwixt them and their ſins, and they went over it to their ſins, the banck was not high enough to keep them and their ſins aſunder. They tranſgreſſed. עברו

*There*] they tranſgreſſed the Covenant, *there* in that good Land of Canaan into which God had brought them, and given them poſſeſſion, ſo the Chaldæ. Expoſ. 1. There

Again, *There* they tranſgreſſed the Covenant, *there* when God had hewed them by his Prophets, and thought to work them to good. Expoſ. 2. Pſa. 14. 5. ibi tinuerunt; i. e. tunc

Laſtly, *There*, that is, in the Covenant it ſelf, and that in thoſe things wherein they thought they kept the Covenant, and thought they honored me moſt; in thoſe things they broke the Covenant. Expoſ. 3.

*They dealt treacherouſly*] The Greek renders it, *they have deſpiſed me*; they have forſaken me, and choſen other lovers, and left me; even as a woman leaves her own husband to whom ſhe was engaged and goes to other men. It notes, the hearts joyning to ſome other rather than God, ſo as to be willing to leave the Lord, and either out of affection to ſome other, or for private advantage, to forſake God and his Cauſe, to promote and further that which is againſt God. The Notes of Obſervation from the words are theſe. κατεφρονηθησαν εν σιν ισο

*That it is Gods goodneſſ that he will pleaſe to enter into Covenant with ſuch poor creatures as we are.* It is made an aggravation of their ſin here, that they did falſifie the Covenant, the love of God in entering into Covenant with ſuch mean worthleſs creatures ſhould command due from us in the moſt difficult precepts that are, and that with willingneſs. Obſ. 1.

*God is conſtant in his Covenant with men.* This is in oppoſition to their unfaithfulneſs, they deal falſly with God in the Covenant, but God is conſtant in his Covenant, he confirms his Obſ. 2.

Dan. 9. 27 his Covenant with the strength of a Gyant, Dan. 9. 27. And expounded he shall confirm the Covenant with many for one week: The word 712171 there signifies, he confirms the Covenant like a Gyant, or a mighty strong man; they as weak men break Covenant with me, but I with strength confirm my Covenant, therefore David saith, 2 Sam. 23. 5. *Yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, it is immovable.*

Obs. 3. *Mans nature is very weak and unsetled.*

*They like men have transgressed the Covenant.* We must not lay too much upon men, for when they are most unfaithful they do but like men, Oh what folly is it in men to forsake the eternal God and run to the creature! We trust our servants in our businesses, and shall we not trust God much more? the Word saies, all men are liars; nay, every man in his best estate is vanity. Psal. 62. 9. *God is our refuge: men of low degree are vanity, men of high degree a lye: if they be laid in the ballance, they are lighter than vanity it self.*

Obs. 4. *The apprehension of our obligations to obey, should keep us within Covenant.* Oh never let it be said, that our sins are so strong as to break Covenant, to get our own desires; it is a sign of a most vile wretched spirit, so to desire sin, as to break over this bond of the Covenant; think of this all you that are so easily overtaken with sin; when a temptation comes to any sin, say thus, such a sin I would have and my desires are after it, but did I never Covenant against it? and what, shall I be so wicked as to break my Covenant for it?

Obs. 5. *The breach of Covenant with God, is a most grievous aggravation of our sin; it provokes God highly against that people or person, there have they dealt treacherously against me, Deut. 29. 24, 25. Why hath the Lord brought all this evil upon this people? Then men shall say, because they have forsaken the God of their fathers, and the Covenant in which they were bound to him in.* What cause have we to biefs God that he hath not destroyed us for breach of Covenant with him? why should not our condition be the condition of this people here in Deuteronomy? had God turned his hand and let our enemies prevail this might have been our case.



God expects ſomething from his people which cannot be done by every one; they muſt not plead they are fleſh and blood as other men, God would have you more than men, you muſt remember that you are Saints and Members of Chriſt, and therefore muſt live as the redeemed of the Lord, in the firſt of the *Corinthians*, 3. 3. *Are you not carnal, and walk as Men?* The Apoſtle rebukes the *Corinthians* for this, God looked that they ſhould walk beyond other men, and that which the Apoſtle makes the ground of his reproof, they make their excuſe; Jeſus Chriſt deſcended from on high, to this end; to purchaſe a peculiar people to himſelf that might honor him in the world beyond that which he hath from other men; we ſhould live as thoſe which have the *Divine Nature* in them, we ſhould beware of paſſion and anger, even as God is ſlow to anger: how far are thoſe from doing any eminent thing for God, which cannot deny themſelves in their wills and paſſions, and have not ſo much as humanity in them?

Obſ. 6.

1 Cor. 3. 3 explained

*If God at any time give us hearts to keep Covenant with him, it is more than is in us; we have not that power of our ſelves, therefore bleſs God for this mercy.*

Obſ. 7.

*Men may go on in multitudes of ſervices and yet be Covenant breakers.* 'Tis poſſible for a man to have committed the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt, and yet be a profeſſor of Chriſt and and the Goſpel; therefore we had need look to our hearts.

Obſ. 8.

*Many times in thoſe things which we ſeem to be moſt Religious in, there we may be falſe and Covenant breakers.* But may this be in the duties of Gods worſhip? yea, thereby this may be; thus, When men ſhall think by this to cover any ſin they live in, by their performing of duties, this is treacherous dealing and playing falſe in the Covenant.

Obſ. 9.

*The ſins of the Saints which break Covenant with him are ſins of a double dye; other mens ſins are rebellions againſt God, but theirs are treacheries.*

Obſ. 10.

*The want of the right knowledg of God, is the main cauſe of breach of Covenant with God. Dan. 11. 32. And ſuch as do wickedly againſt the Covenant, ſhall be corrupt by flatteries; but the people that do know their God ſhall be ſtrong, and do exploits. Who ſhall be*

Obſ. 11.

corrupted by flatteries? those that know God? No, they shall be strong and do great exploits, such shall be employed by him in his work.

Obj. 12. *There can be no keeping Covenant with God, where there is unmercifulness to men: let there be never such professions and expressions of Religion in words, if there be cruelty and unmercifulness there can be no keeping of Covenant with God, Heb. 3. 10.*

Obj. 13. *The consideration that it is God that we break Covenant withal, is a humbling consideration. It is against Me who am their God, who have protected them from dangers, delivered them in straits, 'tis against Me that they have thus sinned; as a man that should bring up a poor child and take care for him, and when he comes to yeers, this child should abuse him and wrong him, would not this be ingratitude and unkindness indeed? so the consideration of what a God it is that we break Covenant withal, doth wonderfully set forth our unkindness to God.*

V E R. 8.

*Gilead is a City of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood.*

**W**EE read in Numb. 32. 1. of the Land of *Gilead* which was on the other side of the river, which *Reuben* and the false Tribe of *Manassah* possessed, in it were divers Cities of refuge, which were the Cities of the Levites, and one of them the most famous which had the name of the whol Country, was *Gilead*: which thing is usually among us at this day, that whol Countries receive their names from some eminent place in that Country, as *Northampton*, *Northamptonshire*, *Leicester*, *Leicestershire*: in this Citie of *Gilead* the Priests were, and should have been holier than the rest, but it was polluted, and from thence the rest of the places of the Kingdom.

The word translated [*They have wrought*] is drawn from a word that signifies, *they have wrought iniquity*, that is, vain things.

things. *And is polluted with blood,* or ſupplanted with blood, or overturned with blood; the Levites which had their abode there have undone the City, how many Cities, are ſupplanted and overturned by the Priests which live in them, by their cruelties, and by their diſtinctions and ſubtil pretences for ſin and wickedneſs? they have ſupplanted theſe Cities of refuge: theſe Cities of refuge were for thoſe which had ſhed blood at unawares, they flying to them were ſecure: but theſe Cities were ſupplanted, and polluted; now this was done theſe four waies.

לעב  
Agere cum  
energia Et  
effectum,  
Pagn.

ללל  
Vanitas.

1. By taking thoſe in which were wilful murderers, when as the City was for the ſhelter of thoſe which had kild any by accident; now theſe men they would judg wilful murder to be but manſlaughter (as we call it) and I wiſh our Kingdom be not deeply guilty of this ſin, even by this diſtinction as it is uſed, when men in their paſſions ſhall make nothing to kill a man, and this ſhall be accounted for manſlaughter; certainly God will never account it ſo, but even willful murder.

קק  
Supplanta-  
ta, Hier.

English  
guilty of  
blood, by  
calling  
murder  
man-  
ſlaughter.

2. By reſuſing to take in thoſe, which of right they ſhould, except they had good ſtore of mony to give them, when ſome that were poor came to be let in, they would reſuſe them and put them by, and by that means they were often taken by the purſuer of blood: for theſe prieſts were to judg of it.

3. By caſting thoſe out which were in, and could not be gainful to them, and many times they did deliver thoſe out to the avenger of blood, when they ſhould have protected them.

4. By their cruelty to thoſe that would not joyn with them in their falſe worſhip; perhaps they might ſome of them be men of tender conſciences and could not joyn with them in their ſuperſtitious worſhip? now theſe Priests perhaps would make complaints of them to the Magiſtrate, that they were troubleſom perſons and bred diſiſions, and by this means they got them out of the Cities of refuge. And hath not this been our caſe of late? thus they ſupplanted theſe Cities of refuge. The Notes of Obſervation are,

Obs. 1. That through mans wickedness the best Ordinances of God for the good of his people are corrupted and abused. These Cities of refuge were for special use, Ordinances of God set apart for the saving of blood, and they made it a means and instrument for the shedding of blood. The Sacrament is an Ordinance set apart by God, for union and communion; and what doth more separate from this, than the abuse of this Ordinance? mens coming unprepared separates tender consciences from joyning with them: so likewise in Civil Ordinances for mens outward good, how have they been perverted? where have they tyrannized more, and used more cruelty and injustice than in those Courts of Justice, where Justice should have been done? and such as should have seen equity performed, were the greatest instruments of oppression and mischief.

Obs. 2. We must not alwaies judg of places as heretofore they have been. Gilead was a City famous for Gods worship, yet now how defiled with blood. So in Rome, how famous was it for the worship of God? yet now it is become the very filth of abomination.

Obs. 3. Places set apart for Gods worship, and Religion, if they are corrupted, they are the worst of all others. Gilead a City of refuge, yet where was there ever such a defiled and corrupted place as it was? so in our Universities, and Colledges, what superstitions, and vanities did abound among them? even like *Augers Stable*, a place of filthiness, and vileness, and this is no new thing, for *Gregory Nazenzine* reports of *Athens*, that it was the plaguest place in the world for superstition, and he acknowledgeth it a great mercy that God did preserve him and *Bazil* from those infections.

Obs. 4. To be a worker of iniquity is a most abominable thing. Gilead is a Citie of them that work iniquity, Gods people sometimes be overtaken by sin, but they are never workers of iniquity, for the Scripture tells us, that he which works iniquity is of the Devil.

Obs. 5. That of all wicked men, Clergie men (if wicked) are the worst. No men can work out or bring to pass their own ends so as they can, the Priests were in Gilead, and they were the men, which

which wrought the miſchief : and hath not our times ſealed to this truth ? Who have been ſo vile and wicked as our corrupted Clergy ? but how hath God broken the plots, and croſſed the deſigns of theſe vermine ?

*The cunning plots of the wicked Clergie overwhelm whol Cities and Countries :* Theſe were they which over-turned this City of Gilead : And thus would they have done to us, had not God in his infinit wiſdom and mercy prevented their helliſh plots. Obſ. 6.

*False worſhip and tyranny are joyned together :* Where ever you ſee tyranny, there conclude is falſe worſhip ; therefore we had need to pray hard for the Ordinances in their purity, that we may not have falſe religion, and ſo have tyranny uſhered in. Luther tells us, that the Devil is a liar, and a murderer, ſo that where there is a lye in Gods religion there is murdering. Obſ. 7.

*There are none ſo cruel to the lives of men as wicked Clergie ;* ſo they may have their wils and luſts ſatisfied, though it coſt the blood of thouſands of ſouls they care not. Obſ. 8.

*That of all cruelties, cruelty in the Clergie is the worſt ;* for it is required of them to be men of peace : But who are the great Incendiaries of our times, and Fomenters of theſe wars, but the vile, wicked Clergie ? And thns much for the 8. verſe. Obſ. 9.

#### V E R. 9.

*And as troupes of robbers wait for a man, ſo the company of Priests murder in the way, by conſent ; for they commit lewdneſſ.*

**T**H I s Verſe hath much of the former in it. [*Troupes of robbers*] The Kingdom of Iſrael had their troupers robbing and ſpoiling up and down ; and who were theſe robbers, but their Priests ? their Priests were turned robbing Troupers ? And have not we this Text literally fulfilled at this day, in our Kingdom ? The Gown is caſt off, and the Armor is put on, and now they are turned Troupers. They were before murderers of ſouls, and now they are turned murderers of

mens souls and bodies both; so that we might send their Gowns after them, and say as *Joseph's* brethren said to their father *Jacob*, Do not you know this? is not this your son *Joseph's* Coot? They stood in the way to rob; how was this, in what way did they rob? *Hierom* putting this question to a Jew, asking him the meaning of this text, his answer was; that at the time of the Pasover, and the Pentecost, the people used to come to Jerusalem, and as they were going in their journey, these Priests would stand in the way and slay them; the were the least suspected of any, *Gilead* was a City which should have defended them from robbers, and they were turned robbers themselves, and so took the advantage of them. The Notes are these.

Hierom

Obs. 1

*Wicked Ministers are the most outrageous against those that forsake and leave them, and cannot joyn with them in their superstitious and false worship. The Priests were so.*

Obs. 2.

*Wicked men, especially wicked Priests, wait for to do mischief; how much more should Gods people wait for opportunities to do service for God, and for his people?*

Obs. 3

*Many people when they think themselves most secure, are then in the greatest danger of undoing; it was the case of these poor travellers here; they thought themselves most safe and secure and then were they slain and murdered, by these wicked robbing Priests.*

Obs. 4

*Wicked men abuse the esteem which others have of them, and their innocency. These Priests were the least suspected, and reputed harmless, innocent men, so at this day; and in other things, as in theft, many servants who are trusted by their masters abuse their masters confidence which they put in them, and so are the more false.*

Obs. 5

*Ment that are judges of others, are the least called to an account for their wronging of others, and therefore are the more bold to sin. These Priests were to judg of murder done by others; now instead of judging others murders, they murdered themselves, now who should judg of their murders? It follows.*

They

*They murder in the way by conſent, for they commit lewdneſs.*

The word is *Schethem*, taken by *Luther* and others, for the City *Shechem*, which ſtood near *Jericho*, and he ſaith that *Chriſt* in the parable of the man which fell among theeves, between *Jericho* and *Jeruſalem* had reſpect to this place of *Hoſea*. But I ſhall ſpeak of them literally becauſe I find it in another Scripture (*Zeph. 3. 9.*) ſignifying conſent, *Then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the Name of the Lord to ſerve him with one conſent.* The word is *Schethem*, i. e. with one ſhoulder: and is a metaphor taken from Oxen yoked together.

*Luther Incidias ponunt in via, verſus Sichem. Via ad Schecem, Trem,*

When Gods people joyn together in a work, it ſhould be a ſhame for any to withdraw from them: thus theſe Priests they murdered by conſent, they ſet to their ſhoulder in this wicked work, the one was not ignorant of what the other did. The Notes hence are.

*Wicked men can joyn together in wickedneſs;* How much more ſhould the Saints joyn together for God? What ſhal we ſay to thoſe differences which are made amongſt us? It is not long ſince we were under *Antichriſts* yoke, and were we not gauled and pinched? then why will you not take *Chriſts* yoke on you, which is eaſie and light? It follows.

*They committed lewdneſs.]* The word is, they ſtudied wickedneſs, they plotted for it. The Notes are. Obſ. 6

*There are none ſo plotting and contriving for wickedneſs as Clergie men are.* *Gilead* is that wicked City of robbers, there the Priests conſulted together, and plotted their wickedneſſes. Obſ. 7

*Studied and plotted wickedneſſe is the moſt vile, and abominable.* *Exod. 28. 6.* the *Ephod* was to be made of cunning work, of a work which had much thought in it, ſo it is in the Original, that work is very good which hath much thought and conſideration in it, and that ſin is wicked with an aggravation, which is thought of, and meditated upon, then it is lewdneſs. Obſ. 8

Think.

Think of this all you that do plot, and think of your sins before you do commit them, in those sins there is lewdness.

Luther  
faciunt  
quiquid  
cogitant.  
Tam dispa-  
rate mali-  
tiae ut nihil  
cogitent  
quod non  
idem pa-  
trare au-  
sunt.

Luther turns the word *lewdness* a little from the Original, which may be the meaning also of the word *lewdness*, they do whatsoever they think, he saith that they had a proverb in Germany, that the Monks were so wicked, that there was nothing so bad which they could think of, but they would dare to do it. None so bold in sin, and dare to venture themselves in it, as wicked Clergy men, many men are vile and wicked enough, but they want capacity and audacity to vend and utter it, but these wicked Priests could do it, calumniate and reproach without fear, these have impudent bold faces, and concerning such, I say no more but this: *The Lord rebuke them.*

VER. 10.

*I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel; there is the whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is defiled.*

**T**HE Lord proceeds futher in His complaint against Israel.

*I have seen an horrible thing]* The word signifies a thing that may make the hairs of our head to stand an end, the Seventy turn it something to the same purpose, by a word which signifies a storm in the Sea, this word sometimes signifies the Devil, Levit. 17. 7. *They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto Devils after whom they have gone a whoring.*

שער  
ריה  
שער  
Pilus.  
עזאסן.  
70.

Tremelius in his coment observes that the letters are more than ordinary in this word here, to encrease its signification: as if he had said, 'tis a horrible thing, a very horrible thing: what is this horrible thing? it was this, *Ephraim had defiled himself.*

Obler,

From whence note, *That Idolatry is a very horrible thing; to worship a false God, and that for politick ends, as they did here, is almost horrible thing, they to preserve their estates and their liberties, fell from the true worship of God, to worship at Dan and Bethel, Jer. 2. 11, 12. and Jer. 18. Will a nation change their gods, for those which are no gods? but my people have*



*have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be ye aſtoniſhed oh ye Heavens at this, and be ye horribly afraid, be ye very deſolate ſaith the Lord. Jer. 18. 13. The Virgin of Iſrael hath done a very horrible thing. Jer. 44. 4. Do not that abominable thing which I hate. God doth not put an aggravation upon this ſin, beyond what is in it; as it is uſual with men, they, if any thing be done againſt them, make it very horrible with circumſtances and aggravations, but God never doth ſo: a notable example we have of mans aggravating an offence. Dan. 3. 14. Nebuchadnezzar ſpake and ſaid unto them, O Shedrack, Meſhach and Abednego, do not ye ſerve my gods, the golden Image which I have ſet up? Is it true, the words in the Original are, what deſolations have theſe made, not to obey me; this is the manner of proud hearts, but this is not Gods way and manner, he never ſpeaks more againſt a ſin, or puniſheth men for ſin, than it deſerves, we can look upon Gods judgments as horrible, but where is the man that looks upon ſin as horrible? it may be you tremble at groſs ſins, but where is the man that trembles at falſe worſhip? the apparitions of the Devil are very horrible to us; and ſin is here ſet out by the ſame words that the Devil is.*

נִשְׁבַּח  
Nunquid  
deſolatio,  
Mont. of  
נִשְׁבַּח  
in Niphal  
Deſolati.

falſe wor-  
ſhip to be  
trembled  
at.

*I have ſeen a horrible thing in the houſe of Judah.*

Though we may ſeem to color it over, yet God he ſees it.

Obſer.

*I have ſeen a horrible thing in the houſe of Iſrael.*

Idolatry is a provoking ſin, but eſpecially in the houſe of Iſrael.

Obſ.

*There is the whoredom of Ephraim.* Ephraim was the Tribe of Jeroboam, and by Ephraim is to be underſtood, the Court, and the Nobles, there (ſaith God) did I ſee this abominable thing, that Nation where the common people are wicked for the generality, it is a ſign of much evil, but if the Gentry are prophane, it is much worſe, but if the Nobility and thoſe at the Court are Idolaters it is night indeed, if Ephraim be vile it is no marvel if Iſrael be ſo alſo. It followe.

Court I-  
dolatry  
moſt dan-  
gerous.

## VER. 11.

*Also O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee, &c.*

**T**Hese words are something difficult, I shall shew the meaning of them, thus; Judah hath wrapped up her self in the same offence, in the same transgression received from Ephraim, (the ten Tribes) and it was grown up to an harvest of judgment, which was set, had its fixed time. But when? *When I returned the captivity of my people.* This refers to that time in 2 Chron. 28. 6. where you shall find these three things: 1. The harvest set for Judah. 2. The captivity of Judah. 3. The return of their captivity. The harvest was set when Pekah, the son of Remalish slew in Judah an hundred and twenty thousand men in one day, because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers; what a harvest was here set? and the text saith, *They were all valiant men for the war.*

Obf.

*Idolatry is a horrible sin, and God makes it as horrible for judgment.* But what was it that provoked the Lord thus against them? because they had forsaken the Lord, the God of their fathers. Gods judgments in Scripture cutting down a people, are compared to a harvest, *Joel, 3. 13 Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe.* But where was this captivity? in 2 Chron. 28. 8. *And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren, two hundred thousand men, sons and daughters.* But when was their return? in the 9. verse, the Prophet comes to them, and tells them in the 11. verse, they must deliver up their captives which they had taken from their brethren; these were brethren as is cleer, yet behold the rage of brethren! yet in the 15. verse, see how this took with them; they cloathed, sed, and restored all their captives again presently. See the mighty power of the Word to still the rage of the stoutest spirits. Oh that it might do so with us at this time, as it did here with this people, this would be a kindly work indeed; so that by this you may see what the harvest is here in the text.

The Notes which we may observe from hence are.

*That*

That the ſins of a people are ſeeds for a harveſt of judgment, as good Obf. 1.  
actions are ſeeds for a harveſt of mercy.

God hath a fixed ſet time for a harveſt of judgment; and though Obf. 2.  
you have a time, yet know it is fixed, therefore ſow as faſt as  
you can, there will come a harveſt ere long.

In the time of Gods judgments, the Lord remembers mercy for his Obf. 3.  
people. He hath ſet a time for the return of their captivity.

Thus you have (I conceive) the genuine ſenſe of theſe words.

There are ſome that read theſe words thus: *Judah*, ſince A 2d In-  
you are guilty alſo, you ſhall not enjoy your peace nor your terpretation  
lands in quiet, till God return your captivity; *Israel* ſhall not  
enjoy their harveſt, but *Judah* ſhall.

Now that which makes me think this is not the meaning,  
is this, Becauſe the Lord ſtill goes on to threaten *Judah* ſtill;  
*I have ſet an harveſt for thee.*

Some others read it thus: When God was about to turn A 3d.  
away their captivity, *Judah* did ſo harden *Israel* in their way,  
that it was the cauſe of my hardening my heart againſt them,  
and not to return their captivity. *Israel* might think thus,  
Though we are bad, & in many things are amiſſe, yet *Judah* is  
alſo filthy in ſuch and ſuch things, who are a people nearer to  
God than we, yet they do ſo.

“Many are ripened for judgment by the example of others, Obf.  
“eſpecially of great profeſſors, and chiefly of profeſſing and  
“reforming Churches that have the name of pure worſhip in  
“them. Let ſuch be very wary what they practice, eſpecially  
in a time of reformation, leſt they harden others in their cor-  
ruption.

Thus I have finiſhed the Sixth Chapter.



## HOSEA, CHAP. VII.

## V E R. I.

*When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria: for they commit falsehood; and the thief cometh in, and the troop of robbers spoileth without.*

**HIS** Chapter is filled with complaints wholly against Israel. The two former Chapters brought in Judah with them; but this Chapter is spent wholly against Israel. *Luther* saith, that by the reading of this Chapter we may see, that the Church hath alwaies evils of one and the same kind, even at this day that it had in those times, even as one eg is like to another eg. We have had a cleer and lively pattern of this held forth to us in our times concerning our evils.

Luther

Expof.

*When I would have healed Israel*] Before God took upon him the person of a husband, that would have recalled his adultrous wife: but in this Chapter He compares Himself to a Chyrurgion who would have cured a wounded person: and His people He compares unto such. But coming to cure them He found the wound in them worse than He expected; as when a Chyrurgion sometimes first comes to a wound, he thinks it not so bad and dangerous as indeed it is upon the searching;

searching of it, and all this while perhaps the patient is very mild and quiet and struggles not at all, but when they are put to pain by searching of their wound, then they are froward and struggle: so saith God, so many waies and means have I used to do them good, judgments, reproofs, and exhortations, and nothing doth them good, but they grow worse and worse, then the sinnes of Ephraim did break forth, the sins of the Court they work out: and the sins of Samaria (which was the chief City) shew themselves; in *Isa. 7. 19.* The head of Ephraim is Samaria: as if the wickedness of the Court should be complained of by some in the Country.

When I would have healed Israel, the iniquity of Ephraim and Samaria did appear; the Prophet looks upon Ephraim the wicked Court, and Samaria the prophane City, and sees death in the face of both, the sin of Ephraim and Samaria, it is in the head which speaks them in a dangerous condition, *Leuit. 13. 44.* they ad iniquity to iniquity, which shews their perverseness, and he that is of a perverse spirit shall be despised, *Prov. 12. 8.* Their wickednesses. In the Original it is in the plural number, When I would have healed Israel, then the sin of Ephraim did break out, and the wickedness of Samaria appeared.

In great Cities where there is such concourse of people, there is all manner of evils.

But now, when was the time that God was about to heal these ten Tribes? to what time doth this refer? some interpret this to be the time when God went about to cure the evils and the abominations that were in Rehoboams time which was a very sad time, had he hearkened to the counsel of his wise, grave Counsellors, it had been well for him, and his people; but the giving credit to the counsel of his young green heads, he indangered the very life of his Kingdom by it, and when he would not hearken through the pride of his heart, God rent the greatest part of the Kingdom from him, and gave it to Jeroboam, and now when there were such hopes of delivering them from these their oppressions, then the iniquity of Ephraim did appear, then did they oppress and crush

7107

Obs.

Time of  
this Pro-  
phesie

Note:

those

those which would not yeild to their superstitious Idols and false worship; but this cannot be the meaning of this story, for at this time the ten Tribes were not devided, nor broken off, neither was Samaria built, for it was builded in 2 King. 16. If this be not the time, then what time doth this refer unto? surely to the time of *Jehu's* reign who was made the Chirurgeon of those times, who was anointed in *Gilead* the City of Chirurgions, for God saith, *Is there no balm in Gilead, no Physician there?* God used *Jehu* for the doing of a great deal of work for their curing, he destroyed and dissipated *Jezebel* and the Priests of *Baal*; and at the time when this was a doing, comes the great Courtiers of *Ephraim* and the Citizens of *Samaritah*, and give him their counsel: *Jehu*; take heed what you do, be wise, consider what you do in such cases as these, take heed you do not over-do; it is enough that you have done in destroying *Baals* Priests and putting down Idolatry; now say they, if you pull down *Dan* and *Bethel*, and suffer the people to go up to *Jerusalem*, you will lose all, then farewell all obedience, your Kingdom is now lost; then the Citizens of *Samaritah* they come and tell him that if he yeild to this, they shall be undone and lose all their trading, and we shall be separated; and why should this be seeing there is no need of it? we may worship at *Dan* and *Bethel* as well, and it will be more for our ease; this might be the language of the people, and in this the iniquity of *Ephraim* and the sin of *Samaritah* appeared, and this was wickedness with a high hand. The Notes of Observation are these;

Obs. 1. That the sins and the miseries of a Kingdom are the sores of a Kingdom, and the wounds of a Nation. *Isa. 1:6.* From the head to the foot there is no soundnesse in them, wounds and bruises are upon them: First, in regard of their sins, then in regard of their miseries.

Use By this we may see that wicked men are the sores and wounds of a Nation, Parish, and Family; therefore one having three wicked daughters calls them the imposthumes or cankers of his family; even so are wicked men, filthy menstruous defiling creatures where ever they come: Oh that people

people would think of this their condition; thou that art a wicked man runnell up and down with filthy ſtuff more odious in Gods eyes, than a lazar in our eyes.

As ſin, ſo afflictions and miſeries are the wounds a of Kingdom, family, or perſon, and if we will not be ſenſible of the one wound made by ſin, God will make us ſenſible of the other by ſuffering them. Our Kingdom is like the man which England ſel among theeves (half dead) as he went from Jericho to Jeruſalem, doth not the Nation lie now a bleeding? and where is the man that pities it: nay, are not men ſo far from pitying theſe wounds, that multitudes flock together, to make advantage of our ſores? even like the flies which ſuckle out ſimile: content and ſweetneſs from the ſores of the poor creatures, ſuch I mean who ſtrive for places and offices in the Kingdom to ſuckle out the blood of the Kingdom in their office: and places, men that are altogether for themſelves, and how they Officers of the Kingdom ſeek their own intereſt may make themſelves and theirs to be great in the world, though the Nation lie a bleeding. One tells us of a man that had a raw place, the ſkin being off upon his body, the flies uſing conſtantly to ſuckle it and lie upon it; his friend coming by him and ſeeing them upon him beat them off, the man was diſcontented at it, ſaying, Alas what have you done? ſaith he, I thought I had done you a good turn; Oh no for when theſe are off freſh ones will come upon it that will ſuckle me worſe than the other did before. Had we not thoſe that did ſuckle us before? have we forgot thoſe oppreſſions? ſhall we have worſe now? It follows.

*When I would have healed Iſrael.*

Hence note, That the Lord is the healer of a people; it is He alone that can do it, and none but he; we may uſe many means to be healed, but all in vain except the Lord heal us, with pardoning and ſanctifying mercies: Jer. 17. 14. *Heal me O Lord, and I ſhall be healed, ſave me and I ſhall be ſaved, for thou art my praiſe.* So Pſal. 60. 2. *Heal the breaches thereof for it ſhaketh.* How many are there that would go about to heal our wounds ſlightly? Jer. 8. 11. we are like many ſilly perſons who feeling a little pain of their wounds will needs have them ſkinned

ned up and healed presently, and then they putrifie and are worse than ever. But the Lord is the healer of his people, and when he heals he doth it to purpose; and many encouragements we have in Scripture, to seek to God for healing, the promise of God, 1 Chron. 7. 13. 14. *If my people which are called by my Name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from the evil of their waies; then will I hear from Heaven, and forgive their sin, and heal their land.* Mark the connexion of these words; first, seek to be forgiven, and then healed; if we should be healed before pardoned, wo be to us, we should then be undone. Isa. 57. 16, 17, 18. verses, *The Lord will not contend for ever, neither will he be angry for ever; lest the spirit should fail before him. For the iniquity of his covetousnesse was I wrath with him, and smote him; I hid my face from him, and he went on forwardly in the way of his heart.* Now what may we think will become of him? surely now, nothing but desolation and destruction. No saith God, *I have seen his way, and will heal him: I will lead him; and restore comforts unto his mourners.* Jer. 3. 22. *Return ye back-sliding children and I will heal your back-slidings.* Oh that the answer of this people might be ours: *Behold we come unto thee, for thou art our God.*

How God  
heals.

1

Now the Lord cures accurately, as Chyrurgions do by purgation, and allaying the misery, so the Lord heals his people by taking away the cause, and the malignancy of that trouble which is upon them. So thou that art under any particular trouble or affliction, if God sanctifie that trouble by taking away the cause of it, God may be said to heal, though the affliction be not quite taken away.

2.

Then God may be said to heal by Fermentation, as Chyrurgions use to do, when the part is able to resist and oppose that which would feed the humour: so when the Lord puts strength into the soul to oppose disquieting and vexing thoughts that sink into the soul from its afflictions: now where this work is accomplished the soul is healed.

*That God in willing things, doth not alwaies will them according to his Omnipotent power.*

Obs. 3.

*I would*



*I would have healed Ephraim* : That is, I would, and I did use all the means that was poſſible to heal them, and which might have done it.

But it may be objected, *If God ſee that we are unable of our ſelves to be healed, how can we be healed, when we have no power to be healed?*

Object.

Now for answer to this, we muſt know, That men are not ſo much healed, it proceeds not ſo much from the want of ability, as their will; men do not do what they can, therefore they do not will to be healed; God doth not make men unwilling, but ſpeaks to us after the manner of men; (though there be alſo an inability, yet becauſe men think not of that in not turning, or becauſe the inability is chiefly in the perversneſs of the will, 'tis not a metaphyſical inability as I may ſo ſpeak, but a formal wilfulneſs) though men think that God is in all the fault; that they are not healed, but God will make this one of his works at the day of judgment, to clear Himſelf from thoſe aſperſions; now men are ſo proud, that they think themſelves too good and too lofty for God, but God will clear, and ſhew Himſelf to be righteous in their deſtruction.

Anſw.

*There is much wickedneſs lies hid many times in a Kingdom or perſon till the means appear to cure them*: It was thus with Paul, Rom. 7. 9: he was ſinful before, but when the Law came ſin revived and I died, yet notwithstanding God by his almighty power helped him over them all: As when a man comes to repair an old houſe which is rotten and decayed, he doth not conceive the trouble of it till he comes to remove the rubbiſh: Who would imagine the wickedneſs that is in many mens hearts which diſcovers it ſelf when the means comes? had not God ſet many ſervants in good families the vileneſs and the vanity of their ſpirits had not diſcovered it ſelf: certainly this is our condition, ſome few yeers ſince, there appeared much wickedneſs in *England*, but how much more ſince God hath ſent the means to cure it? As appears,

Obſ. 4

ſimile

Servants.  
Englands  
wicked-  
neſs

*By a bitter ſpirit of malignancy, againſt the power of godineſs*. No people ſo wicked as we were before, but now it is much more,

our wickedness is now grown to a spirit of malice, and opposition against the Word and the Saints. At the first men cried out for a reformation, and cried down Bishops, but when Gods people began to rejoyce and thought that they should have a day, of a sudden, what a desperate spirit of pride, a spirit of malignancy was there raised to oppose with all the might that could be the way of reformation so much desired, and this so much the more vile, because of their malice against reformation.

aggravated 1. Blind mens eyes, so that they cannot see their misery, by reason of the falsities, and flatteries, and treacheries which is used against *Scotland, Ireland, and England*, nay .2. these men rather than they will be subject to the yoke of Christ they will be slaves to men, any men, yea the worst of men, and that to their vilest lusts rather than yeild to the way of Christ, and doth not this shew a desperate spirit against God?

2. *What a base sordid spirit is there now among us?* that rather than men will be contented to suffer a little trouble, will rather endure perpetual enslavery by vile men.

3. *A most treacherous spirit appears in the most,* for their own private gain and advantages, when men shall betray Kingdoms, overthrow States, and deceive the trust and confidence that is put in them, undermine and destroy Parliaments, doth not this manifest a most vile spirit in the people of this Kingdom? Heretofore the rascality of the people could not be brought to fight against the *Scots*, yet now there can be found a Gentry to fight against the Parliament.

4. *What a blasphemous spirit is there abroad,* this sin abounded before, but how much more is it now encreased; nay, are there not now new oaths invented and pressed?

5. *A cruel bloody spirit is now risen in the people of the land;* some few yeers since who could have imagined the cruelties that have been used by English men.

6. *What a spirit of division is there among us?* we should have thought that in a time of publick calamity we should have sodered together, when there was private persecution more love was expressed, and that which makes the rents the more

ſad, is, that they are between the beſt people.

*What an oppreſſing, tyrannizing ſpirit is there now in many;* 7.  
men who have been formerly oppreſſed by oppreſſors are now turned oppreſſors themſelves: what doth this but preſage what theſe would do, had they the power in their hands? this iniquity is now diſcovered.

*A ſpirit of envy and jealousie:* if any man be in publik place and active in it, how are they envied and ſpited, how many ſtand newters now? and upon this very ground, becauſe they ſee others not ſo rich in eſtates as they made uſe of, therefore they ſit ſtill, and fret themſelves and ſeek to hinder them that are active in publick ſervice, and ſo the work is hindered. 8.

*A ſpirit of ſuperſtition:* Would ever any man have thought that the Parliament ſhould ever have met with ſuch a party to oppoſe them in their way of reforming? we might rather have thought that there ſhould have been a general ſpirit riſing againſt theſe ſuperſtitious vanities, to have kickt them out, Oh what miſery doth theſe rotten teeth put this Kingdom unto at this very day! this iniquity is alſo diſcovered. 9.

*A wanton erroneous ſpirit:* ſuch opinions as were never known before, doubting of the Immortallity of the ſoul, that there is no viſible Church upon the face of the earth, and all this under the Name of Chriſt and free grace. Now what doth all this but ſhew thus much, that when God would have healed us, then our iniquities did appear: what ſad paſſages are theſe of our miſeries approaching? 10.

*What an unmerciful ſpirit is there among us.* Every one ſee- 11.  
king his own, and how he may make him and his great in the world, and neglecting the poor and thoſe that are in diſtreſs, we have cauſe to ſay, Oh Lord, what ſhall become of us? Know this, that I may not altogether diſcourage you; though our times are miſerable, yet are they not like unto Iſrael altogether, it cannot be denied but that our Court hath ſecoded *Ephraim*, which was their Court, and though the City of *Samarish* did joyn with *Ephraim*, yet the Citie with us hath not joyned with *Ephraim* but the bulk of it hath kept faithful with their God; for which mercy the children

Court  
City

He lived \* yet unborn will have cause to bleſs God:  
 not to ſee ; A ſit obſervation is this ; *That when a people grow worſe upon  
 the late diſſention which yet was not total, bleſſed be God though prevailing long.* the means of healing, it is a ſign that their condition is deſperate ;  
*Iſa. 1. 5. why ſhould you be ſmitten any more ? Ye will revolt  
 yet more and more. Jer. 51. 9. We would have healed Babylon, but  
 ſhe would not ; for ſake her. In thy filthineſs is lewdneſs ; becauſe  
 I have purged thee, and thou wouldeſt not be purged, thou ſhalt not  
 be purged from thy filthineſs any more untill I have cauſed my fury to  
 reſt upon thee.* Now certainly had not God found a party in  
 this Kingdom which cloſed with him, when he would have  
 healed us, we might have had occaſion to make uſe of this  
 Scripture, how juſt were it with God to leave ſuch a people  
 as we are in our healing, becauſe we are ſo impatient under  
 the rod, and oppoſe him even in our healing, *Arius Montanus*  
*Ar. Mont.* quotes it out of *Hippocrates*, that the Phyſicians in his  
 time, were bound by an Oath to leave ſuch under their  
 wounds to periſh by them, that were incorrigible and would  
 not endure the Chirurgions to cure them. When a man is  
 engaged in a bad cauſe, and means is uſed for the convincing  
 of him, and yet oft times he will proceed and fly out the  
 worſe, Oh the vileneſs of mens ſpirits in this thing ; we had  
 need take heed what we engage our ſelves in, that the thing  
 be good, the cauſe warrantable, how many men are there  
 which break their conſciences rather than yeild to take  
 ſhame to themſelves for their ſin. Oh what cauſe have we to  
 fall down and be humbled for our iniquity, and to ſay as  
 they in *Jer. 14. 18, 19, 20.* So for particular Towns and places  
 where God ſends the Goſpel, the means of grace, and that  
 people is the worſe for it, they have cauſe to tremble at it,  
 do not cry out againſt the preaching of the Word as if that  
 were the cauſe of it, this were moſt wicked and abominable ;  
 it was thus in Chriffs time : we never read of any poſſeſſed  
 with Devils before Chriſt came ; now ſhall we ſay, it had  
 been better that Chriſt had not come ? Oh blame not the  
 Miniſtry, but your own hearts ; and conſider of this you  
 that God is working upon, the Lord comes cloſe by the Miniſtry  
 of his Word to heal you, and then you diſcover your  
 wickedneſſe.

whē men  
 are worſe  
 for prea-  
 ching, an  
 evil ſign.

wickedneſs, and rotten hearts, the Lord he ſtirrs ſuch a conſcience and begins to heal the ſoul, now 'tis the Devils policy to ſpoil ſuch beginnings, now thinks the Devil, if I can make ſuch a ſoul to commit a ſin againſt conſcience, or live in the omiſſion of any known duty, the word then will never work more to do ſuch a man good. I have heard of a man who being troubled in conſcience for committing that great ſin of uncleaneſs, the Devil tempting him to commit it again, and told him if he would he ſhould never be troubled more for it, the poor man yeilding to do it, and venturing upon it again, after he had done it he was never tempted again nor troubled more, but preſently lay in a wanzeing, languiſhing ſenceleſs condition and ſo died. Oh take heed of this you that are convinced in your conſciences of the evil of ſuch and ſuch courſes; for it is the great policy of the Devil to make thee who art convinced in conſcience, to ſin againſt conſcience, and then he thinks the work is loſt, the Devil doth not much fear the Words working upon him, whom he hath prevailed over to live in ſecret known ſins and to venture upon the commiſſion of ſins againſt conſcience; you who are under Gods hand of cure, be ſilent, and ſubmit quietly under Gods hand and be not froward, as many are in their troubles of conſcience, but hearken for a word from God; as the men of *Benhadad* did from that King, in *1 King. 20. 33.* hearkened diligently whether any words of comfort ſel from him, and they caught at them haſtily. Know that it were juſt with God to make you as that people, *Iſa. 6. 10.* that your hearts ſhould be made fat. This concerns all people, but eſpecially thoſe that are in trouble of conſcience; thoſe that God begins to ſtir and work upon, take heed I ſay; doth Chriſt himſelf begin to work upon you? doth he deſire to heal you? is he willing to offer his blood to cure you by applying it to your wounded conſciences? Let not the corruptions of your hearts now break forth, now take heed of ſins againſt conſcience; leſt he let you to periſh in your luſts, be willing to let God alone to do his work in you, lie quiet and ſtill, take heed of murmuring and repining ſpeeches, but follow on the work

Troubled  
Conſciences;

begin

begun and beseech him not to leave you till the work be completed in you, and the great hazard of your miscarrying over, little do you imagine the wait and burden of those sins will be upon conscience which now you commit against conscience; what a torment will it be to thy conscience to think, that at such a time I felt Jesus Christ coming to heal my soul in the Ministry of his Word, Oh happy had it been for me, if I had lain under his hand, and to have kept his salve upon my sore! but because it was for the present troublesome, and smart, I cast it off and went into such company, and listened unto such temptations, and by this means have wounded my soul anew most desperately, and now what can I expect but that the Lord should for ever forsake me, and leave me to die in my sins, and wallow in my blood, and his eye not pity me, & make me to inherit the curse of that people, whose ears should be deaf that they should not hear, whose eyes should be blind that they should not see and be converted, and I should heal them.

*When I would have healed Israel, then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria: for they committed falsehood; and the thirst breaketh in, and the troop of robbers spoileth without.*

Furthermore, In these words the Prophet showeth in what particulars their iniquity did appear; they committed falsehood, they wrought a lye in regard of their falsehood, their false worship; and then in regard of their oppression, wronging one another, but especially in falsifying their trust one to another, and in their relations not performing the duties which their relations called for, and bound them unto, so the word in the original (*Shekar*) in the propriety of it, signifies. *They commit falsehood.* That is, they commit such a sin as the breaking of that duty which the law of their relation calls for from them. The Notes hence are:

*It is the description of a wicked man to commit falsehood: As the godly man is said to be for the truth, and to do the truth; so wicked men are against the truth, and go contrary to the truth*

שָׁקַר  
 officij dilii  
 violati ex  
 singulari  
 audacia.  
 Obs. 1

truth: as the Devil is ſaid, not to abide in the truth; even ſuch are theſe who commit falſhood, and work a lye.

*It is a forerunner of great miſchief, when men are falſe in their relations.* In Mic. 7. 6, 7. It was an ill time when all ſorts of people were ſo unfaithful in their relations. Obſ. 2,

*The thief breaks in to rob and ſpoil by violence.*

Obſ. 3

From whence note: *There is much ſecret wickedneſſ committed by thoſe which have forſaken the true religion, ſuch as theſe are ſecret and cunning workers of miſchief in Church and State.* Gal. 2. 4. *There are falſe brethren crept in ſecretly, which afterwards ſought to bring us into bondage.* 'Tis a great evil in a Commonwealth to have ſecret oppreſſors, but far worſe to have publick ſpoiling: We have had much of the firſt formerly, and the Lord knows how much more of the ſecond we may further taſt of; I verily beleeve, there is none that ever thought the Enemy would have ſpoiled in ſuch a manner as He hath done, and that ever Engliſh men would have endured it; and we are the firſt people that ever endured ſuch oppreſſions, that were not ſlaves before, and what the counſels and thoughts of God are in this thing concerning us we cannot tell. *Violence and ſpoil before me continually, is grief and wounds.* What then? *Be inſtructed O Jeruſalem, leſt my ſoul depart from thee,* Jer. 6. 7, 8. The firſt part of this Scripture is ours at this day, grief and wounds are continually before us: but be thou inſtructed, O England: In what? In this, That dreadful breach which ſin hath made between the King and Parliament; be inſtructed in this. Jer. 15. 13. *Thy ſubſtance and thy treaſures will I give to the ſpoilers without price, and that for all thy ſins, even in all thy borders.* So Iſa. 44. 22. 24. *But this is a people robbed and ſpoiled, they are all of them ſnared in holes; they are for a prey, and none delivers them; for a ſpoil, and none ſaith, Reſtore. Who gave Jacob for a ſpoil, and Iſrael to the robbers? Did not the Lord, againſt whom we have ſinned.* Who among you will give ear and hearken to this? Men are wicked and tyrannical: But who is he that hath given this our Land to the plunderers? Is it not the Lord? Therefore we ſhould look beyond the troubles, the hand that ſtrikes, to God who gave them their commiſſion, and delivered us up

into

into their hands. When God gives up a people to the robbers and spoilers in such a kind, his wrath is said to come upon them; as in the 25. verse, *Therefore he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battel.*

## V E R. 2.

*And they considered not in their hearts; that I remembred all their wickednesse: now their own doings have beset them about, they are before my face.*

**T**Hey considered not in their hearts] In the original it is, *They say not to their hearts.* This phrase in other Scriptures is used for saying in their hearts: *Jer. 5: 24. Neither say they IN their hearts, Let us fear God which giveth rain.* And in *Eccles. 1. 16. Considering, is, communing with our own hearts; I spoke or consulted with my heart.* From this phrase of speaking thus to our hearts, we may observe:

I It is a good thing to be often speaking to our own hearts, thus: Oh my soul, how is it with thee? what case art thou in? how stand things between God and thee? what terms standest thou in for eternity? canst thou look upon Gods face with comfort and not be afraid? what guilt is there in thy conscience? canst thou behold eternity and rejoyce in the thoughts of it? Such meditations and questionings as these would be very profitable for the soul; Many people can talk abroad in company of these things, but where is the man that sets apart time to question with his soul about these? *Pf. 4. 4. Stand in awe, and sin not, commune with your own hearts upon your bed, and be still:* There are in the soul many times boisterous distempers, but then we should cause a silence and a calm in our hearts, bid them *be still*; there are great distempers in that familie where the husband and the wife go two or three daies together and speak not one to another; so there is no less distemper in that soul which can go two or three daies without questioning it self and examining its condition: But what is it they should speak? This,

simile

*That I remember their iniquities:* the old Latine carries it thus,



thus, *lest they ſhould conſider*: do not you think that God remembers the ſins of your forefathers only, that they were vile and wicked; no, but I alſo remember the ſins that are *preſent* before me. But according to the reading of the words in your books is moſt agreeable to the Original; therefore Luther ſaith, that theſe words are a reproof of their ſecurity Luther then which no evil being worſe: the Princes they feel not the judgment yet the principal actors in the wickedneſs, the common people they ſuffer much, and yet though they ſuffer yet attribute their ſufferings to any thing rather than to their ſins to be the cauſes of them: the obſervations.

*That God doth remember the wickedneſs of people though long ſince* Obſ. 1.  
*committed, as we may ſee in Amalek, God remembers this their wickedneſs many hundred yeers after, 1 Sam. 15. 2. I remember the prank which Amalek played to you when you came out of Egypt. Amos, 8. 7. The Lord hath ſworn by the excellency of Jacob, ſurely I will never forget any of their works: nay they are not only remembered, but recorded, the ſin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, & with the point of a diamond, Jer. 17. 1. every oath, every lye, yea and every vain thought which thou haſt committed, and continuelt in under an impenitent condition, know, that thy ſins are remembered; and that thou mayeſt be ſure of it, ſee what the text ſaith, Job, Job 4. 17.*  
*14. 17. My tranſgreſſion is ſealed up in a bag, and thou ſeweſt up opened. my iniquity. They are ſealed in a bag; as the Clark of Aſſizes ſeals up the inditements of men, and at the Aſſizes brings his bag and takes them out; even ſo will God; as God hath his time to ſeal up mens tranſgreſſions in his bag, ſo he wil have his time to take them out to reckon with ſinners for them, and then wo to them, Deut. 32. 34. Is not this laid up in ſiſore with me, and ſealed up among my treasures? It is ſealed up to be remembered though perhaps committed fourty or fifty yeers ago, and it is thy ſin if thou doſt not remember them, when and where they were committed, and if thou wilt not, know, that God hath his time to make thee know them.*

*Wicked men will not conſider that God doth remember their ſins.* Obſ. 2.  
 In *Pſal. 94. 7. they commit horrible wickedneſſes, daring ſins,*

sins, yet they force themselves not to believe that God doth remember them, and take notice of them, yet they say, *The Lord shall not see it, neither shall the God of Jacob remember it.* The Jews tell us, that when *Jeroboams* hand was dried up, the false Prophets told him that this was but by chance, and so kept him from thinking of God that had smitten him. Did men consider that it is God that remembers them, it would work humiliation in them, and stop them in their sins; were the danger that sin brings men into, alwaies in their eye, they would think it a great madness to sin against God, and folly too; *Joskua* thought it so, *Is the iniquity of Peor a small thing in your eyes, that you should ad more to them?* Didst thou know that God remembers the sins of thy youth and thy elder age, thou wouldst fear, that upon the next sin thou committest God might bring upon thee all the rest of the sins which thou hast committed; as a man that hath used his body to drink poyson, at the first and second time he may do well, but at last he is overcome, and destroies himself: so the next sin which thou committest, though it be a less sin than formerly thou hast committed, this sin may set all the rest on working: as suppose there be many barrels of Gunpouder in a room, and there lies but a thimbleful by it, and a spark falls into that and so fires all the rest; so thy former sins are as the barrels of Gunpouder, the next sin thou committest, especially if a sin against knowledg, may be the thimbleful which sets all the rest on work to pull down judgment upon thee. There is no argument so powerful to keep men from their sins as the consideration that God sees them, and knows them all, and will remember them.

*When God doth punish for sin, he manifests that he remembers sin:* 1 King. 17. 18. the woman of *Zarephath* falls out with the Prophet saying, *What have I to do with thee, Oh thou man of God, art thou come unto me to call my sin into remembrance, and to slay my son?* Gods hand being upon her, brought her sin into remembrance. How doth the consciences of men dictate this unto them in their afflictions, this cross is for such a sin, this misery for such a base lust that thou wouldst have fulfilled at such a time.

We

simile.

Note

simile

Obs. 3.

a time, God now puts thee in mind of ſuch an act of uncleaneſs, ſuch a time thou were cruel and hardhearted; this is cleer in *Joſeph's* brethren, whoſe ſin was committed *twenty two years* before this trouble came upon them; you that have committed many ſins a long time ago and think they are forgotten, 'tis no ſuch matter, if the guilt of them be taken away by *Chriſt*, know that there will come a time in which thou ſhalt be put in mind of them; as a man that gets a ſurfet in his youth and younger age, or gets many a bruife and rub which then he undergoes wel enough and never complains of them, but when he grows old or hath an infirm body, then againſt every rain and change of weather it will appear and he will complain: but this is the *Saints* priviledg, that God never ſo remembers their ſins, as to condemn them for their ſins. It follows.

*I remember all their wickedneſs, now their own doings have beſet them about, they are before my face.*

*Their wickedneſs.*] *Luther* ſaith their ſtudied wickedneſs, their contrived iniquities have beſet them round about, or their doings have compaſſed them round: Theſe words have reference to theſe ſimilitudes; as *Officers* beſet *Malefactors*, who ſhift up and down and play leaſt in ſight, but at the laſt are found and beſet. Juſt thus their ſins had beſet them, that they could no way eſcape; or as *Soldiers* beleaguer a *Town* and will not let any in the *Town* get out; ſo men by their ſins are beſiged, and brought into ſuch a condition that there is no way for comfort to come at them, or for them to avoid the judgments which are coming upon them; mens ſins are like unto thoſe ſix men in *Ezek. 9. 2.* And behold ſix men came from the way of the higher Gate, to beſet the Gates of the City. And know, Oh thou bold ſinner, that God hath his time to beſet thee with thy ſins and his judgments, to awaken thy conſcience by ſetting thy ſins in order before thee; and this is the great reaſon why men cry out in the horror of their conſciences, becauſe they are beſet with their ſins: what a ſad con-

Septuag.  
Luther

Expoſ.

Applic.

dition were this City in if beleaguere with an hundred thousand men? Every mans sins are worfe and endanger a man more than millions of enemies can do; man shall need no other enemy than his own iniquity, thine own iniquity shall find thee out, it shall find thee as in a snare, *Prov. 5. 21. For the waies of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings*: that is, I so remember their sins as if they were all present before me, committed at this very instant; so that thou art to consider that God doth not only remember thy sins, but they are before Gods face, so that God never can look about him but they are present before his face: thou hast committed a sin and perhaps art troubled for it, but after a while thou forgettest it and the trouble is blown over; but God looks upon it as now presently committed: for as there is no beginning of eternity, so there is no succession of it. If thou wert to go to the Lords table thou wouldest not go in a drunken fit, or immediately after an act of uncleanness; but God at that very instant looks upon thee as drunken, unclean, and filthy, though the act may be past many yeers before.

Note wel

VER. 3.

*They make the King glad with their wickedness, and the Princes with their lyes.*

**T***hey make the King glad.]* That is, **Expof. 1.** By their willing yeilding to his commands by the way of their false worship, the King and the Princes were glad to see their edicts yeilded unto and obeyed: at the first when the commands came from *Jeroboam* to change the way of Gods worship, they had cause to fear that it might not take with the people, there would be something to do, to make them change the way of Gods worship, but when they saw it go on currently without contradiction they rejoyced.

**Expof. 2.** By their flattering of him in his wicked waies; they did not only yeild to his unlawful edicts, but commended them, and applauded him for his care and tender respect which he had to them, in shortening their journey, that they should not

go ſo far as *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, & they flattered him in this extremly, telling him that this was the way to eſtabliſh his Kingdom.

He was glad, when he ſaw the people wicked in their waies and their lives looſe and prophane, at this the King was glad, and why? becauſe he knew they were for his turn, his deſign was accompliſhed now, he had made them wicked in their lives by letting them have their will in evil, and now he never feared their ſcrupling or making queſtion of the thing, he never once doubted of their unwillingneſſe to worſhip at the Calves, to go to *Dan* and *Bethel*: Thuſt they made the King glad. Expcf. 3.

The Notes: Firſt obſerve, *That carnal and wicked people are eaſily led aſide by the examples of thoſe that are their Governours*: Which way Superiors go, the multitude will go: if they do that which is good in the outward part of it for externals, they will do the ſame; if they do wickedly they will do ſo likewise, though they do not love their Prince, yet that they may have their Princes favor they will ſin againſt God. Obf. 1.

*It is wickedneſſe for any people to obey the unlawful commands of their Governours.* This people might think this was no ſin in them, What, muſt we not obey our Governours and be ſubject to authority? yet we ſee the holy Gholt calls it wickedneſs. So how many are there who for their worſhip have no other authority but their ſuperiors, their Governours, this will never paſs for currant in Gods account. Obf. 2.

*It is a vile wickedneſſe to flatter Princes.* Yet how hath this been the conſtant courſe of Courts? It is reported of *Dionyſius*, that when he ſpit, his flatterers would lick it up and ſay, it was ſweeter than Honey. This is vileneſs in people to do, and more vile in Princes to love to be flattered. *Cyriſ* upon this text ſaith, That the fear and love of God, had it been in this people, it would have kept both them and their Princes, to have withſtood ſuch wicked commands, it would have balanced their ſpirits. Obf. 3.

Obs. 4.

It is a most most wicked and vile thing, to make any glad with their wickedness, or to be made glad by wickedness. Yet how many are guilty of this sin? some are so hardened in their wickedness that they will make others drunk, and then laugh at them when they have done so; How far are these from *Dauids* temper? whose eyes ran down with tears, because men kept not the Law, and horror took hold on him; there is no greater sign of a desperate heart hardened in sin, than to laugh at sin in others, and make a sport of it in themselves; and the higher men are in place and dignity the greater is the aggravation of their sins; for Princes to be glad at wickeness and to be made merry by iniquity, who are set to be punishers of sin and a terror to evil doers, this is most horrible wickedness, *Prov. 29. 22. If the Prince hearken to lyes, all his servants are wicked.*

Obs. 5.

They make the King glad with their lyes. Note:

The King is in a sad condition, when his ends and plots must be accomplished by the wickedness of the people. Such are the dispositions of these men, that they will do any thing rather than suffer the least evil of punishment, for saith a Prince, these men they have no conscience left in them to check them; but these precise Puritans they will suffer and die rather than sin against God and wrong their consciences. Now these Priests and their officers (which the Prophet here speaks of,) they would reason thus; If I should crosse the Kings mind I should lose my place, and be put out of my office, and suffer a great deal of trouble, and rather than they will run upon these straights they wil run upon any design for the ruining of that which crosses them, yea, though it be the worship of God: *Oecolampadius* saith, that bad Princes are alwaies enemies to to the strict waies of religion, and unto such as are the strictest in those waies, and walk most agreeable to the Word, and are tender in their conscience, fearful to sin against it, these are disregarded and discountenanced; but those that are most wicked they are accounted the best subjects, and these they will trust. Therefore where there is no religion, slavery soon follows, that people may be brought to any thing, who have

Irreligion  
& slavery  
compani-  
ons.

lost their religion; but where profession is maintained it will teach men to stand for their liberties, and not to yeild against the truth. But what, doth Religion teach men rebellion? doth it deny obedience to Governors? No, by no means, Religion teaches obedience to Governors, and the more religious any man is, the more obedient he will be to lawful Authority, the Gospel commands obedience to Governors, but not to Tyranny, to the wils and humors of men, God never made such difference between men, Religion never teaches disobedience to lawful authority, to such as rule in the Lord, yet this was the case of this people. It follows.

*And the Princes with their lyes.*

Luther carries this to the lye of their false worship, their Idolatry, which the Scripture calls a lye, *Rom. 1. 25. Who changed the truth of God into a lye, and worshiped the creature more than the Creator.* But this is not the full meaning and scope of the words, but thus:

They put their false glosses upon their false worship, to make it to take with the people, and with the Princes; as thus: The Priests did not only submit and yeild to them themselves but encouraged the people, telling them it was decent and comely in the worship of God.

Or thus: By denying whatsoever may hinder them in their false worship. If the Prince should by any means hear that his Commands were not like to take with the people, and so he lose his ends, they would boldly come and affirm it to the contrary: or if they had an ill successe, they would deny it, and say, they had none, it was but a slander which was put upon them by these factious Puritans; they would make the Princes beleieve they had good succes when their designs were crost and put back.

But principally they made the King glad with their lyes, by raising slanders and ill reports upon the names and persons of those which might stand in the way to crosse and hinder them, they blasted such men as were in credit in the eyes of the people;

Expo. 1.  
Luther.

2.

3.

4.

people; and those in authority loved this at the heart; this was mighty pleasing in the eyes of the Princes; and this certainly was the plot of the Priests who at that time were enemies to the true worship of God.

The Notes are:

Obs. 1. *That all Idolatry and false worship is but a lye in Gods esteem, He looks upon it as a deceitful thing.*

Obs. 2. *The old way of false worshipers to further their false worship is, by lyes and calumniation of all sorts, to tel them of their good successe, when they had none; and when they had ill successe, to say it was a flim, it was no such matter, their successe was as good as heart could desire; but this in special was their trick to slander & disgrace those that stood in their way. The text*

Jer. 20. 10 *saith in Jeremiab, That they waited for the Prophets halting, and they said, Report, and we will report, do you say the thing, and we will affirm it, we will spread it abroad, Report, and let us alone with it then, we will never stand examining the truth of it, we heard it reported, and that is sufficient; this hath bin the course and practice of our times: and in the stories of later times against Luther, what calumnies & reproaches were by the Papiests raised against him? men set on work on purpose to do it. You may perceive my straight at this time, how loth I am to rake in these filthy puddles, and yet led by this Scripture so fully to it, that I must either baulk the mind of God, or else touch upon these jarring strings; but I shall for peace sake for the present wave it, and reserve it to its more convenient place, howbeit this wil stick to some whose course it hath been; but how vile and wicked is this course? for what recompence is it possible that such can make for the wrong done.*

Evils of  
slander

1

2.

3

4

For first, It cannot be expected that an answer should suddenly come to cleer such reproaches. And secondly, When an Answer is come, it will be but ones yea, and anothers nay. And thirdly, If it should be satisfactory, all the mends that can be made is, a recantation, I am sorry, I was mis-informed, I had Letters of it; and this is a poor requiral. Then fourthly, 'Tis a question whether ever the Answer shall come into



into all the hands that theſe Reproaches have.

*It is a very evil thing, to make men glad with falſities.* This was Obſ. 3 their ſin here, they had made the Princes glad with their lyes.

You had need look to your hearts when you hear reproaches and ſlanders againſt publick inſtruments: do you hug it love, and imbrace it? if you do, it is a ſign there is rottenneſs in your hearts; it is evil to ſow reports & ſlanders, but worſe to harrow them in: he that reports, is he that ſows ſlanders, and he that carries the report and ſpreads it, is he that harrows the ſlander in.

Uſe.

## VER. 4.

*They are all adulterers, as an oven heated by the Baker; who ceaſeth from raiſing after he hath kneaded the dough, until it be leavened.*

**T**HIS Verſe needs but little opening, and the rather becauſe the ſixth verſe hath much of it, to the ſame effect. They are all adulterers, either ſpiritual or corporal. Is the heat of either like to an oven? Therefore let every one take heed of that which may kindle this fire, either of corporal or ſpiritual adultery: 1. an inward heat. 2. violent, that turns every thing to the encrease of it. 3. an heat abiding, collected and reſting, not of a harth which ſcatters the heat, but as the heat in an oven.

Now if wicked ſinful heat be ſo kept in and compacted; how much more ſhould our heat be kept in and compacted for God, in the duties of his worſhip? when we come to Prayer, perhaps we have a little heat, but it is ſcattered and confuſed; if a man were to heat a pot upon the fire, he would take it ill if another ſhould ſcatter the fire abroad; the Devil he comes and ſcatters our heat, and ſpoils us in our affections: now we ſhould oppoſe the Devil in this. It follows.

Uſe

ſimile

*Who ceaseth from raising.*

Hierom

*Hierom* and others have great light for the understanding of these words from a tradition of the Jews which was this. They say, the intent of *Jeroboam* for altering of Religion was very hot, but not knowing how it would take, they sent abroad spies to leaven the people to see how they stood affected, they thought if so be this their design were urged upon them of a sudden, it would not take, but if in this way by degrees it might gain upon mens spirits. Thus *Hierom* and *Cybil*. As the Baker ceaseth from kneading, he doth not presently put it into the Oven, but lets it lie that the leaven may run through it; so *Jeroboam* and his Princes were like this Baker, they were set upon their design, and it they would have, but they would have the people first leavened, and then they would put it into execution: and *Cybil* ads that, those which went to persuade the people, used this fetch and device upon the people; and told them it would be for their ease and profit not to go up to Jerusalem, but to petition the King that he out of his Princely love and wisdom would permit them to worship at *Dan* and *Bethel*. And here lay the top of the plot, that the Kings design so much desired by him and his Princes, yet this must be brought about by the people, they must petition to the King that he would grant this liberty to them to worship at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and that they might not go up to *Jerusalem*, when it was first of all the Kings and the Princes own design. By this you may see how wicked and wise Idolaters are for the accomplishment of their purposes, by this means Princes obtain their ends, and their plots kept in.

*Alphonfus  
Aragonie  
Rex.*

Behold the cunning plots of the Devil to delude poor souls in matters of worship, therefore we had need to look to our waies when we have to deal with cunning Princes and subtil pated men.

This means was of late used among our selves, our bakers have been a doing their feats, but they had heated their Oven too hot, and so their cake proved over baked, and there-  
fore

fore proved abortive and came to nothing; and we have cause to bleſs God, who gave them up to this violence of rage. Theſe in *Jeroboams* time were wiſe enough to carry on their deſigns with moderation, policy, and ſecrecy, and ſo got the day, though our enemies were not.

Applic. to  
England.

And as wicked men do ſtay and are contented to wait, till the fitteſt time is for the accompliſhment of their wicked plots, ſo the Devil is contented to wait, he firſt tempts the ſoul to ſin; and when the temptation hath prevailed he ſtaies a while and lets the ſin work a while, therefore take heed of letting a temptation prevail, do not roul them up and down in your thoughts, ſaying: what if I ſhould do ſuch a thing, what if I ſhould not; now know, that the Devil is a leavening your hearts, and when your hearts are thus leavened, the Devil will come in with ſuch ſtrength of temptation that you ſhall not be able to reſiſt him; therefore as Chriſt bad his Diſciples to beware of the leaven of the Scribes and Phariſees, ſo take heed of the leaven of Satan in this kind, and in this the Devil deals as God doth with a ſinner in the Goſpel, the Goſpel is compared to leaven in *Mat. 13. 33.* God he leavens the heart with ſome truth or other, and there lets it lie and ſoak a while in the ſoul, God caſts into the ſoul ſome truth and doth not preſently urge it with violence upon the ſoul, putting them preſently upon difficult duties, which they are not capable to perform at the firſt, but lets theſe truths lie, ſoak, and ſpread in the heart, till ſuch time as the diſpoſition and favor of the heart be moulded and changed into the truth, and then the Lord comes in with other truths, and works them upon the heart, which it was neither fit nor capable of before; and it were wiſdom in the Miniſters of the Goſpel, to take this courſe, not violently to urge ſtriſt and hard duties upon new converts which they are not capable of, as to ſay this muſt be done, and the other muſt not be neglected, but preſs the Goſpel to them and there let it lie and ſoak a while upon the ſpirit, and bleſſed is that ſoul which is thus leavened: The Lord wil carry on this work to perfection, theſe beginnings the Lord in his time will finiſh.

Satans  
temptat.

VER. 5.

In the day of our King, the Princes have made him sick with bottles of wine, he stretched out his hand with scorners.

The day  
of our  
King

**T**Here is no preposition in, in the Hebrew, 'tis only, *The day of our King.* The people being leavened with *Jerobams* Idolatry, they now make their acclamations in honor of their King, and rejoyce in the way of their worship which they had from the King, which he & his Princes had set up, & would not regard the requests and petitions of some few who desired it might not be established, and though they were bound in conscience to go up to *Jerusalem*, yet notwithstanding the King would send forth his Edicts, to tell the people there should be no more going up to *Jerusalem*, but to *Dan* and *Bethel*, now at this they rejoyce and cry out, Oh the day of our good King which hath set his good people at liberty and eased us of our great journey to *Jerusalem*! (to the danger of the Kingdom) and is an enemy to those precise people.

This day of their King was either the day of his birth, or his coronation day, or the day in which he set up the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*. Now it cannot be imagined but that there was some murmurings amongst some of the people, they were not all of a mind, to give their consent to the setting up of the Calves, therefore they did it by a strategem, with all the mirth and triumphing in the day of their King, pleasing and pampering the flesh, drowned all the discontents by this way of pleasing the flesh, caused all things to be carried before them. Or thus: If the people were not thoroughly leavened, by this means, they would take this course, Come, we wil go set up our King, and magnifie our King, and this will prepare the people to receive any thing he enjoyns. Let the Citizens be in their gowns, and the Gentry in their bravery, and let the King be amongst them, and shew himself courteous and loving to the people, and now let us cry out, Oh our good King! This is the day of our King.

Those

Thoſe who carry this day to the day of his birth, have this Note, That we never read in Scripture of any godly King, that ever celebrated his birth-day, but of three wicked Kings, of *Pharoah*, Gen. 40.20. and of *Jeroboam*, in this text; and of *Herod* in *Mark*. 6.21. not that it is altogether unlawful to celebrate or obſerve a birth-day, or a coronation day, if it be obſerved with two Cautions.

So that it be not made as a holy day, ſo there be not put a holineſs in it; for God never gave that power to man, to ſet a day apart as holy for his uſe.

Then it may be here objected, *What, may not man ſet daies apart for Humiliation, or Thankſgiving?* Yea, he may. *Then what is the difference between Gods ſetting of dayes apart for holy uſes, and mans ſetting of daies apart for holy uſes?*

The difference lies in this: Time and things ſet apart by God for holy employments and ſervices, beſides that they make the duties more holy, and the Ordinances more ſolemn and ſpiritual, than they are upon a day which man doth appoint, (for mans appointment puts no holineſs upon the duties which are done upon thoſe daies) there is a holineſſe in them when out of their uſe, as in Miniſters &c. but there no more holineſs in daies and times ſet apart by man for God, than there is holineſs put upon the paper which the Bible is printed upon; the Printer takes out ſo many reams of paper from his heap, and ſets them apart to print the Bible; now will any man think this paper is more holy than the reſt.

There may be a day kept, yet ſo, as God do not at that time call for ſome other duty or ſervice from us; man muſt not ſo tie himſelf by any institution of his own as to croſſe Gods providence: as ſuppoſe I have ſet a day apart for thankſgiving, at that very day providence may ſo fall out, that God may call for a day of humiliation; now if I ſhould keep a thankſgiving day and ſo croſſe providence, being cal'd to humiliation I ſhould ſin in the thing: Theſe two things being obſerved, I know nothing to the contrary but that it may be lawful to obſerve a day, a man may remember his birth-day in this kind, to be humbled for not doing the work we are called

Kings  
birthdays

with what  
cautiō to  
be cele-  
brated.

Object.

Anſw,

2.

called unto; so men married may at the revolution of the year bless God for the mercies they have enjoyed in that Ordinance entred into on that day: but how many are there who have little cause to remember either that, or their birth day? nay may they not rather with *Job*, curse the day of their birth? Suppose you should hear a voice from heaven this day that you must die and not live, that this must be the last day you should live, tell me then, could you bless God for the day of your birth? would the thoughts of it be delightful to you? 'Tis reported of *Philip the third*, King of *Spain*, who lived so strictly that he never committed any gross crime, never committed any known sin willingly, yet when he came to die, cries out, *Oh that I had never reigned! that I had lived a private life in the wildernes; that I might not have the sin to answer, for not doing the good, or hindering the evil which I might have done.* It is a sad thing when men come to die that they cannot look back with comfort to their lives spent, that they have not discharged their places: had *Jeroboam* kept his birth day in this manner, there had been no evil in it; but his keeping of it, was only to satisfie the flesh, till he himself was sick with wine: in such daies *Bachus*, and *Venus* have the greatest portions.

Philip the  
3 of Spain

Obf. 1

*Festive daies are usually made distemp'ring daies, daies of provocation.* It follows.

*With bottels of wine.*

This wine is like that in *Deut. 32. 33.* *Their wine is the poyson of Dragons, and the cruel venime of Asps: this wine of Asps it makes the spirits warm, and the body sick.* *Job* knew the danger of feasting, therefore when his children were a feasting, he was in sacrificing. *They made the king drunk with wine.* This was the way which they took to gain the King. And is not this the course which is taken now in our daies, to betray the young Gentry into base filthines? This was the plot of these Priests, first to make the King drunk, and then they could do any thing with him, could get any edict from him

him to ſerve their baſe ends and intentions, to ſuppreſs the preciſe people.

*Drunkenneſs is an old Court ſin.* See how the Prophet, *Iſa.* Obſ. 2, 28. 1. fills his mouth, with woes and threatenings againſt the drunkenneſs of *Ephraim*; *Wo to the Crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim.* The Court, the Crown of *Ephraim* was at *Samariz.* A miſerable thing it is that thoſe which have the moſt opportunity for God ſhould ſpend their time in ſuch beaſtly vanities, and do to their bodies and ſouls as *Richard* Rich. 3d the third to his brother, drown them in a Butt of Sack.

*Drunks courses brings diſeaſes.* Be not amongſt wine-bibbers, amongſt riotous eaters of fleſh, for the drunkard and the glutton ſhall come to poverty; how many are there which carry about with them the marks of their luſts, as *Paul* carried about him the marks of the Lord *Jeſus*; men will venture much for their luſts, but if *Chriſt* call them to ſuffer any thing for him, then they are tender and ſickly, but let their eſtates, healths, and credits ſtand in the way to hinder them in the purſuance of their deſires in ſin, they will break through them all: now a ſhame is it for a *Chriſtian* not to do more for God than theſe men will do for their luſts: *Timothy* is commanded to drink but a little wine; and that for his reſhment, to help nature; but when men drink & make fots of themſelves by it, what diſeaſes doth this bring men into? as the falling ſickneſs diſfiguring their countenances making them to look more lik ſwine, than men, &c. The Scripture tells us that the Saints bodies are the Temples of the holy Ghoſt: do you think that ſuch a body as this, is like to be a Temple? no but rather like matter for the very ſinck of hell where all filth ſhall be fuel for everlaſting burning. How canſt thou answer the weakning of thy ſtrength by this luſt, when God deſerves all thy abilities? It may be thou wilt ſay, thou wert never dead drunk; but wert thou never ſo diſtemperd as to weaken thy abilities and make thee unfit for ſervice? how ſinful then is the practice of thoſe that drink others healths till themſelves are ſick through exceſs.

*Drunkenneſs is vile in any, but moſt of all vile in Governors,*

Obſ. 3  
Drunkenneſs brings diſeaſes

See Mr. Sa. Ward his wo to drunkenneſs.

nors, men of place and power, *Prov. 31. 4.* *It is not for Kings to drink wine, nor for Princes strong drink:* It is not for them, and why? because they are above us, and how can any man endure to be under drunken beasts: they are gods, and how vile and abominable is it to have drunken gods? Therefore the

The Law of Carth. *Carthaginians* made a Law, that none of their Magistrates in the time of their Magistracie should drink any wine.

Obs. 4 *It is much more vile to make others drunk, than to be drunk our selves;* Therefore in *Esb. 1. 8.* the drinking was according to the Law, none did compel; for the King had appointed to all the Officers of the house that they should do according to every mans pleasure, none were compelled to drink more than they were willing; you may think they express a great deal of love to you, in drinking to you, and pressing you to drink, and when they have overcome you, then will they laugh at you, and make you a scorn, especially if they can get you who are professors of Religion to be overtaken. Therefore you had need above all men to take heed of this sin, for if you fall, Religion suffereth, and the Name of God is evil spoken of by your means; therefore Christ bids his Disciples themselves to take heed of surfeiting and drunkenness. Therefore you that are professors had the more need to take heed of this sin, and mind this exhortation of Christ.

Obs. 5 *That drunkenness is vile at any time, but especially when we pretend to praise God:* When God shall shew thee mercy, and thou pretendest to praise him for it, and then take liberty to be excessive in the creature, this is most abominable: we have had many daies of thanksgiving to praise God for his mercies, if we have been excessive in the use of the creatures, be humbled, tis an ill requital of God for his mercy. It follows.

*He stretched out his hand with the scorners.*

27 The Septuagint translate this word [*Scorners*] by divers words, as,

20146. First, Pestilent people; so in *Psal. 1. 5.* *Therefore the ungodly shall*



ſhall not ſtand in the judgment, nor ſinners in the Congregation of the righteous; becauſe every ſcorner is a plague to the family, place, and town where he lives, *Prov. 22. 10. Caſt out the ſcorner and contentiou will go out, yea, ſtrife and reproach ſhall ceaſe.*

*Hierom* tranſlates theſe words, *caſt him out*, that is, caſt him out of your counſels, let him have no part of advice with you. *eiſce piri-  
lentem de  
conſilio.*

Again, The *Septuagint* tranſlate it, one without underſtanding, becauſe ſcorners are fooliſh and ſilly men, *Prov. 21. 11. When the ſcorner is puniſhed, the ſimple are made wiſe.* *εὐφροσῆ*

Thirdly, they tranſlate it *pride*, becauſe ſcorners are proud men, *Prov. 1. 35 4. God reſiſteth the proud, Prov. 21. 24. Proud and haughty ſcorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.* *υπερηφία  
15.*

Fourthly, they turn it by, *untamed, unpuniſhed*, *Prov. 19. 29. ſtripes are prepared for the backs of ſcorners: Becauſe they go unpuniſhed they grow ſcorners.* *αυτονομία  
wanton.*

*Luther* tranſlates the word mockers and flowters, and interprets falſe teachers that delude the people, and deprave the Scriptures, and this kind of ſcorniſh by perverting the Scripture is the worſt kind of ſcorniſh of all others, it is moſt abominable, *Job, 20. 14. The meat in his bowels is turned to the gall of Aſſis*, the word in ſuch mens ſpirits as theſe are, is turned into bitternels; theſe ſcorners, who were they? the Nobles and the Princes, the Officers in the Court, theſe were the men which ſcorned at the people for going up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, what fools are theſe which will loſe the Kings favor, their places at Court, their honors and preferments, and all for a meer circumſtance, and a triſle as they thought; and this was at the time of their feaſts and jovialities when they might both harden the hearts of the King and people; now he ſtretched forth his hand to them, that is, 1. He encouraged them, and gave them his hand to kiſs; how unlike is this unto God of whom *Job* ſpeaks that he will not give his hand to the wicked, to malignants. Again, 2. to ſtretch forth his hand is to put forward any work, or further deſigns on foot, as *Herod* furthered their wicked deſigns of the high Priests

*Job, 8. 20*

and Scribes in persecuting Christ, by countenancing them, *As* 12. 1 he stretched out his hand to scorers. Scorers such as are the basest kind of people, as filders, common jerves &c. as if he were a common companion for them, he put off all Princely dignities and made himself an associate for the basest of men, that could but any waies further his designs.

Obs. 1. The first Note from hence may be this, *That such Courtiers which live sensually, are for the most part great scorers.* Experience proves this.

Obs. 2. *Times of feasting are usually times of the greatest scorning, and contemning all Religion;* then they think there is none live such brave lives as they do, when they are throughly heated with wine, then they have a flout and a scorn for every one, then God himself is reproached by them, & his Saints had in disgrace, *Psal. 35. 16. With hypocritical mockers in feasts; they gnashed upon me with their teeth.* There are many which carry things very fait in the eyes of the world, who seem to be Christians, yet when they come in place among scorers they have a scorn, a flout, and a private jeer; these are odious in Gods sight. Where is there more scorning and scoffing than in Princes Courts, and great mens Tables? If a Court Chaplain had but heard any thing of a Puritan, or of a private meeting, was it not their musick? Thus they informed the King, that they were none but a company of precise fools, giddyheaded people, and the King he received this news with joy, it made him merry, and he gave them thanks for their pains; Oh how far is this below a true Princely spirit!

Obs. 3. *That the right way of worship is by carnal hearts accounted a very slight thing:* and Gods people who stand for Gods Ordinances in their purity are looked upon as people who stand for incities and trifles.

Obs. 4. *It hath been the old way of the Devil to hinder reformation by raising up men of pestilent wits to scorn at Religion:* and this way the Devil prevails very much, when he cannot prevail by persecution, he gains much this way; men that are of any spirit cannot endure scorning, therefore we reade of mocking to be a cruel persecution in *Heb. 11. 36.* And others had tryals of cruel mockings,

*mockings.* And *Iſhmaels* mocking is ſaid to be perſecution. In the primitive times they would ſet up an *Alies* Head, and a book by it, to ſhew that they profeſſed to learn, and yet were as ſimple as an *Aſs*. I have heard of a Scholer in *Queens Colledg*, who profeſſed he had rather ſuffer the torments of Hell than endure the comtempt and ſcorn of the puritans. And this is the Devils old way; but men will not be jeered out of their inheritance, and God will ſcorn ſuch ſcorners, *Prov. 3. 34.* That place is famous in *Lament. 3. 62, 63.* *The lips of them that roſe up againſt me! behold their riſing up and their ſiing down, I was their muſick.* What then? *Render them a recompence according to their works, give them ſorrow of heart thy curſe unto them.*

*Kings while their hearts are againſt Religion, ſhall never want* Obſ. 5.  
*wits to further their deſigns in this.*

*It is a ſad thing to that Kingdom when their Princes give their* Obſ. 6  
*hands to ſcorners, and to deny it to the people of God; it was a happy and bleſſed time with that people in 2 Chron. 35. 1, 2, 3.* verſes, when the Prophets of God were encouraged by the King himſelf. It follows.

V E R. 6.

*For they have made ready their hearts like an oven whiles they lie in wait: their baker ſleepeth all the night, in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire.*

**T**H E meaning of theſe words is, to ſet out the ſtrength of *Jeroboam*, and his Princes deſires to ſet up falſe worſhip, and their ſubtilty in taking opportunity and lying in wait to leaven the people. The Notes are from the ſimilitude.

*The heat of their hearts was ſo violent, that it did devour all that* Obſ. 1  
*opposed it: as fire devoures all cumbuſtible things, ſo they devoured all kind of reaſon which was brought againſt them and their way, what was ſpoken to them to contradiſt them in their worſhip, it was like ſtraw or wood in an oven, they were ſo ſtrongly ſet upon it, they devoured all preſently, they tell in all companies, ſuch men have nothing to ſay for their way &c. Therefore at any time, when we come to men*

and see them wilfully bent upon their way, it is to no purpose to speak to them, but let them alone; and let God bat hum-  
ble them upon their sick beds; and then they will hearken.  
No dealing with Bees in a hot day, but at night there  
is.

Obs. 2 *As mens spirits are as hot as an oven in sin, so Gods judgments which are prepared for such, are as hot as an oven. Malachy, 4. 1. God will make as little of them as they do of Gods people? The day of the Lord cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up. It follows.*

Expos. *While they lie in wait.*

Ute Though they are as hot as an oven, yet they do not run head-long imprudently, but they have will to wait their opportunity: And should not this be our wisdom in the waies of God, not to carry things imprudently? Let not our desires be so eagerly set after any thing but that we can be willing to be without it, or patiently to wait Gods time for it. They are as hot as an oven, and yet not cooled because they have not their desires presently fulfil'd: So must we take heed of having our hearts cooled when we have opportunities to further any design we have on foot for God and his Cause: though they had not opportunities to further their plots, yet they waited stil and were not discourag'd: How many times do people, when God sends but a little famine of the Word amongst them grow cold, and lose all the heat which they had?

*And their Baker sleepeth.*

Expos.

'Tis, as if men which have a common oven, they put fuel into it and let it burn till they go and call their customers together, and when this was done, then they might go and sleep. So the people were leavened: These people by their Bakers were prepared, they had heated their oven, and now they thought they might go to sleep, they might be quiet: and

and did not our Bakers do thus? they had heated their oven, *Engl.* but blessed be God that disappointed them in their way: when these bakers slept, their oven heated, notwithstanding.

*Subtil adversaries, when we think them to be most secure, their designs are still driving on.* Thus it was in Ireland; and here amongst us, even in their greatest shews of peace in their Treaties; the truth is, if ever we will have the fire quenched which now burns so violently, we must take away the incendiaries and stirrers up of these unnatural wars. Let us in good causes, though opportunities may cease for work, let not the fire go out, let the oven be hot still; at the first their oven did but begin to heat, now it is all in a flame; at the first they would use fair means with the people and persuade them with good words, and answer their arguments, but when their oven was hot, that they had brought their designs to maturity, and got power into their hands, then---, 'tis now no longer, will ye worship at *Dan* and *Bethel*? and 'tis your best course; but now *Clap law*, now no more satisfying of consciences, but, to prison with them, now such a prison for such, & the other strong goole for the rest: this hath been the way and course of those which would set up any false way of worship; when their morning is come and their oven hot, then-- come the day is ours, no more persuading now; Wil they not come in? force them to yeeld. Their way was at the first to leaven the people, to try how they stood affected; but now enough of that, seaze their estates, and imprison their persons.

## V E R. 7.

*They are all hot as an oven, and have devoured their Judges; \* for this all their Kings are fallen, there is none among them that cal-* *Jeroboams*  
*leth unto me.* *under*  
*whom*  
*Hosea pro-*

**N**OT only *Jeroboam* and his \* successors, but also Princes, *phesied,*  
and people at length grew hot in the pursuit of that *was the*  
great design of altering Religion, in so much, that no man *of low*  
might dare to show himself against them; many of the people *as chap.*  
at the first made scruple of yeelding to their new way: but *1. 1. 105.*  
having overcome their consciences, now nothing troubles *the first*  
*Jeroboams*

them, they not only yeeld themselves, but violently presse the consciences of others which refused: but this similitude we met withal in the fourth verse of this Chapter, which we opened then, and therefore passe it over here. It follows.

*They have devoured their Judges.*

Some of their Judges (it is like) could not but have some light in them, to see that the altering of Religion could not but be against their Laws, yet seeing both the Princes and the people were set violently upon it, they also yeilded, *Hierom* observes this.

This is the vile, base, and low spirits of men in honor, and this honor depending upon the favour of Kings, that rather than they will hazard their places, and lose their gains, will yeeld to any thing, and for the pleasing the King wil tel him the Law is for him, the bonds of the Kingdom do not forbid him. *Mica. 3. 11.* *They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity; the Heads thereof judge for reward, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for money: the Princes and the Prophets ask for a reward.* The Princes have a mind to such and such a thing of their subjects, but to cover the vileness of the action and his injustice, he would ask the Judges whether it were not Law or no; now the Judges for their own profit encouraged him, and told him it was lawful, he might do it. How have our Judges imitated these?

*King crafe* Though men had some integrity at the first, yet the heat arising so high in the Princes and Nobles, yea and in many of the High Court of Judicature, that they could not endure it. Thus we see how one time answers to another in wickedness, The Princes designs go on with strength, when they have got the Judges to side with them, and to give sentence for them in their unjust designs.

*England*

*Expof. 2.* Others carry it thus: They having mischieved and ruined their Judges that did oppose them, therefore *Mercer* that learned Interpreter, for the furtherance of this sense, brings a tradition of the Jews, That the Princes and Rulers had so wrought

*Mercer ex talmud iherosolomit.*

wrought about with the people, that they ſhould come to the King & bring a humble petition to him, in which they ſhould deſire & intreat the King to give them leave to ſet up an Idol, which they did; and when they came, the King put them off & told them it was late in the evening now, & bid them come in the morning: in the morning they came, and bid him, Arife, and ſet them up an Idol. No (ſaith he) your *\*Synedrion* will not give conſent to it, nor ſuffer it. No ſay they, we have taken a courſe with them, we have kil,d them; which is the old way and courſe which perſecutors take with thoſe which might ſeem to oppoſe them in their plots.

Or thus: They had devoured their Judges and their Princes by treacherie: and this ſtory hath reference to that in 2 Chron. 13. a Chapter of as much treachery as we read of: *All their Kings are fallen*: that is, into that falſe worſhip which *Jeroboam* was fallen into. And that is very observable, that all the Kings in the ten Tribes were wicked. From *Jeroboam* the firſt, to the captivity, there were eighteen Kings, and all of them wicked and naught, and the reaſon of this was, that the way of falſe worſhip did ſo ſute with their politick ends; ſo that the Obſervation may be from it,

*That 'tis a hard thing to take men off from their ſtrong engagements.* It was a work ſo difficult, that all the Prophets could not do it, it is very hard, eſpecially when their engagements are in great things; they were wiſe politick men, and therefore could not chuſe in all probability but ſee, how point blank their waies went againſt Gods mind; even *Jehu* himſelf who was raiſed up ſo high by God on purpoſe to root out Idolatry, and did root out Idols and *Baals* Priests; and yet he followed the Calves as well as his predeceſſors.

Therefore never wonder to ſee men obſtinate, and who will not be convinced of their evil waies, this text ſhews it clearly, many are willing to deny themſelves in ſmall things, but when it comes to great things then they flinch and hang off; therefore we ſee what ſnares places of honor are to moſt men, many Miniſters ſee the evil of Ceremonies, and are convinced of it, that they ſin if they ſhould yeeld to them, and rather

Uſe;

than

Places of honor great inares. than sin they will leave their livings rather than yeild to them; but when did you ever see a Bishop deny himself? when was it ever known that a Prelate so far submitted to lay down his great dignities and fat livings for his conscience? It follows.

*There is none among them that calleth unto me.*

They were presumtuious and confident in their way, and none of them would ask counsel of me, notwithstanding their Judges were devoured; they sought to other helps, or rested in their outward prosperity, or 2. They are sottish and stupid, and call not unto me, though all be in a confusion in the State, their Judges devoured &c.

Obs. I

*When people are under Gods band, and Governors set up false worship, such times should quicken our prayers: Mic. 7. 7. I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me; so in Act. 4. 29. And now Lord hear us. The Christians there got into a corner and made their complaints and moans to God, of the evil of the times and do but observe the rise and ground of their prayers, and now O God hear us. They do as men that would leap a great way, take their rise upon a hill to further them; so these people make the miseries of the times their encouragements, not their discouragements; it is a desperate sign to see men sink under their discouragements, and to murmur against God, Oh let us go to God and make our moan to him, and let us die calling upon his Name, let that be our resolution which was Davids, Psal. 116. 2. I will call on the Lord as long as I live. And this is a very good argument that the Cause of God will stand; if our spirits of prayer hold, the Cause of God will hold, but if that godown, fear the sinking of the Cause.*

ἡ τὰ νῦν  
Act. 4. 29



## V E R. 8.

*Ephraim he hath mixed himself among the people, Ephraim is a cake not turned.*

**E**PHRAIM hath mixed himself.] There is a great evil charged upon Ephraim, and that is observable, he hath mingled himself among the people, the people did not so much seek to him, as he to them; some here understand by Ephraim the Court, because Jeroboam was of the Tribe of Ephraim; and Cyril hath this Note from thence, that it is a great dishonor for them that are in place of honor to sute themselves and their minds to those that are of base low spirits among their people; men of place and power should be men of honor and worth. But we take Ephraim here for the people of the ten Tribes, for so it is more often taken in Scripture, they were guilty of this sin, in mixing themselves with the people, that is, the Gentils, in these five regards.

First, *In their marriages.* The seed of the Israelites was too precious to mingle with the Gentiles, this was forbidden them in *Deut. 7.3.* and the good man *Ezra* in the 9. chapter, in the day of humiliation, confessed this sin unto God against them, and this was typified of the Christians under the Gospel that they should not mix themselves with the wicked and ungodly of the world; they must marry in the Lord, it is a sad affliction to be unequally yoked; it is reported of *Maxentius* a cruel tyrant whose custom it was to judg some Malefactors to death after this manner, *viz.* To have a dead man chained to the living man, till the living man was kil'd by the dead man. How many living men have dead wives, and living wives dead husbands? Oh how comely a thing it is to see the delight of our eyes, the delight of Gods eyes!

*They mingled Gods worship with their superstitions and Idolatries;* they had not wholly defiled the worship of God, yet they had mixed themselves; *Jeroboam* had been in Egypt where he had seen their Idolatrous Heifer, and he was much taken with

Cyril

Unequal  
marriages  
Maxent.

2.

it, therefore he would imitate them in his Calves: 2 Kings, 17. 33, 34. in one verse 'tis said, they feared the Lord, and in the next verse 'tis said they did not; *They feared the Lord, and served their own gods*; unto this day they do after their former manners, they fear not the Lord; never let us satisfie our selves in mixtures of worship: though we have never so much true worship among us, God will never be put off with such excuses.

Mixt  
worship

3. *They mixed themselves in their persons, and suffered others to joyn with them*: neither must Christians suffer the wicked to joyn with thē in matters of worship; & surely if fornicators, adulterers & profane men are crept in; they must (when discerned) be cast out speedily. Now if such as these must be cast out when crept in unawares, then surely such must not be received in, when they are known beforehand to be such, and certainly a bare confession of faith is not sufficient or enough to admit a man to the Ordinances, for those that are vile and wicked in their lives, may make a verbal and outward confession, yet far from a true and cordial; men may confess with their mouths, and yet deny all in their lives; as if a man should confess his faith in English and deny it again in Latin; yet if any should creep into a Church in which thou art bodied, if thou dost thy duty in admonishing them, and if they will not be warned to profess against them, thou maiest certainly, yea and with good conscience partake of the Ordinance notwithstanding.

Mixt  
congregations

Note

Not to  
separate  
from a  
Church  
for some  
offendors

4

*In their leagues and covenants they mixed themselves, they made Covenants and leagues with other people, which was forbidden them in Exod. 34. 12. Take heed to thy self, lest thou make a Covenant with the people of the Land; whither thou goest, lest it become a snare in the midst of thee. Deut. 7. 2. And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them, thou shalt make no covenant with them nor shew mercy unto them. Isa. 30. 2. They went down to Egypt for help, and have not asked at my mouth, to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trust in the shadow of Egypt: therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame.*

They

*They were mixed in their ſocieties with other people;* Pſal. 106. 35. they were mingled among the Heathens and learned their works, they ſerved their Idols which were a ſnare unto them. It is a very dangerous thing to be mixed with a wicked ſociety, *And the mixed multitude which were amongſt them* (people that came out of Egypt) *fell a luſting;* The mixt multitude fell a murmuring; this is an affliction in any ſociety, but eſpecially in Church ſocieties. But ſuppoſe providence caſt me into a family where there are ſuch as theſe? In ſuch a family thou maiſt be as oyl in water unmixt, put never ſo much water amongſt oyl, the oyl will be above it, ſwimming upon the top, Pſal. 26. 9. *Gather not my ſoul with ſinners, nor my life with bloody men;* if you would not be gathered with them in the day of judgment, do not you gather to them now in communion in Ordinances, nor in intimate ſociety. The *Lacedemonians* would not ſuffer a ſtranger to be with them above three daies; and ſhall we aſſociate our ſelves with ſuch as are ſtrangers to God? God had made a great difference betwixt Iſrael and other people, they were a people ſeperated from all the people of the earth, *Exod. 33. 16.* in the Original it is *marv'ailouſly ſeperated*, or ſet apart for God, they were a people whom God did own in a more peculiar manner, and his eye was upon them for good, therefore it did not become them to mix with other people.

5

Numb.  
11. 4.

ſimile

Pſa. 26. 9  
applied

Lacedem

ובלינו

*Ephraim is a cake not turned.*

We read this expreſſion and make little of it, but there is very much concerning us in it: mark well the expreſſion, the repetition of the word *Ephraim*: *Ephraim is a cake not turned*, the Prophet here ſpeaks in a condoling way and manner, Oh *Ephraim*, what my deer ſon and do thus. *Ephraim* was a cake not turned in theſe four reſpects.

*In their plots and counſels*, they did not turn their deſigns and proceedings up and down, they thought of one way of falſe worſhip, but not of another, to wit, the time which might have carried on their plots, they did not weigh circumſtances

I

this way and that way.

2. *A cake not turned, or baked;* that is, you could not tell what to make of him he was so indifferent, that it mattered not much to him whether God were God, or Baal. 1 Kings, 18. 21. How many men are of this garb among us, both in their opinions and practices?

3 *As a cake not turned;* in regard of their perverseness: although heavy afflictions were upon them that they lay as it were burning upon the coals, and took no means for their help and cure, they cried out and lay howling upon their beds, yet they turned not to the Lord, they could not devise a way to escape, they were good for nothing, as a cake not baked; like those in Jer. 3. 5. *Will he reserve his anger for ever? will he keep it to the end? Behold thou hast spoken and done evil things as thou couldest:* Just thus it is with souls in their spiritual estates, in terrors of conscience and sorrow for sin, they lie pining away in their iniquities, and take no course to deliver and help themselves: when thou art in this condition thou shouldest be acting upon God, and looking after him, thou shouldest not lie scorching and burning upon the coals of thy transgressions, but should make out after the mercy of God in Jesus Christ.

4.  
Luther  
Vatablus

*Luther and Vatablus* make the sense of the words to note the greediness of *Ephraims* adversaries, they were like a man pinched with hunger, and coming to food fall upon it presently, and eat the cake presently, and wil not stay till it be baked; thus *Ephraims* adversaries fell upon him; but this I conceive not to be the meaning of the words, but the second and the third. It follows.

V. E. R. 9.

*Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not, yea gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not.*

**S***trangers have devoured his strength]* By strength we must understand; *Ephraims* rich and warlike power; and here we may

may ſee the poor ſhifts and ſtrength of carnal hearts; the Almighty is the ſtrength of the Saints, ſuch a ſtrength is God that all the Devils in hell nor men on earth cannot take away from them; ſtrangers devoured the ſtrength of *Ephraim*, wicked men ſuch as were not in covenant with God, may rob the Saints of their outward ſupports and comforts, a good cauſe may miſcarry when thoſe which are the managers of it are reſted upon, and too much confidence is placed in them, we ſee how juſt it is with God to croſs and turn the deſigns of men againſt themſelves when they forſake God, and this is a great curſe to men, when wicked men are ſuffered to take away what we have and do enjoy in our eſtates and liberties; and metaphorically this may be applied to our ſpirituall ſtrength, we ſhould take ſpecial care that ſtrong luſt; do not devour our ſtrength for God; and this is the reaſon of our flatneſs in duties; you many times complain of deadneſs in prayer; examine whether there be not ſome ſecret luſt which takes away your ſtrength: And is it a miſery for ſtrangers to devour the ſtrength of our bodies and eſtates? much more of our ſpirits. It follows.

Humane  
ſtrength.

*And he knows it not.*

The Note from hence is this, *That the hearts of wicked men do ſo ſtrongly work after their luſts*, that although they meet with never ſo many difficulties in their way, yet they know them not. But in good they know every little difficulty they meet withal, and have repenting thoughts in them that ever they were ſo engaged in a good Cauſe; but in their own waies, the waies of their luſts they are not troubleſom to them. It follows.

Obſer.

*Gray hairs are here and there upon him.*

That is, Such miſeries as make them gray, there were at this time many troubles upon the ten Tribes, often afflicted by the *Aſſyrians* plundering and ſpoiling of them: and it is no ſtrange thing to ſee men gray with very grief and ſorrow. *Scaliger* tells us, of a young man who through the extream trouble of his ſpirit, was turned all gray in one one night. How much more ſhould our ſpirits be affected with the miſeries of our times.

Gray.

2. *Gray hairs*] That is, their miseries were so long upon them, that made them gray, they were lasting sorrows, they were old in sin, and God made them old in miseries and punishments for their sins. Thus *Germany* hath been gray-headed for many yeers together, in respect of the length of their miseries.

3 *Gray hairs*: that is, They have been a long time and might have gained more knowledge of me, and got large experiences of the goodness of my waies, yet they know me not, nor my waies; the whiter mens heads are, the blacker are their sins many times; 'tis a most dreadful sight to see a white head and an old sinner. I have read of one *Eleazer*, which would not do any thing which might seem to be evil, because he would not spot his white head. *Gray hairs* should be a strong argument to move men to walk blamelessly in their lives.

4 *Gray hairs*: that is, They had many symtoms of their ruin and destruction upon them: As *gray hairs* show that mens ends are near, men that are gray, and would not be thought to be old, wil pluck out their white hairs; but if there be *gray hairs* upon us, let us know, they are admonitions to us, and warnings of our ruin: *Heb. 8. ult.* There are many symtoms of a kingdoms *gray hairs*; I shall instance in some of them:  
As,

1. Oppression in Courts of Justice, is a *gray hair*.
2. Idolatry and superstition in Gods Worship and Ordinances.

3. The secret curse of God upon men and their estates.
4. The taking away of the valiant and righteous men out of the kingdom, is a sad *gray hair* in that kingdom. Such a kingdom where these *gray hairs* are is in a dying condition, and happy were it for us if these *gray hairs* were not to be found amongst us; we have lain a long time at the graves mouth, and yet many *gray hairs* do continue still, and what God will do with us we know not; how covetous and self-seeking are men in these daies, notwithstanding Gods wrath burns so hot, threatning an utter desolation of al? Had we not need therefore to prepare for a dying kingdom. It follows.

*And*

*And he knows it not.*

Doth not this ſpeak our condition likewiſe? Gray hairs are here and there and we know it not; how have the Miniſters of God forewarned us a long time ſince of theſe times? but we would not regard them, both they and their meſſage was ſlighted: this people was ſo ſtupified they knew not who it was that ſmote them, nor for what it was they were ſmit- ten.

VER. 10.

*And the pride of Iſrael teſtifies to his face; and they do not return unto the Lord their God, nor ſeek Him for all this.*

**I**N the fifth Chapter we opened the ſame words with theſe, only the ſcope of the place is different; they would not take notice of Gods hands, but braved it out in a proud way, and would not learn his meaning in the rod. Let us learn the contrary humility, to accept of the puniſhment of our iniquities, ſubmitting, and acknowledging that our father hath ſmitten us and ſpit in our face, (and yet they return not to me) Whence obſerve:

*God expects we ſhould turn upon afflictions. Job, 33. 16. Sealed* Obf. 1.  
*their inſtruction. Chap. 36. 10. Commands that they return, repen-*  
*tance forced by afflictions.*

*Afflictions, if not ſanctified, will never turn the heart.* Obf. 2.

*It is a great aggravation of mens ſins, not to turn under afflictions.* Obf. 3.

*Though when afflictions work repentance, yet repentance is ſeldom* Obf. 4.  
*true, it will not oft times hold out the trying; yet people*  
*ſhould try and ſee what it will do: repentance coming from*  
*afflictions hath a promiſe: Levit. 26. 14. If then their uncircum-*  
*ciſed hearts be humbled, if then even when my hand is upon them, they*  
*accept of the puniſhment of their iniquities: then will I remember my*  
*Covenant with Jacob, and I will remember the Land.*

*True repentance is rather a ſeeking of Gods face, than our* Obf. 5  
*own eaſe from afflictions.*

## V E R. II.

*Ephraim also is like a silly Dove, without heart, they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.*

וְהָיָה

**T**HE word translated *silly* signifies, easily seduced, persuaded to any thing; we use to say, that children and fools are easily persuaded to any thing; men that are hardly persuaded to believe in God, and what God saith? yet are easily persuaded to believe errors, these are silly Doves: yet they thought themselves very wise, in going to Egypt, but they have done very fillily, 2 King. 17. 4. the leaving of Gods waies and following our own is very silly: how many when it hath been too late have cryed out of this their folly? From whence this Note may be observed.

Obs.

*That although men by others may be misled and seduced, yet are they not excused;* this will not excuse them before God at the great day to say others did thus, and I followed them, thinking them to be in the right.

*Without heart.*] That is, without understanding, Prov. 6. 32. *But who so committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding,* Prov. 10. 21. *The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for want of understanding,* or for lack of wisdom. Now of all creatures the Dove is the most silly: as appears.

I.  
The Dove

The Dove defends not her yong ones as other creatures do, the Hen and other flying creatures will preserve their young ones, but the silly Dove lets them go quietly; so was Ephraim, in this respect like unto the Dove, they were destroyed and made a prey on by others, yet they never laid it to heart. The Lord in mercy look upon us, Is not this our case? we suffer our brethren to be destroyed and made a prey of, and never lay it to heart, because we for the present are quiet.

2.  
Pliny

The Dove will keep her nest although you take away her nest. Yea *Pliny* reports of some Doves which will fly many miles to their lockers. Even in this is Ephraim like unto a silly Dove also, where he was many yeers ago there he is still. And so it is with many men, they know and are convinced that



that ſuch company hath done them miſchief, which they have frequented, and yet they cannot leave them, here is a ſilly Dove, without underſtanding indeed.

Doves though they be ſwift in their flying, yet dull in preventing of danger, it is eaſily caught with the net; ſo was Ephraim eaſily enſnared by his enemies at their pleaſures and preyed upon by them. Plin. l. 10. c. 37

The Dove is delighted in the beauty of her feathers, and prides her ſelf in the clapping of her wings, and cutting of the air as it were; Ephraim was priding her ſelf in her ornaments, and fine excellent out ſide; we are very ready and prone to imitate the creatures in that which is evil, but not in that which is good; there are ſome good properties in the Dove which they would not follow, as in their innocency and ſimplicity, their unity and chaſtity, meekneſs, without gall, cleanlineſs and purity, it loves cleer water, loves no carcaſs to feed on &c. *Prudentia obſq; bonitate malitia eſt, & ſimplicitas obſq; ratione ſtultitia eſt.* From whence we may note, that godlineſs does not bear men out in waies of folly, when men will not go from the rule, but ſtick unto that to be guided in all caſes of their lives, this is godly ſimplicity; it is matter of wonder to ſee how ſubtil men are to damn themſelves, and it is, and ſhould be the care of the Saints to be wiſe to ſave their ſouls, it is a ſcandal which is raiſed upon the Goſpel, that it makes men fools. Thoſe are only wiſe men who are truly godly, then men begin to be wiſe, when they begin to be godly; our ſimplicity may aggravate our miſery, but it can never bear us out in it, nor excuſe it; true godlineſs will undermine all ſinful ſimplicity, therefore take heed of putting that upon the Spirit of God which is nothing but the ſimplicity of our own hearts, *Therefore be ye, wiſe as Serpents, but innocent as Doves.* Idē. l. 11. c. 36.

## V E R. 12.

*When they shall go, I will spread my net upon them, I will bring them down as the souls of the heaven: I will chastise them as their Congregation hath heard.*

**I**N the former verses, the Lord by the Prophet charges Israel for their silliness as the Dove; but as silly as they were they thought to provide for themselves well enough, by their going to Egypt; but it being out of Gods way, it proved but silliness, for God was resolved to meet with them: when they go, I'll spread my net over them, my providence shall so begirt and straighten them, that although they may seem to escape, yet they shall be ensnared. This place hath reference unto that story in 2 Kings, 17. 4. the Assyrian was Gods net to take them in, the emphasis of the word lies here.

*My net*; in the pronoun *my*. Men by their cunning and policy may bring men into great trouble and straights, but when God sets himself by his Attributes of wisdom, power, and justice to bring a people down to ruin, they shall be taken, they shall not escape. The Notes are:

Obf. 1.

*Those which go out of Gods way, it is just with God they should be ensnared.* Job, 18. 7. *The steps of his strength shall be straightened, and his own counsel shall bring him down.* Job, 22. 10. *Therefore snares are round about thee, and sudden fear troubleth thee.* How many men from experience can speak the truth of this? who going out of Gods waies have met with snares? and it is Gods curse upon the wicked, that their table shall become a snare to them, and God threatens it in Isa. 8. 14. that he would be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And therefore when we are in straights, it is good to think thus, Where am I? what am I a doing? am I in my way or no? have I not followed my own counsel and left Gods? If we have, mark what God saith, *I'll bring you down as the souls of Heaven*: you think to escape

escape by flying, no stay a while, when you think you are the most secure, then I will meet with you.

*God may for a time let wicked men prosper in their waies, inſomuch* Obs. 2. *that they may think all danger is paſt with them; but when they are ſo high, then is Gods time to pul them down, when they are at the higheſt God can reach them; yea even then it is Gods delight to pul them down; a famous text we have for this purpoſe in 2 Sam. 22. 28. But thine eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayeſt bring them down. Thine eyes are upon them: That is, as a fowler ſets his eyes upon a bird, which he would take in his ſnare or net, that ſits on high; the proud and haughty ſpirits fly on high and think themſelves very ſecure, and bleſs themſelves in their way, but Gods eyes are upon them, waiting for a fit time to pull them down. It was the anſwer of a Phyloſopher being asked what Jupiter did in the higheſt heaven; ſaith he, he pulls down the haughty, and exalts the humble. Obadia the 3, 4. verſes, The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwelleſt in the clefts of the rock, whoſe habitation is high, that ſaith in his heart, Who ſhall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thy ſelf as the Eagle, and though thou ſet thy neſt among the ſtars, thence will I bring thee down ſaith the Lord. This is alſo true in that proud King of Babylon in Iſa. 24. 21. And it ſhall come to paſſ in that day, that the Lord ſhall puniſh the hoſt of the high ones, which art on high, and the Kings of the earth upon the earth. This cannot be underſtood of the Devil, but of the King of Babylon, whom God threatens to pull down. It follows.*

*I will chaſtiſe them.*

The word tranſlated, *I will chaſtiſe*, ſignifies both, to bind, to chaſtiſe, and inſtruct.

First, *I will bind them*: ſinners ſhall be bound with the cords of their luſts.

Secondly, *I will chaſtiſe and inſtruct them*; noting that chaſtiſements ſhould be with inſtructions: *I will chaſtiſe them.*

*As they have heard] Moſes and the Prophets have inſtructed*  
 them,

them, but they disregarded them, but Ple, make it good what they said of them.

Obf. 3.

*Sinners had need to regard what they hear out of the Word of God in the Congregation, for it will take hold on them some way or other, Zecharia, 1. 6. But my Words, and my Statutes, which I commanded my servants the Prophets, Did they not take hold of your fathers, or overtake them? Oh thou impenitent sinner! take heed how thou goest on in thy wicked waies, for know, that*

Use

*all the power in God is engaged to make good his Word against thee. Therefore when Christ sends forth his Disciples to preach the Gospel, he engageth all his power to make good what they in his Name and according to his mind deliver, Mat. 28. 18, 19, 20. All power is given to me in Heaven and in Earth: Go ye therefore and teach all Nations; and lo I am with you alwaies to the end of the world. Oh how should we from this consideration, be stirred up to hear the word with trembling!*

Matt 28.  
18, 19, 20  
opened

Obf. 4

*When judgments come upon impenitent sinners, it is a humbling consideration unto them, to consider; that that word which they heard in the Congregation was true? How do multitudes on their sick beds prove this to be true? Now God makes them beleve the truth of that word which before they had slight thoughts of; it is wonderful to consider how God brings Sermons into the minds of such upon their sick beds which they had forgotten before, it is the office of the Spirit of God to bring the Word into the minds of the Saints though by them it be forgotten, John 14. 26. But the Comforter, which is the holy Ghost, whom the Father will send, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things into your remembrance, whatsoever I have taught you: But it is another manner of course that God useth to bring the word into wicked mens minds, even by his strokes, and that not for their comfort, but for their horror and distruction. It follows.*

## VER. 13.

*Wo unto them, for they have fled from me: deſtruction unto them, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed againſt me, though I have redeemed them, yet they have ſpoken lyes againſt me.*

**W**O in Scripture ſometimes ſignifies pity, and miſery; here it is to be underſtood of miſery, deſtruction to them.

*They forſake me]* The word here interpreted, *forſake*, ſignifies to *wander*; it is a woful thing to depart from God, much more to wander from God: Wo be to you, when I depart from you, but if you depart from me, what will you do? In wandring from God, thou wanderſt from the only Infinite good, and then, where wilt thou reſt the ſole of thy foot? what ſhall comfort thee in the time of thy diſtreſs? It is evil to wander from God, but much more to make haſt from God. It is the Devils plot and cuſtom, to hurry backſliding ſinners from God, that they ſhould not conſider what they do, and whither they are going, he poſteth them on in their evil waies as a bird to the ſnare, and knoweth it not that it is for his life, *Prov. 7. 23.* Oh how much more ſhould the Saints be put on for God? not to be kept off with impediments, but let our ſouls with *Dauids*, in *Pſal. 63. 8.* follow hard after God; and *Pſal. 119. 63.* *I made haſt and delayd not, to keep thy righteous judgments.* It follows.

*Deſtruction to them.*

This is the end alwaies of ſuch as depaert from God: and happy were it if thou couldſt ſee it beforehand. Oh how many when they have come to ſee the end of their waies upon their death beds, have given a moſt dreadful ſhriek as ſeeing themſelves paſt recovery.

*They have transgressed against me.*

They have not only sinned against me, but have broken covenant also, they have now dealt perfidiously with the Lord. Before God said He would *chastise* them : but now He would *destroy* them, make an end of them : Utter ruin is the portion of those that break Covenant with me.

Covenant  
breakers  
ruin.

*Though I have redeemed them, yet they speak lyes against me.*

Some reade it in the future : Though I would, and was ready to do it, yet they say that the way of worship I prescribed is not so successful, and no such blessing follows it ; they say my Prophets threaten nothing but judgment and utter desolation : now saith God, All these are lyes, it is no such matter, I was ready to do them good. But the future is often used for the pretense in the Hebrew, and so here : the sense is, I have not only redeemed them out of *Egypt*, but very often since out of the hands of their enemies. And the story which this Scripture refers unto, is, in *2 Kings*. 14. 27. the Lord wonderfully prospered them in their wars, and the Lord said not, that he would blot out the name of *Israel* from under heaven ? but he saved them by the hand of *Jeroboam* the son of *Joash*. It follows.

*But they spoke lyes against him.*

That is, They attributed their redemption unto those helps which they had, or to their Idols, saying in this manner : Other people that served not God were delivered as well as we, we see not so much of Gods hand in our deliverance as you speak of. Or else, They fathered their errors upon me because I delivered. Now saith God, in this you lye against me : They made false interpretations of Gods mercies ; As that God was no such enemy to this way of worship, because he had redeemed them. The Notes are :

*Gods reedeeming mercies, are great aggravations of our ſin.* When God delivers, and we attribute it to any thing in us, or that we have done, is mighty provoking to God, because it takes away his glory in delivering. Obſ. 1

*When God delivers a people or perſon from danger, and they now think to ſin by this means more freely againſt him, is a lying againſt God.* As they, in Jer. 7. 10. ſaid they were delivered for to do all theſe abominations. Or as that wicked King, being delivered in a ſtorm, ſaid it was to this end, That he might root out all the Lutherans. So, are there not many ſo vile who being delivered in a ſickneſs, or from any great danger, think it is, that they might ſin more freely : which is a moſt horrible wickedneſs, and lying againſt the Lord. Obſ. 2,  
Philip  
King of  
Spain.

*For any man to urge any falſe doctrine or opinion upon another, is a lying againſt God.* Therefore take heed how you bring Scriptures to prove any error which you hold, or is maintained by any, for God will look upon it but as a lying againſt him. It is a dangerous thing to counterfeit the Kings Stamp; and is it not much more to counterfeit the Truths of God, by errors ſeemingly maintained by Scripture? Obſ. 3

But to apply this ſpiritually: Many whom God hath redeemed from ſin, hell, and wrath to come, the hazard of their miſcarrying being over, yet dare not, will not ſay, that God hath ſhewed mercy unto them, they are ſtill complaining, Oh they are ſtill in their ſins, there is no work, of Gods Spirit upon them; or if they wil grant there is ſome change, God hath done ſomething upon me, that's true, but it is only to aggravate my condemnation, it is not in truth, God will leave me at the laſt, al this is but in hypocriſie, I may periſh at laſt for ought I know. Now take heed of this kind of ſpeaking, beware what you ſay in this caſe, leſt you be found liars againſt God, ſpeaking lyes againſt the Truth of God in your hearts. Luther upon theſe words takes much notice of Gods ſpeaking ſo in his own perſon: They have departed from Me, they have tranſgreſſed againſt Me, done wickedly againſt Me, ſpeak lyes againſt me, call not upon Me &c. Here note,

ſimile

Uſe;

*That the great evil of ſin lyes in this, That it is againſt God.* This Obſ. 4,  
conſideration.

consideration laid *David* very low, *Against thee only have I sinned*. And this is that which humbles a gracious heart, that it should sin so unkindly against God.

Obf. 2. *The more a mans sins are directly against God, the greater is the sin.* For now God suffers more immediately in his glory, and this puts the aggravation upon the sin.

## V E R. 14.

*And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me.*

**A**ND *they have not cried unto me*]. The Seventy have it thus: *Their hearts have not cried to me.* Where we may see, that it is not enough to cry with with the mouth, except the heart cry as well as the mouth. We reade of *Moses*, who though he spake not a word that is expressed in the text, yet it is said, he prayed: It is the working of the heart that is the heart of prayer. Therefore when *Elijah* prayed, 'tis said, he prayed in praying, *Jam. 5. 17.* And by this we see the great difference there is in praying; Heart-prayer pleaseth God. A work-man which wants words to express himself, yet may be able to perform his business very well in Gods account; so he that is able to express himself in fine language, eloquent sentences, and multitudes of words, may yet not pray at all: therefore when you pray look that your hearts go along with the duty, otherwise, your cries will be but as their prayers here in the text, which are called *howlings*, and that in these four respects.

Prayers  
howlings  
why. 1.

הווי  
the letter  
is super  
added.

2.

In regard of the hideousness of their crying unto God, as the Heathens used to their Idols, and so the Hebrew seems to carry it, and to express something remarkable, setting a letter more than ordinary to this word *howling*. And thus the Heathen Indians at this day howl to their gods. And in this manner were the cries of Israel looked at but as howlings.

They were howlings in regard of their distempered and unquiet spirits; they were in their spirits very turbulent and



and unquiet in their lives, and froward in their carriage in prayer. Even thus it is with many in trouble of conſcience, they are very boiſterous and make troubleſom noiſes, the ſhallowelt waters makes the greateſt noiſe, but the deepeſt rivers run the ſtilleſt; ſo thoſe that have the deepeſt ſence of ſin, and are kindly troubled for it, are quiet, ſtill and ſubmiſſive under Gods hand, and certainly ſuch a boiſterouſneſs of ſpirit under the ſence of ſin, is not from the Spirit, although there may be ſome legal terrors, but when God hath ſubdued the heart to himſelf, the heart will ſeek earneſtly for mercy, and yet in a quiet humble way.

They howled upon their beds in regard of their pain. The bruit beaſts in their pain and trouble will cry out and roar: even thus did theſe men here, the extremity of the miſery they were in forced howling from them. There are no men cry more out of judgments when they are executed, than thoſe that were leaſt ſenſible of them when they were threatned. Carnal hearts cry out altogether of the miſerie of the times, the judgment it is that troubles them, more than the ſin the procurer of them. See this between *Pharaoh* and *David*, *Saul* and *David*: *Saul* cries, he cries to *Samuel*, ſaying, *I have ſinned, and done fooliſhly, yet honor me I pray thee, before the people.* *David* he confeſſeth his ſin and accepts of the puniſhment of his iniquity, *Lord, tis I that have ſinned, as for theſe ſheep, what have they done?* *Pharaoh* he cries to *Moſes* that he would pray to God to deliver him from the plagues that were upon him. *David* he cries to God, *Lord take away the iniquity of thy ſervant.* If iniquity be done away, judgment will ſoon be removed, ſin being the cauſe of all miſery.

*Howling*; to note, that God regarded their cries no more than the howlings of beaſts: *Amos*, 8. 3. *The ſongs of the Temple ſhall be howlings in that day*: as the prayers, ſo the ſacrifices of ſuch, how pleaſing they are to God we find, *Iſa.* 66. 3. they are but as the cutting off a dogs neck; and their cries were but as the cries of that dog whoſe neck was cut off: They in their pride were wont to ſpeak contemptibly of God, his waies, and ſervants, contemning them, and God,

he contemns and scorns them, their prayers, and their sacrifices; therefore that in *Prov. 1. 26.* is verified here, *He will laugh at their destruction, and mock when their fear cometh.* Oh how vile are wicked men in Gods eyes, when they are in trouble and misery. None so vile but we pity them, and releve them; but for the infinite, merciful, pitiful God, who is full of goodness and hath bowels of tender love and compassion, for him to have them in derision and to jeer (as we may so speak) the cries of his creature, Oh the consideration of this is most sad; Oh vile is the sin which makes man thus odious.

Wicked  
men of  
no use.

And here we see what little use there is of wicked mens spirits, they are of no use, there is for them in the places where they live nothing that they can do, thou canst easily sin and bring down judgments by thy sins, but when they are come upon thee what wilt thou do? perhaps thou wilt pray and cry to God, God he abhors thy prayers, thy cries are abomination unto him; it is the Saints prayers that are so acceptable unto him, the prayer of the upright is his delight, *Prov. 15. 8.* the least sigh, which comes from a godly heart is such a strong cry that it fills heaven and earth, so that (as I may speak with reverence) God can hear nothing else but that, because he both prepares their hearts to pray, and prepares his ear to hear; therefore we find in Scripture such expressions as these: *Psal. 10. 17.* and *Nehem. 1. 7.* the good man praies that Gods ear would be attentive, and his eyes open that he might hear the prayers of his servant. *Psal. 86. 1.* *Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear, and help me for I am poor.* *1 Pet. 3. 12.* *His ears are open to their prayers.* And *Psal. 86. 6.* God gives his ear to their prayers and attends to the voice of their supplication; what doth all this hold forth unto us but this? that the prayers of Saints are very delightful to him, they are pleasant musick in his ears, were there no other difference between the godly and the wicked than in their prayers, it were sufficient to make men out of love with the waies of sin, and joyn with the Saints in the waies of holiness, the Saints they send up sweet breathings, and God takes pleasure in them: the

the wicked they howl and cry out, and God rejects them.

*They howl upon their beds.*

Men in their prosperity go up and down uncontrowled in their wicked waies, but when God confines them to their chambers and their sick beds, then they howl. It follows.

*They aſſemble themſelves for corn and wine.*

The old Latin: *Ruminabant*, not *Comedebant*, like beaſts they feed: the Hebrew word that hath ſuch a ſignification, differs not much from that which ſignifies to aſſemble, *גָּוַר* *congregare* *גָּוַר* *ſetare*, *ruminare*. The Seventy *κατατινυσθησονται* they cut themſelves as *Baals* Priests: But rather it ſignifies to aſſemble. They flock together, that they might get corn and wine, ſo they had it, they did not care what became of God and his Ordinances. 2. Aſſemble to feed themſelves with the wheat, ſo they might be pampered, they looked at nothing elſe. 3. Or more probably, were aſſembled at their Temples to cry for wheat. The Notes are theſe.

*That the vileſt men in times of common calamity and publick miſeries will aſſemble themſelves to pray to God.* Now certainly, if they will pray to have trouble taken away, when upon them, 'tis our duty to pray to prevent danger a coming. Obſ. 1.

*When ever Hypocrites aſſemble together, it is for themſelves, not for God: for corn and wine, and outward mercies.* Were it not that they wanted ſome outward good, God ſhould ſeldom or never hear from them. Obſ. 2.

*Hypocrites in their ſeeking of God, ſeek him more for ſenſual things than for others.* We aſſemble together in our faſts to ſeek God, but what is it for? if only or principally for outward things, it is but carnal, and not ſpiritual ſeeking. It follows. Obſ. 3.

*And they rebel againſt me.* *Præ frumento*, when they are fed like unto the Ox when it is fed fat it kicks againſt the Maſter. Or 2. they rebel after they have aſſembled themſelves, when

once the duty is over, they go to their old courses again, and undo all their prayers: as Jer. 5. 3. *Thou hast striken them, but they have not grieved; thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction.* We should from hence learn, *That duties should mightily engage us against sin.* Hast thou in prayer, either confessed sin, or asked mercy of God to pardon thy sin? Know, there lies a great engagement upon our hearts now to be humbled for our sins, and to walk according to our prayers: Dost thou in prayer beg power against thy sins? and in thy life dost thou rebel against God? Are there not many who will be long in prayer, and very earnest, and judge themselves for their sins, yea and in words justify God if he should for ever condemn them for their sins, and yet afterwards rebel anew against God? Oh! may it not be said, *What is this the man that even now was in Heaven in prayer, and is now as it were in Hell in his conversation?* Me thinks the very next time thou goest to pray to God, thy mouth should be stop'd and not able to speak unto God: as we read *Origins* was, when he had apostatized, and coming to preach again, and reading that text in *Psal. 50. What hast thou to do to take my Word into thy mouth, and hatest to be reformed?* his mouth was presently stop't, and he was not able to speak a word more. So thou prayest to God, and after thou hast prayed, thou goest and sinnest freely again; Oh thou wretch, tremble at this, go and humble thy soul before God for thy sins, and tremble at coming into Gods presence in this kind. I put this dilemma to you; Either you pray against your sins, or you do not; if not, Oh consider how thou art departed from God; if thou dost pray against them, then how darest thou live in those sins which thou hast prayed against? *Tertullian* hath an excellent speech to this purpose: he saith, *That prayer must alwaies be with remembrance of Gods precepts, lest we are as far from Gods ear, as his precepts are from our hearts.* It follows:

*They rebell against me.*

That is, When their own turns are served, and their own ends

ends ſatisfied, then they rebel againſt me, as if now they had no more need of God, nor never ſhould want help from him; Oh how many are there who upon their ſick beds cry out to God, that he would ſpare their ſins, and ſhew them mercy, making large promiſes to God what they would do? God hath taken them at their words, and hath raiſed them up again and reſtored them to ſtrength. And what have they done? nothing but rebelled againſt him more than formerly, and are like the wild aſſe that ſnuffeth up the wind.

## V E R. 15.

*Though I have bound and ſtrengthened their arms, yet do they imagine miſchief againſt me.*

**G**OD in this verſe compares himſelf to a ſkilful Chyrurgion; who binds up broken arms and wounds; ſo God had often bound up their arms when broken by the enemies.

2 King. 14. there we find God bound up their broken arms;

*It is God only who can bind up broken arms.*

Obſ. 1

2 *It is a great aggravation of a mans ſin, to be ſinful after great mercies.* God finds us as Chyrurgions do their patients, all out of joynt, and crying out of their pains, Oh that I had eaſe! I would give my eſtate, that I might be cured; and when the Chyrurgion hath uſed his ſkill, and hath cured you of your pain, and hath given you ſome eaſe, if now you ſhould ſtand hagling with him for a ſhilling matter, Would it not be an unworthy act? and would not the man think his time and ſkill ill beſtowed? Oh how many people are there who deal thus with God? haggle and ſhuffle it with God in their diſtreſſe: Oh if God will diliver them, what promiſes do they make? but when they have peace and quiet forget again.

Obſ. 2

*It were an argument of an excellent ſpirit indeed, if when after our ſtrength is reſtored and any mercy anew given into us, we would ſtudy how we might glorifie God with the ſame.* Have our arms been broken, & hath God bound them up for us? O let us now uſe them for God. But this people were far from this diſpoſition, they imagined evil againſt God: As if a patient which is cured of

Obſ. 3.

ſome

simile. some desperat wound, or disease, should seek to stab his Chyrurgion or Physician.

*They imagin mischief.*

27 The word signifies, all kinds of evil, and to imagin mischief is in som regard worse than to practice it; it was not a weakness or sin of infirmity in them, for it was an imagined mischief, it was a most vile provoking sin, for it did aim at the mischieving of God Himself: they who live in sin, live as if they were born for nothing but to do mischief to God.

Quest. *What was this mischief they imagined against God?*

Ans. Why thus, When the arm was broken, they were more remisse in urging and pressing their false worship; as if God should say, Now they are low and in trouble they want opportunities, and have not that power to set up and presse forwards their designs, against my true worship, and servants, but now that their arms are bound up, and they have a little more ease and liberty, now they set their wits on work to invent mischief against my people, and worship, and it may be this is the cause why the Lord keeps our arms still broken that we might learn to submit, for when at any time God hath begun to bind up our arms, how have many improved all opportunities to set up themselves and their waies.

England.

V E R. 16.

*They return, but not to the most high: they are like a deceitful bow: their Princes shall fall by the sword, for the rage of their tongue: this shall be their derision in the land of Egypt.*

**T**HEY return] They make shows, yea somthing they do. This verse hath reference to the story of Jehu who did very much; there were very great beginnings in his time to cast out Idolatry, but neither he, nor the people did come up to the full height that God required of them, but they would have some mixtures of their own. And thus it is in many peoples reformation, they are very hot at it in the begin-

beginning; and even among us, how high did the hearts of England, people riſe? but what a damp is there ſince that time? though bleſſed be God great things are don among us. But ſaith God, that is not yet done amongſt them which I would have done, it is true, they honor me indeed, but it is as the Nations round about them honor their Gods, they do not honor me as the Infinite Eternal Firſt-being of all things; I am not worſhipped by them as the Infinite, High, Eternal God; people ſhould ſo labor to reform themſelves that they may hold forth the honor of God as he is Infinite, Glorious, Eternal, and having all power in his hands. The Notes of Obſervation from the words are theſe.

How we  
ſhould  
honor  
God

*That God is the moſt high God, the ſupream Majeſtie of Heaven and earth: he is ſo high that he humbles himſelf to behold things done in Heaven, 'tis a ſtooping in him that he takes notice of things in Heaven, ſurely then much more for things done on the earth: ſurely then he is a high God, and when ever we come before him in prayer we ſhould come before him as unto ſuch a God who is ſo glorious and high above all things betwixt whom and us there is an infinite diſtance.*

Obſ. 1

*A true repenting ſinner ſhould have the ſight of this high God always in his eyes; and great would be the efficacy of ſuch a ſight as this is upon the ſpirit, it would be very profitable for the ſoul. For,*

Obl. 2,

This would make the ſoul to be very ſerious with God, not daring to dally with him who is infinitely above it.

1

It would make the ſoul abhor it ſelf in duſt and aſhes, *Job, 42. 5.* there is nothing humbles the ſoul more than this ſight of Gods Majeſtie.

2.

It ſhews unto the ſoul the infinite evil which there is in ſin in that I ſhould do nothing but caſt dirt in the face of God.

3.

That there is no ſtanding out againſt this high God, that I muſt crouch before him, for he will have the better of me.

4.

That he is infinitely worthy of all that I am or have, and all that I can do, and this very thing would answer all temptations againſt God.

5

6. This sight of God would inform us that it is not every sorrow and slight mourning for sin which will serve the turn, but it must be such a sorrow as is becoming such a God.

7. In this sight of God I behold that which hath power in it to raise my soul above all things here below, self, the world, and all creature-comforts, all things must be looked upon as under our feet, else we cannot close with God.

8. I see by this sight, enough in God to make me blessed, and that I may bless my self in him, in the loss of all the world; and that there is enough in him to make me amends for all the troubles I have met withal for him. These are the thoughts of a true penitent heart concerning God. Now the soul can say, the Lord is God, and there is no such God as the Lord, and by this you may put your repentance to the tryal, whether it be of the right kind or no, by your thoughts of God.

Trial of  
repentanc

Have you sorrowed for sin, as before such a glorious high God as the Lord is, that those that see your humiliations may see glory and honor and praise written upon them to the Lord? The want of this, these people were charged for here: and this hath been our case many times, the Lord help our reformers to carry on the work of reformation begun, as before the high God. If we lose this opportunity, we lose such an opportunity as yet was scarce ever granted to any Nation upon the face of the earth. Now wicked proud men may lift themselves high in the world, and be thought to be somebody for it, but it is the low, broken, penitent soul which it the high man, because he returns to the high God. But secondly, *They return, but it is not to the yoke*, as some render the words, They will not come under obedience to Gods commands, for there is but a little difference (namely in the pricks) between *ſυ जुगुम* and *ſυ अलिप्सि*, and if we understand the word thus, then it notes, that they promised much, and made many fair shews of doing much, but they would not come under the yoke; they will still be sons of Belial, without yoke. So many people, upon exhortation and intreaties will promise fair, they will return, and they will do much, but when it comes



comes to ſee the yooke, Oh they flinch back and hold off, Oh it is too hard for them. It follows.

*They are like a deceitful bow.*

Thus did their progenitors they trode in the ſame ſteps, *Pſal. 78. 57. They kept not his teſtimony, but turned back and dealt deceitfully as did their fathers, that were turned aſide like a deceitful bow.* Deceitful bow.

When it cauſes the arrow to turn from them it was levelled to hit, and recoils upon him that ſhoots it. Theſe people were Gods bow, *Zachariah, 9. 13.* ſaith God, I have bent Iſrael as my bow to ſhoot at evil doers. How vile and wicked are thoſe men, into whoſe hands God hath committed power to execute juſtice and judgment againſt evil doers, and they ſhall turn all their power againſt the Saints and thoſe that do well.

A bow is deceitful when it carries the arrow the wrong way though the Archer ſee the mark, and aim at it, yet it carries quite contrary. Juſt thus did theſe people, many of them had good aims and intentions, and purpoſes, but yet they carried the matter quite contrary; theſe words refer unto *Jehu's* time, he was a notorious deceitful bow; *Come, ſee my zeal for the Lord,* yet an hypocrit. Oh let us look to our hearts, there may be ſecret warping, in our hearts which may cauſe us to miſcarry for ever, if we take not heed; many who have good intentions, good purpoſes, aims and deſires, and yet have ſome ſecret warping which they know not of, which may make them miſcarry to all eternity. A man may with a deceitful bow aim at a beaſt, and yet kill a man; ſo many may think they ſtrike at ſin, and yet with that very goad may at the ſame time wound the Saints. It follows.

*Their Princes ſhall fall by the ſword.*

Theſe were they who had the chief hand in the ſetting up of falſe worſhip, and in oppreſſing thoſe that would not joyn with them: now God would reach theſe great ones. In times of battel Princes ſtand by ſecured at a diſtance, they have their Life-guards, they put on others and think to be ſafe themſelves, they will bring others into ſtraights, and miſeries, and care not though thouſands of them be ſlain at a fight, they

shall do well enough, but faith God, they shall not so escape in battel, *Their Princes shall fall by the sword*, it shall not distinguish them from others.

*For the rage of their tongue.*

They raged against God, his People, and Ordinances, and thought themselves too big to be contradicted; we may note here,

Obs.

*That when men grow very wicked they grow outrageous*, like mad men, there is no ruling of them, there is such a world of wickedness in them they take a liberty to say what they please; we find many strong expressions about the tongue in Scripture.

Δι' ἀπα-  
σκευασί-  
αν τοῦ 70.  
render  
the words  
Epethites  
of the  
tongue,

As *Job*, 5. 21. it is called a *scourge*; therefore the Saints are promised to be delivered from it.

2. *Psal.* 57. 4. it is call'd a *sharp sword*. *Prov.* 12. 18. there is that speaketh like *the piercing of a sword*, *Prov.* 25. 18. a man that beareth false witness against his neighbor, is a *Mole, and a Sword, and a sharp Arrow*.

3. It is compared to *fire*, yea unto the fire of hell, *James*, 3. 7, 8. To the *coals of Juniper*, *Psal.* 120. 4. which are quickly kindled, but abide long; all these expressions with others we find about the tongue of the wicked. But now see what is said of the tongues of the Saints, *Cant.* 4. 11. *Thy lips O my Spouse, drop as the hony comb, hony and milk are under thy tongue*. And *Prov.* 10. 20. *The tongue of the just is as choice silver: The heart of the wicked is little worth*.

4. An outrageous tongue is such a poyson as poysons it self, which no other poyson doth, other poysons hurt no further than they are applied, they cannot poyson at a distance, but this is such a strange working thing, that it will both hurt and so destroy men that they shall never recover themselves, and this it will do at a distance, and come not neer, these men have such dispositions, that they will let none pass without a lash of their tongue. Now the Lord he will not let these go in this manner, he will scorn the scorers; when these men are in their rage none are spared, Magistrates, Ministers, Parents, Ordinances, no nor God Himself; But Christ will convince them of their hard words. Consider how in  
your

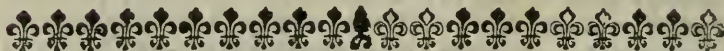
your families, or in ſome companies you have been guilty of the rage of the tongue in theſe kinds. It follows in the laſt words.

*This ſhall be their deriſion in the Land of Egypt.*

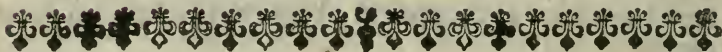
When they come to Egypt they think to find them their friends, that they will help them and ſtick unto them; no ſaith God, inſtead of helping them, they ſhall ſcorn them. One part of the rage of their tongue was in ſpeaking baſely of the worſhip of God, and of his people; and now the Egyptians ſhall ſpeak baſely to them; Why do you come to us for help? where is your God become, that you ſo boaſted of? Therefore juſt is it with God, that thoſe which forſake him and his help, and go to men for ſuccor, that they by them ſhould be made a ſcorn: O it is a moſt grievous judgment for Gods people to be made a ſcorn by ſuch, the Egyptians! And it ſhould be our care and duty not to put our brethren into ſuch ſtraights, that the poor Saints of God ſhould be forced to go to the wicked for help leaſt, they ſhould reproach them, ſaying, Why do you come to us? What, cannot your holy brethren releve you? do you expect help from us? But in ſpecial this is their deriſion in the land of Egypt, the rage of their tongue, their fallings out one with another, they could not agree but wrangled and jangled among themſelves, when the Egyptians ſhall ſee this, they ſhall deride them, and look upon them as the greateſt objects of ſcorn that poſſibly can be.

The Lord deliver us from this judgment; when was there ſuch diviſions amongſt us as at this day? Oh the rage of the tongue which abounds in every place! the Devil himſelf hath a chief ſtroke in this rage, and he laughs to ſee it proſper and encrease as well as our adverſaries, who laugh in their ſleeves at us both; and what ſhould move us more to agree one with another than this; The conſideration of that woful ſcorn and deriſion we ſhould be to them if God ſhould deliver us up into their hands. Now as this their rage was a ſymtom to them of their ruin, ſo the Lord grant that we

may berimes repent of it least it prove a sign of utter ruin and desolation unto us. And thus though the Lords help and assistance we have gone through this seventh Chapter, and shewed you the meaning of the holy Ghost in it.



F I N I S





A N  
**A L P H A B E T I C A L**  
**T A B L E**

OF THE 4, 5, 6, & 7. CHAPTERS OF THE  
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