

away. The fashion of this world it passeth away, and therefore, oh, my soul, now use the world as if you used it not. Thus the apostle speaks, this is his argument, and these are his arguments; and so say I, brethren and beloved, "the time is short, it remaineth therefore, that both they that have wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away."

SERMON VI.

MEN'S WRATH AGAINST GOD'S PEOPLE SHALL TURN TO
GOD'S PRAISE.

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." PS.A. lxxvi. 10.

IN this Psalm we have a declaration of the majesty and glorious appearance of God, in and for his church and people. "In Judah is God known, his name is great in Israel, in Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling place in Sion," verse 1, 2. Where God appears as a Captain and General unto his people, and as a Judge.

As a Captain and General; therefore in verse 3: "There," in Sion, "brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Thou art more glorious and excellent than the mountains of prey. At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep."

As a Judge, at verse 8: "Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven, the earth feared and was still: When God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth."

But if God do thus appear, to, and for, and with his people, why doth he suffer the wrath and anger of men to be so much against his people?

Why he answers it in verse 10. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee, the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain." Though God do suffer the enemies of his people

to be very angry and wrathful with his people, yet that wrath of theirs shall turn unto the praise of God, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. From whence then I take up this observation.

Though there be a great deal of anger or wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God: yet God will either turn their wrath unto his own praise, or restrain their wrath.

For the clearing and prosecuting whereof, two things will fall under our consideration.

First, That there is a great deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of men against the people of God.

Secondly, That this wrath, God will either turn to his praise, or restrain the same.

First of all, There is a great deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of men against the people of God. A great deal of anger; so much anger as doth amount to wrath, for wrath is the height of anger. Now the men of the world, they are wrath with the people of God, not only angry, but wrathfully displeased, Psalm cxxiv. "Had not the Lord been on our side when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us."

There is not only wrath in their hearts against the people of God, but such wrath as doth amount to rage. For as wrath is the height of anger, so rage is the height of wrath. Now there is rage also in the hearts of men against the people of God. "Why do the heathen rage?" Psalm ii. They rage.

And there is not only rage in the hearts of the wicked against the people of God; but such rage as doth amount to fury. For as rage is the height of wrath, so fury is the height of rage. Now there is fury in the hearts of men against the people of God. In Daniel iii. 13. Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and they brought these men before the king, verse 19. Then was "Nebuchadnezzar full of fury."

Yea, there is not only a fury in the hearts of men against the people of God, but there is a hatred in their hearts against the saints and people of God. For as fury is the

height of rage, so rage settled, is hatred. Hatred is the worst of all, it is settled anger, wrath, and rage, and fury. Now wicked men they do hate the saints. In Psalm xxiv. 21. "Evil shall slay the wicked, and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate." Yea, saith David, Psalm xxv. "Consider mine enemies, for they are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred," verse 19. So that thus then we see in the general, that there is a great deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God.

Well, but for the opening of this a little further. It will be said, what kind of anger and hatred is there in the hearts of men against the people of God?

And how comes it to pass that they should so hate and be so wrathfully displeased with the saints and people of God, that do them no hurt?

To give you some account of this. If you ask what kind of anger and hatred, or wrath there is in the hearts of men against the people of God.

I answer, it is a violent wrath and anger: proud and violent men are risen up against me.

As it is a proud and violent wrath or anger, so it is a fraudulent and deceitful wrath: bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days; speaking of the enemies of the people of God. Their wrath is not only violent, but there is a fraudulency that is joined therewithal.

As it is a deceitful and a fraudulent wrath and anger, so it is a mortal wrath and anger that is in their hearts towards the people of God. A devouring, consuming and destroying wrath. "They eat up my people as they eat bread," Psalm xiv. "If the Lord had not been with us, they had swallowed us up quick," Psalm cxxiv. And they shall kill you, saith our Saviour Christ. So that this wrath and anger that is in the hearts of wicked men, it is a mortal, deadly, destroying, consuming and devouring wrath.

As it is a mortal, deadly, destroying and consuming wrath, so it is a blaspheming wrath. How long shall foolish men blaspheme thy name? Rabshekah was angry, and he did not only blaspheme the people of God, but God himself. "Where is now your God?"

As their wrath is a blaspheming wrath, so it is an unreasonable wrath. Why do the heathen rage? Why? Why,

they have no reason for it. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" It is a vain thing, they have no reason for it. The wrath that wicked men have against the people of God, and their anger it is most unreasonable.

As it is an unreasonable wrath and anger, so it is an insulting wrath and anger, whereby they do insult over the poor people of God, Psalm cxxxvii., "By the rivers of Babylon we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Sion. We hanged our harps upon the willows, for there they that carried us away captive required of us a song: and they that wasted us, required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Sion;" insulting over them. And so in Rev. xi. They will make merry, and send gifts one to another, rejoicing over the dead witnesses. It is an insulting wrath and anger that they are filled withal.

And then further, as it is an insulting wrath and anger, so the wrath and anger that is in the hearts of wicked men towards the saints, it is an universal wrath and anger. For though they be angry with one person, their anger doth not stay there, but it riseth unto all the party of the saints. Haman's wrath began with Mordecai, Esther iii. 5., "And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath." What then: "And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had shewed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews." So wicked men, they begin, it may be, to be angry with one saint; but from that one their wrath and anger doth arise to them all. It is an universal wrath against all the seed of the godly. They take occasion from one, and fall upon all.

And then as is is a universal wrath and anger, so it is an implacable, an un-appeasable never-dying, and everlasting wrath, Amos i. 11., "Thus saith the Lord, For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and kept his wrath for ever." It is an everlasting wrath, wicked men will not be appeased.

This is a certain rule, the more there is of religious end that any evil work hath, the more lasting, holding and con-

tinuing is that evil work. Now in John xvi. 2., our Saviour saith, "They shall put you out of the synagogue; yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service." The Syriac reads it so: That whosoever killeth you will think that he doth bring a sacrifice unto God. In Exod. viii. 20., saith the Lord by Moses, unto Pharaoh, "Let my people go that they may serve me." Now this is the errand that Moses hath: Pharaoh answers it thus, verse 25., "And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to God in the land." Moses saith in the name of the Lord, "Let my people go that they may serve me:" Pharaoh understands it concerning sacrifice, and therefore saith he, Go and offer sacrifice unto your God. And indeed the thing sacrifice hath the same word. The word that is used here in this xvth of John, "Whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth *λατρείαν προσφέρειν τῷ Θεῷ.*" Now in Ephes. v., the sacrifice that Christ offered, hath the same word, "Walk in love, as Christ hath also loved us, and hath given himself" *προσφοραν και θυσιαν*, an offering and a sacrifice. So that as good authors do observe, what Christ saith here, They shall think that they do God good service: it is as much as if he should say, They shall think when they kill you, they shall offer a great sacrifice unto God. But this is the thing I bring it for, the more religious end that any evil action hath, the more holding and continuing is that evil action. Now wicked men for their malice, they shall have a religious end; they shall think they do God good service: their malice therefore, and their wrath against the people of God, is never-dying, and an everlasting wrath. Thus you see what kind of wrath it is.

It is a violent anger: it is a fraudulent anger: it is a mortal anger: it is a blasphemous anger: it is an unreasonable anger: it is an insulting anger: it is a universal anger against all the people of God, upon one man's occasion: and it is an everlasting and a never-dying anger.

But then how comes it to pass that there should be such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the people of God; for the people of God are a quiet and a peaceable people?

It is true so they are: but who more quiet and peaceable, and meek, than our Lord and Saviour Christ; he lift not up

his voice in the streets, and yet who ever bare more anger and wrath from men than he ?

Yea, the saints are not only quiet, meek, and peaceable, but beneficial to the men where they live. The innocent delivers the land : yet notwithstanding, saith Solomon, Eccles. ix., “ I have seen a sore evil under the sun, there was a little city, and few men within it : and there came a great king against it, and besieged it and built great bulwarks against it : now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city, yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength, nevertheless the poor man’s wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.” So though the saints and people of God do deliver a nation, and are exceeding beneficial to the people where they live, and where they are, yet they shall be despised, yet there shall be wrath and malice in the hearts of men against the saints of God.

But you will say, how doth this come to pass, that there should be such a deal of wrath and malice in the hearts of men against the people of God ?

The saints and people of God, and the men of the world, they are directly contrary one unto another : they are contrary in their birth, and in their original. For the men of the world, they are of their father the devil, who was a murderer : but the saints and people of God, God is their Father.

They are not only contrary in their original, but they are contrary in their principles. For the one are the seed of the woman, and the other the seed of the serpent, whose principles are contrary. The seed of the bond-women at the best, and the seed of the free-woman.

Yea, they are not only contrary in their principles, but they are contrary in their worship : for the worship of the world is a pompous and a carnal worship, but the worship of the saints is spiritual, “ Such worshippers doth the Father seek, that worship him in Spirit and truth.”

And as their worship is contrary one unto another, so their deeds and their practices are contrary. For why, saith the apostle, “ did Cain kill his brother Abel, but because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s good ?” Now one contrary seeks to destroy another. Why, these are contrary ; they are con-

trary one to another, contrary in their original ; contrary in their principles ; contrary in their worship ; contrary in their lives and practices : and therefore no wonder that there is such a deal of wrath and anger in the hearts of the men of the world against the saints and people of God.

But the saints and people of God, they do not regard the men of the world, and the men of the world they think so. Now for high and lofty men to be slighted and not regarded, this makes them angry. In Dan. iii., when the three children would not bow down to the image, " There are certain Jews, (say they to the king) that thou hast set over the affairs of Babylon, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ; these men O king have not regarded thee." Why, they think now, that if the people of God do not bow down to their commandments, and to their idols, that they do not regard the magistrate, " These men have not regarded thee : " and the truth is, godly men that are the saints and people of God, they cannot regard them, " For blessed is the man, (saith the Holy Ghost) that regardeth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies." God hath given a blessing to those that regard not the proud. Now wicked men cannot bear this, that they should not be regarded ; high and great men of the world, that they should not be regarded : and therefore no wonder that there is such a deal of wrath and anger in their hearts against the people of God.

The saints and people of God, they do withdraw from the men of the world, and do separate from them ; " Come out from among them, and be ye separate, touch no unclean thing." Now when we withdraw from men, and from their worship, we do condemn their worship, and the men of the world do not love to be condemned. Noah condemned the world ; and by the separation of the saints from them, they do condemn them, and they do not love, I say, to be condemned. To separate from them, and from their worship, this they cannot bear. The saints do separate from them, and therefore there is such a deal of anger and wrath in their hearts against them.

As the saints and people of God do separate and withdraw from them, upon which they are much provoked, so the saints and people of God do hinder them in their proceedings. A man doth not love to be hindered in his proceedings ;

the saints and people of God, they do hold wicked men's hands that they cannot proceed, hold their hands by their prayers. I remember a story of Mr. Tyndale, that blessed first translator of the Bible into English, that died a martyr in Flanders, being then at Antwerp, and much respected by the merchants there: there was a great report of a certain juggler that could bring a dish of meat from any prince's table, and so set the table that they were at with several dishes, from several princes' tables: Pray, saith Tyndale to the merchants, will you let me be at your supper? Yes; and so they carried him. And when he was there, the juggler tried his skill, and sweat, and took a great deal of pains; But, saith he, I cannot do it, there is some man here that doth hold my hands. And Tyndale only set himself to this, to believe that he should not do it. I speak it only to this, that the people of God, they hold their hands. And in this lxxvith Psalm, "The men of might, they find not their hands, There brake he the arrows of the bow, the shield, and the sword, and the battle: The stout hearted are spoiled, they have slept their sleep, and none of the men of might have found their hands." Why? Why, there brake he the bow and the arrow. There; where? In Salem. In the assembly of the saints, by their prayers. Now men cannot endure to be hindered in their proceedings. The saints do it, and therefore there is such a great deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of them against the people of God.

But then further, As the saints and people of God do hinder them in their proceedings, which doth anger them; so they do destroy their gods, destroy their idols. Men of all things cannot endure to have their gods destroyed; how angry were they when Paul came and preached down the gods of Diana! then they were in a rage, Oh, great is Diana; Paul preaches down our gods, and destroys our gods. The people of God do destroy the gods of the wicked, no wonder therefore that they are so provoked against the saints and people of God.

As the people of God do destroy their gods and their worship, so they do destroy their sins and lusts. The saints are enemies unto all their lusts. Wicked men cannot endure to be kept from their lusts; but if they be hindered from their lusts, kept in and restrained from their lusts, what say

they then? In Ps. ii., "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." These Puritans, they will not let us play upon the sabbath day, they will not let us have leave to dance about a May-pole, they put cords upon us, and bring us into bonds, and take away our liberty. "Why do the heathen rage, &c. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed." Why, wherein is it expressed? Why, they say: "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." The people of God are great enemies to their wickedness, and therefore they are so angry; full and furious against the people of God.

As the people of God are enemies unto all their lusts, so the men of the world they are enemies unto the saints, unto all their ways, and duties, and graces. The saints are a praying people; the men of the world are enemies to prayer; forms of prayer they can endure, but the power of prayer they cannot bear.

The saints and people of God are righteous in their generation. The men of the world cannot endure the truth of the generation, the grace of the generation, the righteousness of the generation, they cannot endure it.

The saints and people of God, they have, and they are stampt with the image of God; the image of Christ is stampt upon them: and the more that any man is stampt with the image of God, the more the men of the world hate him. Why there are the footsteps of God in the creatures; man at the creation was made after the image of God, now being raised again by Christ, the very image of God is stampt upon the saints, and wicked men cannot endure to see the image of God; the more they see the image of God shining forth in any man, the more angry they are. But now the saints, they have the image of God stampt upon them, and therefore no wonder that they are thus angry. And thus you see what kind of wrath it is that is in the hearts of the men of the world against the people of God; and how it comes to pass that there is such a deal of wrath in the hearts of wicked men against the people of God.

Secondly, But then will God let men wicked alone in this their wrath and anger against the people of God?

No, but saith the second part of the doctrine, the Lord he will either turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise, or he will restrain it. You have both here in the text; thou wilt turn thy anger unto thy praise, O Lord, and the remnant of their wrath thou wilt restrain. Either God will turn their wrath unto his own praise, or he will restrain it. I use to express it thus: by the miller that lets the water run; so much water as will serve his turn to grind the corn, he lets it run, the rest he doth restrain, and does not let it run. So the Lord doth let the wrath of man run so much as may grind his corn, so much as may serve his turn, so much as may work to his praise. The remnant he doth restrain, either he will work the wrath and anger of men to his own praise, or he will restrain the same.

Sometimes he will restrain it: in Isa. xxvii. 8, speaking of the afflictions of the people of God: "In measure when it shooteth forth wilt thou debate with it; he stayeth his rough wind, in the day of the east wind." Consider that expression, "He stayed his rough wind, in the day of the east wind." The east wind is an obnoxious wind, a hurtful wind, a piercing wind, and a wasting wind. Why, now this east wind may blow but mildly, and it may blow roughly. Why, saith the Lord, when wicked men that are rough, and when they are very rough, God will stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind; though it be a day of God's east wind, and wicked men are very rough, God will stay his rough wind; the wrath and anger of wicked men is his rough wind, but God will stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind; sometimes he will restrain it.

Sometimes again he will turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise; and for that I will only turn to Dan. iii., you see how angry the king was when the three children would not bow down unto his image, verse 13. Then Nebuchadnezzar in his "rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach," &c., at the 19th verse. Then was Nebuchadnezzar full of fury, and the form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, &c., and he commanded the most mighty men that were in his army to bind Shadrach, &c., and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. What was the issue? God let this wrath go on; but in the end see how it turned to God's praise; when Nebuchadnezzar saw what he had done,

“Therefore,” saith he, “I make a decree, that every people, nation, and language, which speak anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill, but there is no other God that can deliver after this sort.” Thus the rage and wrath of the king turned to the praise of God.

But you will say then, how will the Lord turn the wrath of men unto his praise? it is a day of much wrath, and of great anger in the hearts of men. Wicked men are full of wrath and anger at this day against the people of God; it is good news, that God will either restrain it, or turn it to his praise. But how will God turn the rage and wrath of wicked men unto the praise of God? and what assurance may we have of this? and what is our duty that flows from hence?

If you ask what way God will turn the wrath of men against his people to his own praise: I answer, many ways; I shall but name them.

Thereby the holiness of God shall be the more exalted by the wrath of men. God spake in his holiness: I will divide Shechem, and measure out the valley of Succoth. The holiness of God, wicked men they are but dishclouts for to make clean the vessels of the sanctuary; by their wrath, and by their anger and rage, they shall make clean the saints. These dishclouts shall make clean the saints. Thus God's holiness shall be thereby exalted, so many enemies, so many schoolmasters.

Thereby also the power of the Lord shall be declared and manifested, by the wrath and anger of wicked men against the people of God. Is it not a great deal of God's power to preserve the poor saints in the midst of all their rage; when wicked men have power, yet that the poor saints should be preserved? hereby the power of the Lord is the more declared.

By the wrath and anger of wicked men, thereby the anger and justice of God is justified. Who will not justify the anger of God against wicked men? when wicked men are so angry with his children; oh this justifies the anger of God against them: why, you are angry with my children, and just therefore it is that I should be angry with you.

Thereby the patience of the Lord is magnified. If one

should stand by, and see a man smite his child, be very angry and wrathful, and smite his child, and not meddle, would not you say, This man was very patient? So that God should see so much anger against his own children: oh the patience of God is magnified, that can bear with wicked men in this manner!

Hereby also the mercy, grace, and goodness of the Lord is exalted. The free grace and mercy of God doth discover itself, and is exalted both towards wicked men, and towards the saints.

The free grace of God towards wicked men. God doth sometimes convert wicked men in the midst of their rage wrath and malice against the saints, witness Paul.

Sometimes men are convinced by their very injurious dealings with the people of God. I remember in the book of martyrs, there is a story of James Abbes, that was cruelly handled by his enemies: and when he was dead, the enemy was troubled in conscience, and cryed out, I am damned, I am damned; James Abbes is saved, and I am damned; James Abbes is saved and I am damned. Men sometimes snore so loud in their sleep, that they wake themselves; sometimes men are converted, jailors converted, and jailors' relations converted by their unreasonable dealings with the saints and people of God.

And hereby the grace and mercy of God is magnified towards his children: oh that they should be preserved in the midst of all the rage and malice of wicked and unreasonable men; here is the grace and mercy of God towards them. Thus the goodness, mercy and grace of God is exalted, both towards wicked men, and towards good men.

Again, from the wrath and anger of wicked men against the people of God, thereby the providence of God is very much magnified. Haman was very angry with Mordecai, and then Mordecai should have been cut off; and that night the king could not sleep. Here is one providence.

Well then, when he could not sleep, he calls for the records, here is another providence, and there he hits upon the place were there was mention made of the good deeds of Mordecai; and so Mordecai was spared. But thus the wrath and anger of men doth draw out the providence of God, and it is magnified thereby.

Thereby also the faithfulness of God is declared, and magnified and manifested. The faithfulness of God: for God hath threatened to destroy the enemies of his people, and hath promised to preserve his people. When the enemies rage and are destroyed, God is faithful in fulfilling his threatenings. When the people of God are preserved, God is faithful in his promise. Thus by letting out the rage and anger of wicked men against the people of God, the faithfulness of God is magnified. And now is the threatening fulfilled, God is faithful. Now is the promise fulfilled, God is faithful. And thus you see how the Lord doth turn the rage and anger and wrath of wicked men, and the men of the world unto his own praise.

But then, what assurance have we of this? It is a very comfortable thing, in the day of men's wrath and anger, that all this anger and wrath should turn to God's praise, or be restrained. But what assurance have we of this, that it shall be so?

Assurance you have in the text. Surely the wrath of man shall turn to his praise. That same word, surely. Aye, but what assurance have we of it?

It is very certain that God will be fearful in praises. It is certain, and very certain, that God will be above wicked men in the thing wherein they behave themselves proudly. But besides this,

You have the assurance of Christ's death and merit. If you look upon the death of Christ, and the issues thereof, you may see it, and be assured of it. Was there ever more anger and malice let out upon any man, that upon Christ in his death? They were angry to the utmost. And did ever anger or malice turn more to the praise of God? What one thing was there that ever turned more to the praise of God than the death of Christ, and the anger and malice of those that brought him to death? Why now Christ by his sufferings hath merited this, that if we be conformable unto him in sufferings; as his sufferings, and as the wrath that brought him to suffer did turn to the praise of God; so that wrath that brings us to sufferings, shall turn to the praise of God. This is a great matter, and here is much in it, and we may be assured of it, when we see and feel the wrath and anger of men, if we be conformable in our sufferings unto Christ's

sufferings ; then as the wrath of men in bringing Christ to suffer, did turn to the praise of God ; so the wrath of men, in bringing the saints now to suffering, shall turn to the praise of God, you have the assurance of the death of Christ for it.

As you have the assurance of Christ's death and merit for it, so you have the assurance of the Father's design. God would not suffer men to be so wrathful and malicious against his people, if he did not intend to turn it unto his praise ; God hath a design upon all their anger : God hath bid them to be angry, if I may so speak, and why, if he had not a design to turn it to his praise ? The Lord bid Shimei curse David : who was it that bid Shimei curse David ? God. And who was it that sent Joseph into Egypt ? God sent him. The wrath and anger and envy of his brethren indeed were instruments, but God sent him. God had a design upon their anger, and upon their envy and wrath. In Rev. xvi., you find that three unclean spirits that came out of the mouth of the false prophet, and dragon, and the beast, they stir up the kings of the earth to battle ; and they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. They go forth to stir up men to battle, but in verse 16., it is God that gathers them : " Behold I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments," &c., " And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon : " God had a hand upon their hand ; God gathered them. In Micah iv. 11., " Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say : Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion." Let her be defiled, here is anger enough, but saith he, verse 12., " They know not the thoughts of the Lord, neither understand they his counsel ; for he shall gather them as the sheaves into the floor." He shall gather them, in verse 11., it is said : " Now also many nations are gathered against thee, that say, Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion ; " but they know not the thoughts of the Lord : are gathering together against the people of God ; and God is gathering to thresh them : they gather together, God hath a design upon their gathering : God gathers them : so in Exek. xxxviii., you have there the story of Gog and Ma-

gog, that came up against the people of the Lord in a great multitude; and they came up to spoil:" therefore verse 14., "Son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God, In that day, when my people Israel dwelleth safely shalt thou not know it? and thou shalt come from thy place, out of the north parts, thou and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army, and thou shalt come against my people Israel as a cloud, to cover the land, it shall be in the latter days: and I will bring thee against my land." Why? "That the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes," verse 11. Thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, &c., to take a spoil, and to take a prey; but see, the Lord had another design, "Thou shalt come up against my people Israel, as a cloud to cover the land, it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land:" Why? "That the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes:" and in verse 23., "Thus will I magnify myself and sanctify myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord." Here is God's design, God doth let out the wrath and anger of wicked men against his people, and he hath this design that his name may be sanctified: so that you have this assurance also, the great design of God.

You have the assurance of God's zeal; the zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall do this: the God whom we serve is a zealous God. Zeal is angered love. Now there are three things that God doth love especially. He loves his truth; he loves his worship; and he loves his people. When wicked men do prevail against the people of God, they scorn the truth, they defile his worship, they persecute his people. I say, these three things God loves in the world. But now God will not suffer these things that he loves thus, to be always trampled on: for he is a zealous God, and therefore you may build upon it, you may be assured of it, that either he will restrain the rage of men, or he will turn their wrath and anger unto his own praise.

But then, suppose all this: what is our duty that doth flow from hence?

If that there be such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of men against the saints and people of God; wonder not at it, be not offended when you see it: it was always so from the beginning: God hath put enmity, and the enmity that God hath put between the seeds, shall stand; Cain began betime, and as Luther saith, Cain will be killing his brother Abel to the world's end: it hath always been so, and do you think there shall be less anger in the hearts of the men of the world against the people of God now in the latter days: no, rather, more; in Rev. xii., it is said, "The devil is come down, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." The shorter the devil's time is, the more his wrath will be in his instruments: why now we are fallen in the latter times and therefore his anger must be greater now. Austin thinks that the anger and wrath and persecution of the wicked, will be the greatest at the last: saith he, The persecution of the primitive times was very sharp, but afterwards there followed the persecution of the Arians, and that was sharp, but the last persecution, is the persecution of antichrist, and that shall be the sharpest: and we find in Rev. xi., speaking of the latter days, "That the nations were angry," verse 18., "And the nations were angry and thy wrath is come." That is well, God's wrath goes with their anger: but the nations were angry, speaking of the latter days. There are three or four things that will raise the anger and wrath of antichrist in the latter days.

There is the prophesying of the witnesses: the witnesses prophesy, and when they have finished their prophecy, the beast shall kill them; and being slain, they shall make merry over the witnesses that prophesied, verse 10., and rejoice over them, and shall send gifts one to another: why? because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth; the protestants and reformed churches do torment by their prophecy. So that there is one thing that doth enrage them.

Another thing that doth raise the anger of the anti-christian party in the world in the latter days, is the separation: for there shall be the greatest separation that ever was, "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." There shall be the greatest separation, and that provokes them.

Another thing that shall provoke the anti-christian party in the latter days is this, that they shall pour forth the vials: the angels that come out of the temple, they shall have an hand in pouring out the vials: and what then? Why then, the men of the world, they shall be tormented, and gnash their teeth, and bite their tongues for pain. The pouring out of the vials is another thing wherein they shall be instrumental for the angering of the bestial party. But then another thing shall be

The setting up the kingdom of Christ. So you have it in Revelations xi. The seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying: The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever, &c. What then? "And the nations were angry." When Christ's kingdom comes to be set up, then the nations are angry. It is the setting up of the kingdom of Christ that angers the nations: and therefore in the second Psalm, Why do the heathen rage, and the kings and princes take counsel together? It follows, I will set my King upon his holy hill, I will set up my kingdom, and the kingdom of Christ shall be set up; for all they are so angry at it, I will do it. But this is another thing that shall raise the anger of the men of the world in the latter days. Aye, but is this so, that there is such a deal of anger and wrath in the hearts of the wicked against the people of God? Be not offended at it, it always was so, and it must be so in the latter days.

If there be so much wrath and anger in the hearts of wicked men against the saints, why should we not all make sure of the love of Christ? oh, the love of God in Christ will weigh down men's anger, what need I care though men be angry, if God love me; though men frown, so God smile: if God be angry, and wicked men angry too, how shall we bear that? how shall we stand under that? Wicked men are angry, and full of anger, and it is a persecuting time, and wicked men are very angry against the saints, if God be angry too, how shall we bear it? Therefore labour to make sure of the love of God in Jesus Christ.

If that the wrath and anger of wicked men shall turn to the praise of God, why should we fear when wicked men are angry? why should we be afraid? when men are angry, we

are apt to fear, but in Isaiah li., “ Who art thou that art afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass : and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hast stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth ?” &c. Who art thou that art afraid of a man that shall die ? Is that all the argument ? There is another argument before, verse 7., “ Harken unto me ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law, fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.” Why ? “ For the moth shall eat them up like a garment.” They shall eat out themselves, as the moth eats out herself. “ For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool ; But my righteousness,” the gospel of my righteousness, and the righteousness of Christ, that is my righteousness, shall be for ever, and my salvation, from generation to generation. Fear not, why, God will turn all their wrath and anger unto his praise. And therefore why should we fear ?

If God will turn the wrath and anger of wicked men unto his own praise, why should we not be contented, satisfied and comforted under all the rage and malice of unreasonable men in such a day as this ?

Will you say, oh but they are not only angry, but they are furious. Why, their fury shall turn to the Lord’s praise.

You will say, oh but they are not only furious, but they hate, and they are enraged and their rage ascends up to heaven. All this shall turn to God’s praise.

Their great design is to damp the spirits of the people of God. But they waxed bold by my bonds, saith Paul, speaking of the saints.

Their great design is to scatter the people of God. But by the scattering of God’s people shall his truth be scattered. They scatter God’s people, and God’s people scatter God’s truth : it shall turn to his praise.

Their great design is to destroy the gospel, to suppress the gospel. But, saith Paul, my bonds turned to the furtherance of the gospel. Thus God will work it to his praise. And therefore when you see the wrath, anger, and malice of wicked men, breaking out to such persecution ; be quiet, be contented, be satisfied, be comforted ; all this shall God turn to his praise, or he will restrain it.

But then, if these things be so, why should we not now stand still and behold the salvation of God? See what God will do, expect the fulfilling of all this, it is a day of anger, it is a day of great wrath, there is abundance of anger and wrath, and hatred and malice in the hearts of men against the people of God at this day, who doth not see it? Well then, friends, stand still; you know how angry Pharaoh was when he followed after the Israelites; and saith Moses, Stand still and see the salvation of God. So say I, you shall see all this turn to God's praise. You shall see the restraining of prayer, turn to the enlarging of prayer. You shall see the seeking to suppress the gospel, turn to the furtherance of the gospel.

Now in such a day as this, be righteous in your places, for saith the Lord: Say to the righteous, It shall go well with him. Say! who should say it? Why, ministers say it, christians say it one to another. Let every man say it to himself. Say to the righteous, "It shall go well with him," therefore be righteous in such a day as this.

And then, Fear before the Lord; in such a day of anger be sure that you fear, and fear before the Lord. Look what is said in Eccles. viii., "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him." That fear before him; what is that? That is, a man that fears the Lord, walking up and down in the presence of God.

But what case doth he speak to?

Look into the 9th verse, "There is a time," saith he, "wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt; and, saith he, because they rule thus, and sentence against wicked men is not executed speedily, but they go on and prosper in their rule and government; therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." But saith he, "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him." Be sure therefore that you fear the Lord, and that you fear before him; and the more you fear God, and fear before him, the less will you fear men.

But then again, and so I end. Now in such a time, give

yourself much to prayer. In Ps. cix. 4: "For my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer." So you read it, but "I prayer." I give myself unto, is not in the Hebrew, but, "I prayer;" the sense is good enough. For my love they are my adversaries, but I give myself unto prayer. Now in such a time as this, when they are angry, and their rage ascends up to heaven; now do I go to prayer, now do I give myself to prayer. Now then, if it be an angry day with the enemies, now go to prayer. And in all your prayers in reference to men's anger and malice, when you go and spread their anger and malice before the great God, aim more at your duty, than at your safety. Look into Acts iv., there you find that they were angry: "Why do the heathen rage," verse 25. They bring Ps. ii. to their purpose, "and the people imagine a vain thing, The kings of the earth stood up;" being at prayer, at verse 29, "And now Lord behold their threatenings." They spread their threatenings before the Lord: "And now Lord behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants," What, grant safety? No, "Grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word:" it is matter of duty that they pray for. What then? "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Here was prayer answered presently; they prayed, and in their prayer, their mind was more upon their duty than upon their safety. They go to God, and spread the threatenings of the enemies before the Lord. And now Lord, behold their threatenings. And what then? Now grant that with all boldness; let us beg grace to do our duty. They begged not for safety, but their great request was: that they might have grace to do their duty. So, I say, when men are angry: now let us go to God in prayer, and in all our prayers, spreading their anger and threatenings before the Lord. Yet let our mind be more upon our duty, than upon our safety.