

denly all is gone, The Oxen were taken away, and the Affes that fed by them. But who made this attempt? The messenger informs that in the next words:

And the Sabæans fell upon them.

לָבָן from *The Sabæans.*] The Hebrew is, *Saba fell upon them*, the Country put for the people, *Saba* for the *Sabæans*. As we use to say, *Spain* made war, and *France* made war, that is, the *Spaniards* made war, or the *French* made war; so it is such an expression, *Saba* fell upon them, that is, the people inhabiting *Saba*.

Fell upon them.] The word noteth a mighty violence, they came upon them as from above, they came powing down upon them like a storm. There is such a phrase in war, when they go violently upon a place, they are said to storm the place; to storm the gates of a Castle, or of a City; so here, they fell upon them, that is, they came violently upon them like a storm. In *Prov.* 1. 27: destruction is described to come upon wicked men like a whirlwind.

Sabæos autem Arabas intellege, qui latrociniis dediti erant: unde posterior atas eos Saracenos appellavit, non a Sara ut quidam somniant, sed a Saras verbo Arabico, quod furari & latrocinari significat. Unde Saric, Fur, Latro, Druf. in loc.

The *Sabæans* were a people (as it is concluded by most interpreters) inhabiting *Arabia felix*; neere the Country where *Job* dwelt: And for the manners of these people, it is observed by Historians, that they were a people famous only for robberies, a people that lived by pillage and by plundering of their neighbors, such a people they were; These *Sabæans* fell upon them, they took away thy Cattel, and have slain thy servants with the edge of the Sword.

Here it may be questioned, How or why these *Sabæans* at such a time should fall upon the estate of *Job*? What hurt had *Job* done them? *Job* lived in a faire way with all his neighbors, and kept good quarter and correspondence with them; he was not a man of war or contention, how then commeth it to passe that these fell upon *Jobs* estate and took it away, and upon that day too, in this nick of time?

As when the Widow of *Tekub* had told a fair tale to *David* about the bringing back of *Abfolom*, the King asked her, *Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?* So when you see such men, *Sabæans* and *Chaldeans* falling upon the estate of *Job*, you may demand, *Is not the hand of Satan in all this?* Yes no doubt. These *Sabæans* fall upon *Jobs* estate, but *Satan* first fell upon the

Sabæans

Sabeans, and by strong temptations provoked them to do this service.

But how could he prevail upon the *Sabeans*, that they should come and do his business now at this time?

The Apostle telleth us, *that wicked men are led captive by Satan at his will.* 2 Tim. 2.26. Satan doth lead men captive at his will, while they are as they conceive conquerours, riding in triumph, doing their owne will. These *Sabeans* come to execute their owne designs, but Satan had a design upon them, he brought them thus to spoyl the estate of *Job*.

But what could Satan do? How could Satan prevail with these? Can he force men to be his instruments, to execute his designs upon the people of God? Or hath he *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, Nations and people at his beck, or under his command?

No, Satan cannot force or compel them against their wils, but as that Scripture saith, *he leads them captive at his will*; and as another Scripture, *he is a Prince of the power of the ayre*, and he works in the children of disobedience, yea he works like a Prince, mightily and powerfully in the children of disobedience; Though he cannot constrain Ephes. 2. them, yet he can work mightily in them to effect what he hath to do.

But how doth he bring them about thus readily and suddenly to act what he projects?

Thus; First, He finds out the temper and disposition of the persons; That Satan can do; he is a great *Naturalist*, and hath a great deale of help to his skil, *long experience*, by both he can goe very far in discovering the dispositions of men, which way their spirits tend; and he found out that these *Sabeans* were a people given to robbery and spoyl, and so fit ministers for him to work by in his design of spoyling the estate of *Job*. Secondly, When he hath found out the naturall temper or state of a mans heart, he can lay a baite of temptation suitable to that inclination and desire: finding out a people given to spoyl, he presently sets before them rich spoils, these are a taking object. See, yonder is a brave prize for you, yonder is a rich man, his estate will be good plunder, yonder are Oxen and Asses store, there's good booty to be had. Thus finding out their disposition, he presents or holds up an object to them which hits it fully. Thirdly, Satan deals with man to draw him to his purpose a degree further, *sc.* by injecting and casting into the mind the motion to do this.

He not only presents such and such a thing, such and such an opportunity, but he casts in and injects the motion. As it is said of *Judas*, that the Devill put it into his heart to betray Christ; The Devil being a spirit hath access to our spirits, and can convey himself into them, and infill his suggestions: as the Lord Christ did breath upon his Disciples, and so they received the Holy Ghost, and were filled with the Spirit; So Satan breaths filthy suggestions into the spirits of men, and fills them with all manner of wickednesse, malice, unrighteousnesse, he fills them with the spirit of Hell: *Why hath Satan filled thine heart*, saith Peter to *Ananias*? Satan had fill'd his heart to lye, to the Holy Ghost; Thus he infilled these thoughts of gain by robbery and murder into the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, and filled their hearts brim full: Then they resolve to act it with the hand, and so they become his instruments. Lastly, Satan can do somewhat more then inject and suggest such thoughts; he can mightily irritate and provoke, and stir up the heart to be willing to give entertainment to such a motion. He not onely barely presents his temptation, but vehemently backs it, and will give no rest to a man till he yeelds it: As it is said of his tempting *David*, that *Satan stood up and provoked David to number the people*: He did not only inject such a thought into *David*, but he *provoked him*, he never let him alone, but followed him, solicited him to it. This Satan can do; And yet he cannot *presse men* to take up Armes for his designs, all those that fight under Satans colours are *Voluntiers*, he never constrains any, neither can he, the will is never forced by him, neither can it be. Satan uses no compulsion beyond a moral persuasion well set on; he can but vex us (as the *Midianites* did *Israel*) with his wiles. He is an *Achitophel*, not an *Alexander*, a *Machiavill*, not a *Cesar*.

This is the manner of Satans working in the children of disobedience. All these things he can do; yet I beleve he is not always put to do all these upon every one over whom he prevails. Some come to this work on easier terms then others. He needs not provoke and solicit them, a suggestion wins them. The very sight of an object overcomes them: Yea some stand ready offering their service unto Satan, and setting themselves to work any wickedness he will employ them in. I have shewed you the most that Satan can do; I conceive he had not much to do with these *Sabeans* to invite them to this war: *That which is in motion*

tion is easily moved. And as we say, *He must needs run whom the Devil drives*, so the Devil needs not drive them who are running of themselves.

It being opened, what these *Sabeans* were, and how they came into the service of Satan, what made them take up Arms, as it were, in his cause; we may observe from hence,

First, *That wicked and ungodly men while they satisfy their own lusts, are but doing the worke of Satan and executing his designs.* These *Sabeans*, though they did not think it, yet they came upon Satans errand: So God, when he doth justly use wicked men to punish or correct his people, they doe their own will, and they have their own way; but God hath his way too, he overrules them to effect his businesse at that time; As it is said of the King of *Assyria*, *O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, I will send him against an hypocritical Nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him charge; Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart thinke so,* Isa. 10. he hath purposes of his own. So they that are agitated by Satan and provoked by him, they think not so, they think not they are doing the will and work, the dirty drudgery of Satan, but the truth is, they do nothing else all the while: *You are of your father the Devil, and his lusts will you do, saith* Ioh. 8. *Christ to the Jews*, while they do their own, they fulfill the lusts and designs of Satan. As it is said in the *Revelation*, *The Devil shall cast some of you into prison;* it was not the Devil in person, Revel. 2. 10. it was the Devil in his seconds or servants; and these men little thought that they did the Devils service at that time, if one should have come and told them, you are now doing the Devils work, and undertaking a peece of service for him, you are so many instruments and agents for Hell; they would not have beleev'd it, but the truth is, it was the Devils work, and they did it so devilishly, that from both it is said the Devil did it, he cast some of them into prison. It is a fearful thing to persecute or oppress the people of God, such in serving their owne lusts, are indeed the *right hand of Satan, the Devils hirelings.*

Secondly, Forasmuch as Satan will have *Sabeans* and *Caldeans* to afflict *Jobs* estate, (he could have destroyed all himself if he pleased. Good Angels have mighty power, and so have wicked Angels too, if God will let them alone to put out their power: therefore they are called *Principalties and powers.* Satan had Ephes. 6. leave, he might have taken what course he would with the estate

of *Job*: he doth not call in the *Sabeans* and the *Chaldeans* to this work, because he could not do it himself; No, it is because he would work by others, he would have instruments.) Note from hence;

That *Satan* loveth to draw others to be partakers with him in his designs. Though he can doe his work alone, yet he will have man joyn with him in it, if he can: And in this he imitates God himself, who hath an almighty power, is able to do all things alone if he please, yet he usually calleth in instruments: He is able to convert alone by the motion of his Spirit, but he will have Preachers to convert by the ministry of the Word: He is able to protect his people from their enemies by his own strength, yet he will have Armies mustered to do it by. And why doth God chuse to work thus? There is a double good in it. He doth it that he may do good two ways at once. First, His creature is saved and relieved, that's one good. Secondly, Men who are employed as instruments are honoured and respected; They having given helpe to God in such a cause, (so he interprets it, a coming forth to help the Lord against the mighty) God gives them honour in the eyes of all his servants; there is another good. So *Satan*, while he setteth men a work, *Sabeans*, *Chaldeans*, and others to do mischief, he doth a double mischief at once; he doth mischief to *Job* or others whom he afflicts, and he doth mischief to his instruments, he makes these sin, as he makes others suffer: If he carry on the work alone, they suffer, but others do not partake in the guilt of the sin; but now when he useth instruments to effect his wicked designs, he makes one miserable and the other wicked. This is one of *Satan's* methods, he will work by means, and do his businesse by the hands of men, that he may at once do a double mischief.

Thirdly, In that these *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans* are observed in Histories to be a people given much to robberies and spoil, and these are the men whom *Satan* picks out for this businesse. Observe;

That *Satan* suiteth his temptations to mans naturall temper and inclination. Whensoever he tempteth, he takes this advantage if he can discover or obtain it. He is wiser then to set sail against wind and tyde, to row against the stream; Therefore he labours all he can to find which way the stream of every mans affections runs; and to what sins his relations, his calling or his opportunities

cities, lay him most open and obnoxious, accordingly he lays his snares and spreads his net. When he meets with a proud man, him he tempteth with high thoughts: When he meeteth with a covetous man, him he tempteth to the love of the world, he lays a golden bait of profit before his eyes: The adulterous he leads to the Harlots house. For howsoever it be true, that every man hath in him a principle suiting to every sin, yet it is a truth too, that every man is not equally active for, or dispos'd unto every sin, and every man hath not every particular sin predominant in him; now Satan when he seeth what is predominant in any man, then he fashioneth and frameth a temptation suitable: He perceived these *Sabeans* were given to rob and spoil, and he sheweth them a desirable booty.

And have slain thy servants with the edge of the sword.

This is a further aggravation of the affliction, they did not only fall upon *Jobs* cattell and took them away; but they slew his servants. A mans servants are neerer to him then his Cattell, then his Oxen, and his Asses; servants are next unto our Children. So that this was an heightning of *Jobs* sorrow, not only are your cattell gone, but your servants are slain, and they are slain (saith he) with the edge of the sword; the word in the Hebrew is *they are slain with the mouth of the sword*.

We read in Scripture sometimes of the face of the Sword, and sometime of the mouth of the Sword. As *Isa.* 31. 8. where we translate, *they shall flee from the Sword*, the Hebrew is, *they shall flee from the face of the Sword*; The like Text you have, *Jer.* 25. 27. Now when the Scripture speaks of the face of the Sword, it is meant of war coming, or war preparing and approaching. But the mouth of the Sword is war inflicted, war acted. This phrase, the mouth of the Sword, is used to shew that the Sword is a great devourer: *Deut.* 32. 42. *I will make mine arrowes drunk with blood, and my Sword shall devour flesh*. War hath a terrible face, it hath a wide mouth and sharp teeth, *They have slain thy servants with the edge of the Sword*, the mouth of the Sword hath devoured them.

At this day we have great cause to have our hearts deeply affected with this thing. There hath been (as it were) the face of the Sword a great while looking towards us, but now there is the very mouth of the Sword gaping at us, yea tearing, gnawing, and devouring

vouring the flesh and bones of thousands amongst us. Where the Sword comes it will devour; war is a great judgment, one of Gods fore judgements, the forest of all Gods outward judgments. *David* chooseth the pestilence rather than the Sword; the pestilence is a devourer, but the Sword is a greater devourer. And though the Prophet *Jeremiah* in his *Lamentations* makes famine a forer judgment than the Sword (*Cap. 4. 9.*) *They that be slain with the Sword are better then they that be slain with hunger;* Yet the Sword is in this worse than famine, because usually it is the cause of famine. The Sword cuts off food, the support of mans life, as wel as the life of man. While the Sword is making it self fat, it hath famine in the belly of it.

We need not go to *Jeremy* or *Josephus* for the proof of this, in *Jerusalem's* *Babylonian* or *Roman* desolations: sad *Germany*, bleeding *Ireland*, are neer woful witnesses and spectacles of it at this day. The Sword hath open'd a way for famine to enter both, and which of the two hath eaten most flesh, is hard to determine. Let us cry earnestly to God that the mouth of the Sword may be stopped, or continued open only to devour those who would devour the man that is more righteous then they; let us pray that blood may be spared, or none but corrupt blood spilt. *Spare thy people O Lord*; It is (I confesse) one of the saddest prognosticks in my observation against this Nation: That God hitherto hath made little difference. Our Sword hath not yet been taught from Heaven to distinguish of men. Precious blood hath been drawn; and men whose very hairs were al numbred (that is, highly priz'd) by God, have been numbred among the slain. It must satisfie us that the will of God is so. The answer which *David* gave *Joabs* messenger is good setling counsel now (*2 Sam 11. 25.*) *Let not this thing displease thee* (He speaks this after the fall of noble *Uriah*) *for the sword* (not by accident but decree, not casually but providentially) *devoureth so and such* (as the Hebrew elegance hath it) *one as well as another*, so we translate. It is mercy, we are not all consumed by this eater, as in the Text ye may read all the servants of *Job* were, excepting one, only one got out of the mouth of the sword, it eat up all saving one, and he was saved, that by the report of this destructive sword he might destroy *Job* himself.

And

And I onely am escaped to tell thee.

The Word in the Originall is double, *Tantum ego, solus ego*, only I, *I alone am escaped*, as if the man should have said between horrour and amazement, much ado I had to get away without losing somewhat of my self, I only single, single I got away and escaped. The sword was very hungry, when but one man of all *Jobs* servants escaped the teeth of it.

Bur how cometh it to passe that this one man escaped?

Certainly, as I said before, the hand of Satan was in this also. For howsoever the Lord ordered and disposed all these things, yet he let Satan worke in his circle, in his compasse to contrive things as he pleased himself, the most aptly he could imagine, to afflict and trouble *Job*, therefore there is somewhat in it, no good will (I beleve) to *Job*; that this one man had the favour of quarter, or the mercy of an escape.

It was not out of any compassionate respect to *Job* that one of his servants comes home alive. It was rather to increase the affliction of *Job* and for the perfecting of his sorrows, this man was not slain, that *Job*, may be more deeply wounded. There are two reasons which may be assigned why one man escaped out of every one of these calamities:

First, That the report of his affliction might come suddenly to him. A man that escapes out of such a danger needs no driving, his fear will add wings to his feet, he will run home again:

Secondly, For the certainty of it. Reports fly abroad, they may be false, *Fama mendax*, fame is a liar. *Job* might have had such reports from his neighbours in the Country, all your cattel are seized upon, and all your servants are slain; and *Job* might sleight it and say, This might be but a runior, I give no credit to it: Therefore Satan lets one of his owne servants come frightened home with the news, one that was there, one that was an eye-witnesse, one that *Job* knew, one that had no reason, much lesse the boldnesse to bring false tales to him; that so the report coming speedily and certainly, his heart might be smitten presently. *It is some abatement of an evill to have but a colour to doubt of it.* If we can but lay hold of any circumstance which renders an evill report improbable, and may for a while strengthen our unbelief of it, we may in that interim get more strength of faith to bear it, when we see it is certain and unquestion-

unquestionable. There was no mercy in such a sparing.

And we may observe out of it, that which Solomon speaks of the mercies of the wicked is most true of Satans; *The very tender mercies of Satan are cruel*, the best of his mercies, his sparings are woundings, he never spareth but with an intent to do further hurt. *Jobs afflictions had not gone so deep, if this man had not been left to bring the message.*

It followeth,

Verse 16. *While he was yet speaking there came also another and said, the fire of God is fallen from Heaven and hath burnt up the Sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*

In this verse we have the second charge which this great enemy gives Job, *While he was yet speaking there came also another. Afflictions seldom goe alone;* And therefore when one affliction is ended, look another should begin, and labour to prepare for it. Job having received this message of the losse of his cattell and death of his servants, while the messenger was yet speaking, a second comes with a sadder story then that. Satan would not give him the least breathing or intermission, *while he was yet speaking, one evil treads upon the heell of another;* as wave overtakes wave in the sea; so it was here, here was wave after wave, to overwhelm his spirit. And as it is said in the Revelation, concerning him that sat on the white horse, that he rid out conquering and to conquer; there was no intermission of his victories; so Satan goeth forth afflicting and to afflict, vexing and to vex, tempting and to tempt, he will never give over. *While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, the fire of God is fallen upon thy sheep.*

The fire of God.

Why is it here called the *fire of God*? Some conceive it is called the *fire of God*, because sent from God: that is ascribed to God, which comes from God, as that Gen. 19:24. where it is said, that the Lord did rain fire and brimstone upon Sodom out of Heaven from the Lord; or Jehovah did rain from Jehovah fire upon Sodom to consume it: And Levit. 10:2. it is said, *That a fire went out from the Lord and consumed Nabad and Abihu. Elijah procures*