

Readings of M. Deering upon

threatnings, before she ate of the apple; when G O D had said ye shall die the death, did she not fall to halting, and began with peradventure? She could not tell well whether it were so or no. And from this staggering fell she not away to sinne, and turned not till she fell into the wrath of God for euer? Did not Adam also follow her example? and this corruption let vs bee sure wee haue taken from his loynes, and sucked from his breasts: by it the diuel is strong against vs, but let vs beware of it and be faithfull, and his strength is broken. The Lion of the tribe of Iudah hath ouercome the crooked Serpent, and by faith in him wee shall surelie liue.

This (dearely beloved) the Apostle heere dooth teach vs, a blessed lesson if we can happilie learne it, and in which we shall bee saued for euermore, and all our enemies shall bee our footstoole. And the Lord grant for his Christes sake, that we may be made rich in all knowledge of his will, and abound in a great measure of faith, that we may cleaue vnseperable vnto God, and vnremoueable to be ioyned as chaste virgins, with a pure faith: vnto his Sonne Christ. And let vs pray, &c.

The

the Epistle to the Hebrues.

The eighteenth Lecture, ypon the  
1. and 2. verses of the fourth  
Chapter.

1. **L**et vs feare therefore, least any time by forsaking the promise of entering into his rest, any of you should seeme to be deprived.
2. For vnto vs was the Gospell preached, as also vnto them, but the word that they heard, profited not them, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it.



Ye haue heard two especiall points, in which the Apostle dooth amplifie this exhortation alledged out of the Prophet; *To day, if you heare his voice, harden not your hearts, &c.* The first was, that he saith, *to day*: therefore wee ought not to foreflow the time of our calling, but take the occasion and opportunity, while it is offered.

Say not vnto the Lord, when he knocketh; goe, and come againe another time: for thou knowest not whether he will returne or no. Seeke him therfore where he may be found, and call vnto him while he is neere at hand.

The second poynt the Apostle stode on was, that, *If we heare his voyce, we should not harden our hearts*: teaching vs, that not onelie by faith wee should bee fruitfull hearers. And if infidelitie beate rule in our hearts, all preaching and teaching is in vaine, and the voyce of Christ can bee vnto vs, but a sauour of death, vnto death: therefore, when wee heare him speake, let vs faithfullie receiue the Gospell of Salvation at his mouth,

or at the mouth of his Minister, knowing hee is our onely prophet, given of God vnto vs: of this the Apostle now concludeth in the first of this chapter; *Let vs feare therefore least at any time this promise of entering into his rest being forsaken, any of you may seem to be deprived:* by this conclusion yet once againe exhorting them, that they would not neglect their onely Prophet calling them, and so at last bee frustrate of their vaine hope. Let vs heere lay together these sayings of the Apostle; in the beginning of the second Chapter when he had proued our Saviour Christ to be God, he saith: *Wherefore my brethren, wee must oserfully hearken to the things we heare, least we fall away as water.*

In the beginning of the third Chapter, when he proued him to bee man also, like vnto vs, except sinne, hee addeth, *Therefore my brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and high Priest of our profession, Iesus Christ:* After againe, when he had proued our Saviour Christ to be our onely and faithfull Prophet, hee confirmeth his doctrine by the word of the Prophet, alledging this exhortation out of him: *Today if you will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts, &c.* Againe, applying these words of the Prophet, he saith: *See my brethren that there be not in any of you an euill heart, of unbelife.*

Now, heere againe, as a conclusion, *Let vs feare, least this promise of entering into his rest being forsaken, wee should seeme to be deprived:* And as though all this were not enough, in the eleuenth verse after, he saith: *Let vs therefore be diligent to enter into that rest, that no man fall into the euill example of disobedience.*

And yet againe, in the ende of this Chapter; *Seeing wee haue a great high Priest that hath passed the heauens, euen Iesus Christ the Sonne of God, let vs holde fast our profession, &c.*

What

What shall we thinke of all this? What meane these often exhortations? surely (dearely beloued) nothing else but that wee bee dull of hearing, and exceeding hard to learne: for tell me, notwithstanding this exhortation so often made, are there not (trowe you) many among vs, which yet regard it not? Yea, and yet if againe, and againe he should crie vnto vs, would we all obey his voyce? Wee would, if wee were wise; but foolishnesse is so wrapped vp in our hearts, that I am afrayd, all the exhortations not onely here made by the Apostle, but all other that haue bene made vnto vs, thirty, forty, fifty, threescore yeares, haue not yet taught vs all that be here this day, with singleness of heart and with sincerity to loue the Lord: and is it then any maruell, though the Apostle hauing compassion on his brethrens ignorance, doeth this often exhort them in one thing? and if we bee weake, subiect to the same infirmities that they were, let vs thinke it is necessary for vs. Onely I beseech you take heede, that seeing God hath this mercie vpon vs, which he had vpon our fathers, that his word is thus vnto vs; *Precept vpon precept, precept vpon pre-* He. 12.10  
*cept:* let not vs bee againe as they were, that notwithstanding all these often and earnest exhortations, so plaine to understand, yet that the Lord speak vnto vs, as with a stammering and a strange language, that wee vnderstand nothing: for Alas (dearly beloued) how vnprofitable were that for vs? And how much better were it, wee had neuer heard at all, than so often to refuse the Lords calling? Let this therefore bee our wise vnderstanding in this case, and that which so often is told vs, let vs at the last truely learne it. Now, touching these woords of the Apostle, that hee saith: *let vs feare, that wee lose not this rest promised vs, wee must not take it, as though the Apostle taught that the elect should feare, as though they might fall from*

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their hope; or, that their election were not sure: for you have heard before, how he said, *wee must hold the reioycing of our hope, with all assurance and constancie vnto the end*: but here wee must consider to whome the Apostle speaketh, that is, to such as are farre off from a true faith, which haue shewed no great regard to the voyce of the Lord Iesu, which are yet in many tentations of sinne, doubtfull to be carried away with the deceits of it. As if at this day the Apostle should preach, when wee see so many worldlie minded men, so few hungering and thirsting for heauenlie things, in this case, and to such people (considering their outward workes) the Apostle saith: let vs feare, as in deede there is iust cause of feare: for when there is scarce in vs any zeale of G O D, scarce any loue of righteousnesse, but all our thoughts doe wander in worldlie vanitie; if in this case wee should boast of our faith, were it not good to bid vs feare, to take heed that wee bee not deceiued? And what is this against the assurance of the faithfull, that the Apostle biddeth them, which are not yet called in holinesse, to feare, lest they bee deceiued in their vayne hope.

The feare that is commended is the godly, what is it.

If it be heere sayed; the Apostle includeth also himselfe, and therefore this feare is also in the most godlie: I denie not, but in other places of Scripture, feare is commended vnto the most godlie, but the cause of this is, because wee bee all weake, full of infirmitie, readie to sinne: as wee see in Dauid, in Ezechias, in Peter, in all the Saints of God: and therefore this feare is commended in them, which is, a good care and regard of their weakenesse, that they fall not, a care that may driue out securitie, not a feare to take away the boldnes of faith.

So when we are bid to feare, it is as when we are bid to watch, to be sober, to stand with our loynes girded, to haue before

the Epistle to the Hebrews

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before vs the waies of God with reuerence, and obedience, it forbiddeth presumptuous and vaine boasting of saluation, when the glorious and fearefull name, *the Lord thy God*, is not regarded of thee.

So, when Saint Paule commendeth our faith, he addeth: *Rom. be not yet high minded but feare*: and Iob sayeth, *If I haue done righteouslie, I will not lift up my head*. This feare is a feare of falling into sinne lest we should offend so mercifull a father; it is not a feare of falling from his grace, lest hee should take his mercie from vs. A plaine rule of this, Saint Paule commendeth vnto vs all, writing to the Philippians, *Phil. with feare (sayth hee) and trembling make amend of your owne saluation*: commending lowlinesse, and humblenesse of minde, but yet ioyning it fast to the hope of eternall life. And this counsell hee followed himselfe, as he sayeth to the Corinthians; *I was among you in weakenesse, and in feare, and in much trembling*: Yet hee held fast his faith, that *neither death, nor any creature should seperate him from the loue of God*.

And this the Apostle, euen in this place, teacheth, when hee addeth; *lest arie of you seeme to be deprived*. For (in deede) he is not deprived, or frustrate of any hope, who neuer had hope, but it seemeth so to some, because hee woulde talke of hope. No more can any man fall, who neuer stode: because it appeareth so, Saint Paule sayeth; *Hee that seemeth to stande, let him sake heede hee fall not*.

It is most certaine, *hope maketh not asbamed*: but wee deceiue our selues, in thinking we haue hope; for true hope, as is siide heere, is in the promises, and they are apprehended with faith, and faith hath feare of sinne. Where these things are, no man is deprived of his hope; where these are not, hee hopeth foolishlie, who had in deede,

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no hope at all. And he is said to fall out, who at the last is found to have no inheritance with the Saints, who yet neuer fell out: for in deede, hee neuer was within the covenant; according to that, which Saint Iohn saith: *They went out from vs, but they were not of vs; for, if they had bene of vs, they should have taried with vs.*

This I say, that you may know how to answer the enemies of our faith, who would haue vs still to doubt, and neuer to be sure of Gods promises; when they object vnto vs these places of feare, wee may answer them, that our feare is our humilitie and casting away of pride: our feare is our reuerend care to walke in the waies of God, if they feare any other feare, we will not feare with them; *For God hath not given vnto vs the spirit of feare againe vnto bondage, but he hath given vs the spirit of adoption, by which wee crie, abba, father.*

This is our blessing which wee haue of GOD, and in which, wee should alwaies reioyce. I graunt, wee doo not heere obey God, as wee should: for who is hee that sinneth not. Wee feare many times, and Gods dearest children are most tempted; so that they are brought somerime euen to hell gates; but this we confesse, is our infirmitie, the truth of Gods promises ought to haue greater faith within vs; but it is necessarie we should feele our sinnes, that we might be humbled, and we must dye in our selues, that we may reigne through the victorie which Christ hath gotten: and in all our weakenesse we will still confesse, that we may not, nor ought not thus to feare, but much rather to reioyce in the Lord, and alwaies reioyce.

Now, it followeth in the Apostle: *For vnto vs hath the Gospell been preached, as well as vnto them, but the word that they heard profited not them, because it was not mixed with faith, in those that heard it.*

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In these wordes, the Apostle sheweth the cause, why hee hath thus applied the Prophets exhortation vnto vs, because vnto vs now the same Gospell is preached, which was preached vnto them: and if wee be vnfaithfull, how should wee escape, but be partakers of the same punishments?

This place is well to be marked, which teacheth vs that the same saluation is now preached, which was preached before to all Patriarches and Prophets; in which we know there hath been but one way of Saluation, from the beginning of the world; for then this was promised, which is now performed: *The seede of the woman shall breake the head of the serpent*: from which promise made, there was neuer but one faith of Gods elect, and one way of life, which was Iesu Christ, euen as our Apostle sayth, *Iesu Christ yesterday, and so day*: hee is the same, world without end. And this doctrine is not newe, but the Prophets and Patriarches knewe it with vs, and they all beleued the Catholique Church, and communion of Saints, euen as this day we do. Saint Peter sayth, *that it was revealed vnto the Prophets, that not vnto themselves, but vnto vs they ministred those things, which now are preached vnto vs.* And the Prophet Esay in the 41. chapter, sheweth, how God called out all nations, as it were to dispute with him, whether there were any saluation in the world, but by his free grace: and first hee asketh, who called Abraham in that covenant of mercy which was given him? who hath done it? euen he, that called the generations from the beginning: *I the Lord, I am the first, and with the last, I am the same*: expressly teaching, that his people of Israel had the same saluation, which Abraham had; and Abraham, the same which all Nations and Countries euer shall haue; one sauing health of all, euen as God is for ever vnchangeable. So Saint Paul, making comparison betweene

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tweene vs, and the people of Israel, of whom, heere the Apostle speaketh, he saith: *They ate all the same spirituall meate, and dranke all the same spirituall drinke: for they did drinke of the rocke which followed them, and the rocke was Christ.* And not onely this one saluation is vnto vs all; but this also, only Christ hath been euer the Prophet and Minister, to declare that saluation; for so the Apostle teacheth, then, and now, his voyce was heard: and as it is sayd after, his voyce did then shake the earth, yea, before then, in the daies of Noah hee was preached vnto the disobedient people, who were drowned in the floyd, and are now holden in the prison of their sinne. So that this wee know, in Christ are saued all his Saints, and by Christ they haue been taught all that euer did beleue. Whereby wee learne, all the sacrifices of the Patriarches, and all sacrifices and ceremonies of the lawe, they purged no part of their sinnes, neither was there any redemption in them; for the Israelites had not the fathers sacrifices, nor the fathers had their ceremonies, nor wee haue now either sacrifices, or ceremonies, which were in honour among them, yet one saluation is vnto vs all; and therefore, as we may boldly say vnto them, for all their ordinances in worldly elements, they did not purge their consciences, meates and drinke did not helpe them, who were dayly exercised in such obseruations: so againe they may say vnto vs, neither our sacraments doe giue grace vnto vs, no more than theirs vnto them; they seale vnto vs the grace that is in Christ, & assure vs of the saluation that is in him; but in themselves there is no health at all. And if wee may say thus, even of the sacraments instituted of G O D, in so much, that if they should bee made causes of our iustification, and the glory of Christ should be so giuen vnto them, wee might iustly call them the beggerly elements of the world, and vnprofitable things.

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What shall wee say or thinke, of so many childish toyes, and foolish fancies, as we haue seene of late, when men will attribute saluation vnto them? when our owne workes haue this honour giuen them? when Holy water, Bells, Candles, Crosses, Palme bowes, Agnus Deies, the beginning of Saint Johns Gospell hanging about your necke: when to these things wee attribute power against the diuell, whom Christ vanquished only vpon his Crosse, what name shall wee giue these beggerly things? When Pilgrimages, fastings, visiting of mens Tombes, kissing of Reliques, purchasing of Masses; when these things are exalted and said to purge our sinnes, what shall we call them? what drunkenesse, what witchings, what madnesse, what brutish astonishment hath covered our spirits, that wee should beleue such things? what strange illusions and sleights of Satan, haue hid our vnderstandings, that we should know nothing? The ceremonies ordained of God himselfe, the sacraments of his eternall testament, they are but helpe of our infirmities, to leade vs vnto Christ; from whom when you shall seperate them, they are no more Gods holy sacraments, but beggerly elements, and our owne phantasies and fond imaginations, which are contrary to Christ, even from our cradle, to exalt them thus, what is it, but a proud liking of our owne presumption.

This is a cleare prooffe, that in nothing is saluation but in Christ alone: and that one saluation hath bene from euer, while these outward things haue had many changes. And againe, in that Christ was then the Prophet, wee are sure the Patriarches and forefathers did not worship God after their owne will and deuce, but only as the spirit of Christ did teach them; from which testimony of spirit, when they fell away, all their religion was reiecte

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for onely in Christ, GOD was also well pleased: so that, though they had no lawe written, yet were they taught of God, and his sonne was their schoolemaster, to leade them in all truth, revealing his will vnto them, euer by such meanes as best pleased him: and after, when God wrote his law, hee wrote this also as a decree for them to holde euer, that they should neuer adde nor take away, but doe onely what they were commaunded: and much more now in these last daies, in which our Sauour Christ hath appeared vnto vs in our owne nature, man like vnto vs, vpon whom wee sawe the holy Ghost to come downe, and God himselfe hath sealed him, in making manifest his owne glorie, speaking out of the cloude: *This is my beloved Sonne, heare him.* Much more (I say) wee ought now onely to heare his voyce, because now more clearly than euer before, he hath revealed all the counsell of God vnto vs; but now, the diuell hath been no lesse enuious against the saluation of man then he hath been before: now also he hath made some to set forth the imaginations of their owne hearts, and hath bewitched many to follow their damnable waies, by whom the way of truth is blasphemed, and for their owne traditions sake, he hath made the word of the Lord Iesu of none effect.

This worke hath he wrought in all the Papacie, yet wee cannot or will not see his rebellious doings: Christ saith, *his kingdom is not of this world:* yet hath he taught them to make their Bishops Princes, & hath giuen them power ouer life and goods: Christ sayth, *The Princes of the nations beare rule over them: but it shall not be so among you:* yet hath hee made his first begotten sonne to weare a triple crowne, and all the Kings of the nations to come kisse his feet. So Christ hath taught vs to worship in spirit and truth, to drinke the wine in the sacrament of his body & bloud, to pray in a knowen tongue,

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tongue, to eate of any meates without scruple of conscience, to vse holy matrimony in all estates, as a remedy against sinne: but as though Christ were no Prophet vnto vs, wee haue abrogated these his lawes, and made other contrary of our owne. This our eyes haue scene, and our eares haue heard, and whether we will or no, we must needes confesse it: yet, some flatter themselves in a maruillous madnesse, & doing all things contrary to the Lord Iesu, they say still, they cannot erre; but they shall one day see and know, that Christ is the only Prophet of the new testament; and blessed be the Lord God, who hath made vs this day to beleue it; and while yet the day of health and acceptable time is, to hearken onely vnto him, and refuse all the vaine inventions of men.

It followeth now in the Apostle: *But the word that they heard, profited them not, because it was not mingled with faith, so those that heard it.* As before the Apostle concluded, repeating againe his exhortation; so in this verse, hee repeateth the cause, why they profited not by the word of exhortation, that wee againe hearing the cause of our sinne, should bee made more wise, to take heed of it; and the cause was their infidelity, because sayth hee, *the word was not mingled vnto them with faith.* The word of God preached, is as a cup offered vnto vs, of which we must drinke whether wee will or no; and one way it is made vnto vs a cup of the water of life, another way, a cup of destruction; and such a liquor, as is of death vnto death, euen as faith or infidelity is boobyght vnto it, so it is a cup of life or death. In this similitude, the Apostle speaketh thus: *The word was not mingled to them with faith.* As men shal come to sit at the tauerne, doo mingle their drinke with spites, or their wine with sugar; so wee in that most blessed tauerne, in which the word of God is offered

1. Cor. 10  
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Heb. 13

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vs to drinke, wee must mingle it with the sweete spice of faith, and it is a cup of eternall life vnto vs; otherwise, if we be vnfaithfull, we haue lost our blessing, & are fallen from the hope of life. Christ, who is the head corner stone, in whom the building doth stand, hee is now to vs a stone of offence, at which wee haue stumbled and are fallen downe, because wee haue not receiued his word with faith. It is true, the Gospell is the power of God, to saue man, but yet to saue the man that doth beleue, whether hee bee Iew or Gentile: and here we see, how God hath ioyned vnseparably, his word and our faith: wherefore it is also called, *the word of faith*: neither is it possible to be faithfull without the knowledge of the worde; neither is any knowledge of the word profitable, but being mingled with faith. This (dearely beloued) is no obscure doctrine, that you should not vnderstand it, neither is it taught vs in ambiguous words, that ye can doubt of it, but it is plaine and plainly taught; that if we will be saued by Iesu Christ, his word must bee mingled to vs with faith; if we be of the new testament, and belong vnto this couenant which is made in Christ, to the forgiveness of our sinnes, then *wee beleue the word that is preached, and the lawes of God are written in our hearts*. And this S. Paul setteth out so cleare vnto vs, that it is impossible, impossible I say, for any to know the Gospell, and to bee ignorant of it: for this is the Gospell, as Paul sayth; *The power of God to saue all that doe beleue*: doe you heare this? & do you vnderstand it? tel me then what think you of that religion, where this preaching of the Gospell is holden backe: nay, where they haue been so enuious vnto it, that they haue not suffered the word to bee in such a language as the people might once read and vnderstand it? The Priests themselves vpon whom they laied the worke to sacrifice for their sinnes, and to whom they confessed their sinnes, to haue forgiveness of them.

1. Cor. 11

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Heb. 10.

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Rom. 1. 16

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them. And what (I say) will you thinke of such a people? or what religion haue they? doth not the Apostle say true, ther is no saluation but by beleueing the word as it is preached vnto vs? and doe they say true, that the Masse purgeth our sinnes, the Priest forgiueth them? and the Masse is in latine, the Priest is ignorant, the people are led with vain imaginations; no faith, no word is in all their doing? But it is no maruaile though some men bee robbed of their hearts, and beleue all the illusions of Satan; for how can a man beleue the trueth, except the spirit of God be in him? Pharaoh was not taught by all the wonders that Moses wrought in Egypt. The Iewes were not the wiser for all the miracles which Christ wrought before them. If such things haue happened in the dayes before vs, though now the Apostles and Prophets doe all crie, without faith in the Gospell preached, you can neuer bee saued; ignorance is abomination before GOD; and yet the Pope who taketh the worde from vs, teacheth ys no faith, couereth vs with blindness, praiseth ignorance in our hearing; if wee embrace him, follow him, loue him, honour him, as Pharaoh did Iannes and Iambres, or as the Iewes did Annas and Caiphas, let vs not maruaile, no new thing hath happened in our dayes. The Lord hath not lightned their munes, and what wisdom can bee in them; but wee will leaue them to him, who is iust and mercifull: and let vs pray, that his word may bee alwaies mingled vnto vs with faith, that in this great darkenesse of the worlde, wee may see light.

One thing els we may here marke, that it is sayd: *the word did not profite them, because it was not mingled with faith*: whereby we know it is only faith that commendeth vs vnto God, without which the word is in vaine, the presence of Christ is in vaine, to bee his brother, sister, mother, all is yaine: nothing

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nothing but faith carrieth vs with boldnesse into his presence. Many singular proofes of this, our Saviour Christ sheweth in many places, when a woman crieth vnto him:

*Blessed is the wombe that bare thee, and the pappes that gave thee sucke:* Our Saviour Christ answereth: *nay rather, blessed are they that heare the word of God, and keepe it.* When some sayd vnto him: *Behold thy mother and thy brethren would speake vnto thee:* he answered againe: *He that doth the will of my heavenly father, he is my brother and my mother.*

In another place, when controuersie was, how wee should haue life and saluation through him, he saith to his disciples: *The flesh profiteth nothing, it is the spirit that quickneth:* noting in all this, that not his bodily presence, not his kinred, not the travell of his mother, not any thing is imputed vnto vs for righteousness, but only faith, in which we beleue, according to his Gospel preached vnto vs, that in his death all our sinnes are purged, and in his resurrection we are iustified.

This maketh vs acceptable, and without this it is vnpossible to please him: this the Apostle teacheth vs here, when hee saith: *For this cause, the word profited them not, because it was not mingled vnto them with faith:* for onely faith doth all, apprehendeth all, ouercommeth all, and the gates of hell shall not in the ende preuaile against it: and the Lord increaseth this faith in vs. And let vs pray &c.

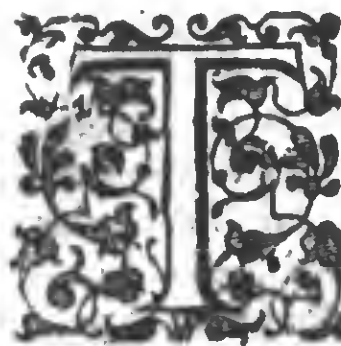
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The nineteenth Lecture, vpon the

3.4.5.6.7.8.9. and 10. verses.

- 3 For wee which haue beleued, doe enter into rest, as he said to the other: As I haue sworne in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.
- 4 For hee spake in a certaine place of the seventh day on this wise: And God did rest the seauenth day from all his workes.
- 5 And in this place againe: if they shall enter into my rest.
- 6 Seeing therefore it remaineth, that some must enter therein, and they to whome it was first preached, entred not therein for unbeliefes sake.
- 7 Againe, he appoynted in David a certaine day, by to day, after so long a time, saying as it is said: this day, if ye heare his voyce, harden not your hearts.
- 8 For if Iesus had giuen them rest, then would he not after this haue spoken of another day.
- 9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.
- 10 For he that is entred into his rest, hath also ceased from his owne workes, as God did from his.



His scripture, which now I haue read vnto you, I must needs confesse, to me it seemeth yet somewhat obscure, neither hath GOD so reuealed it vnto me, that I dare boldly pronounce, this it is: but, submitting my selfe to any better interpretation, which shall be shewed of other, according to that which God hath giuen mee: so I will shewe you what I

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