

ZERUBBABEL'S ENCOURAGEMENT TO  
FINISH THE TEMPLE.

TO THE HONOURABLE HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
ASSEMBLED IN PARLIAMENT.

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YOUR command giving me the opportunity, I took the boldness to urge and encourage you to church reformation, which is the main scope of this sermon ; a subject which otherwise, and in all other auditories, I have been silent in, and am no whit sorry for it ; for I account it the most fit and happy season to utter things of this nature unto authority itself, although the people likewise are to know their duty. My comfort is, that what I have spoken herein, I have, for the general, and I have spoken but generals, long believed, and have therefore spoken.

You were pleased so far to own me, as to betrust me with this service, to be God's mouth in public unto you ; and also this sermon of mine, as to command the publishing of it. Wherefore, as in propriety it is now become yours more than mine, or all the world's, so let it be in the use of it. If it shall add the least strengthening to your resolutions to keep this purpose for ever in the thoughts of your hearts, I have what I aimed at. Go on, worthy fathers and elders of this people, and prosper in, yea, by this work, without which nothing that you do will prosper. But the rest I shall speak to God for you. Let me be known to you by no other thing than this, to be one whose greatest desires and constant prayers are and have been, and utmost endeavours in my sphere shall be, for the making up the divisions of the church in these distracted times with love of truth and peace. And therein, to use David's words, am,

Wholly at your commandment,

THO. GOODWIN.

## ZERUBBABEL'S ENCOURAGEMENT TO FINISH THE TEMPLE.

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*Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the head-stone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace unto it. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hand shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you.—ZECH. IV. 6–9.*

THESE words are part of the interpretation of a stately vision of a candlestick, and two olive trees standing thereby and pouring oil into it, made to the prophet Zechariah in the 2d and 3d verses; and the scope and matter, both of that vision and of this interpretation, is to encourage Zerubbabel their prince, and with him the priests and elders of the Jews, to finish the building, and make complete the ornaments of the temple, whereof the foundation had many years before been laid, but was left imperfect, and was left disfurnished. And this his scope is plainly, and without a parable, held forth in the 9th verse, 'The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it.' And, indeed, to stir him and them up unto this perfecting God's house, unto which work they had been too backward (as appears by Hag. i. 2–4, 'The people say, The time is not come that the Lord's house should be built'), was the principal end why God sent unto them no less than two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, as two extraordinary ambassadors from heaven, on purpose to put them on upon it (for the finishing of the temple is a business of that moment as is worth two prophets at any time). And this appears not only by both their prophecies, but also by the story, Ezra v. 1, 2, 'Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah in the name of the God of Israel. Then rose up Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and began to build the house of God which is at Jerusalem: and with them were the prophets of God helping them.' That same particle or circumstance of time, *then*, doth refer us to the story of those times, recorded in the book of Ezra, as that which is necessary for the full understanding of their two prophecies, what is recorded there being the occasion of them; but more especially for

the understanding of this piece of our prophet Zechariah, his prophecy, which I have read unto you, which wholly concerns the finishing of the temple.

I must necessarily, therefore, as a preparative introduction to the exposition of these words, set you down in, and give you a prospect of, those times, and the occurrences thereof, which were the occasion of these words here, *Who art thou, O great mountain? &c.* And if Zechariah himself, a prophet, and that lived in those times, knew not at the first the meaning of the vision in this chapter,—ver. 5, ‘Knowest thou what these be? And I said, No, my lord,’—much less shall we be able to know the interpretation thereof, and how fitted to this vision; nor what this ‘mountain’ here is, &c., without being prepossessed of the knowledge of this story, which in brief is this:

The Babylonian monarchy (Rome’s type) had trod down the holy city, and laid waste the temple and worship of God for seventy years; which being expired, the Jews had liberty and authority from the first Persian king, Cyrus, to build the temple, and restore God’s worship, according to their law. This is the sum of the first and second chapters of Ezra. In the third chapter you have an altar set up, sacrifices renewed, feasts kept, and the foundation of the temple laid (which was as true a type of that great reformation from under popery). But after this work had been begun, and fairly carried on in all the fundamentals of it, there started up a company of Samaritans that were adversaries to the Jews (as we read, chap. iv.). Samaritans they were, as appears by ver. 10, ‘They were the nations seated in the city of Samaria, brought thither,’ ver. 2, in the room of the ten tribes; a generation of men who were not heathens in their profession, for they professed the same religion with the Jews. So they allege for and arrogate to themselves in the aforesaid verse, ‘We seek your God as you do; and we sacrifice unto him,’ and have done so long, ‘from the days of Esar-haddon, who brought us up hither;’ and yet they were not true Jews neither, nor perfectly of the same religion, but of a mongrel and mixed kind, between the religion of the heathen and of the Jews, intermingling heathenish idolatries with Jewish worship. So 2 Kings xvii., ver. 33 and 41 compared, it is said, ‘These nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images after the manner of the nations.’ Yea, they expected the same Messiah that the Jews did: ‘I know that the Messiah cometh, who is called Christ,’ saith the woman of Samaria, ‘and he will tell us all things,’ John iv. 25. Now these Samaritans were adversaries to the Jews (as they are called, ver. 1), and so unto their temple, and the finishing of it; and yet at first they were but underhand adversaries, for they friendly offer to build with them: ‘Let us build with you,’ ver. 2, but so as with an intent to have defiled and spoiled the work. Zerubbabel and those other builders refusing them, they grew thereupon enraged, and openly professed their opposition, both weakening and discouraging the hands of the people; and also, when they could not altogether hinder it, then they troubled them all they could in building; thus ver. 4. And they ceased not here; but further, they incensed and made the court against them (they growing potent there), both by hiring counsellors against them, ver. 5, and also by insinuating to those mighty Persian kings such suggestions as they knew would take with monarchs; misrepresenting these Jews unto them as of a rebellious spirit, opposite to kings and monarchy; calling Jerusalem ‘that rebellious and bad city;’ so ver. 12, ‘hurtful unto kings and provinces,’ and that had of old time ‘moved sedition,’ so ver. 15 (for even thus old is this scandal), and that therefore these Jews must be kept under; for ‘if this city be builded, and the walls set up,’ and they once but get strength, ‘then they will not pay toll, tribute, and



custom,' but withdraw their allegiance, so ver. 13. But, on the contrary, for themselves, they profess that they are their faithful servants, ver. 11, and that which made them speak was only a tenderness of the king's honour. So ver. 14, 'Now, because we have maintenance from the king's palace' (had their dependence wholly upon them), 'and it was not meet for us to see the king's dishonour, therefore have we certified the king.' And by these their flatteries and misrepresentations, they raised up so great a mountain of opposition (as it is here called), that they frustrated the Jews' good purpose of perfecting the building (as the words are, ver. 5); and though they could not prevail so far as to throw down the foundation laid, yet 'they made them to cease' building any further 'by force and power,' so ver. 23. And thus the work did cease during all the days of Cyrus, and the reign of one or two kings more, even until the second year of Darius, ver. 5 and 24; and *then* it was that these prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, did prophesy unto the Jews, as it follows in the very next words, chap. v. 1, 2; then, when they had thus been overtopped by so potent a faction for many years, and with opposition wearied out, then it was that God stirred up our Zechariah to put spirits into them to revive the work again, and among other visions gave him this (which is in this fourth chapter) of all the most eminent, to strengthen them thereunto. And so I have brought you to Zechariah again, and unto the words of my text; and now you shall see how necessary this story was to interpret this his prophecy, for which simply I have related it.

The words are (as was said) the interpretation of a vision; and to understand either, we must take in both. Let us therefore first view the vision; and, secondly, this the angel's interpretation of it, which are the two parts into which this whole chapter is resolved.

The vision is made up of two things:

First, A glorious candlestick all of gold, with a bowl or cistern upon the top of it, and with seven shafts, with seven lamps at the ends thereof, all lighted.

And, secondly, that these lamps might have a perpetual supply of oil, without any accessory way of human help, there are presented (as growing by the candlestick) two fresh and green olive-trees on each side thereof, ver. 3, which do 'empty out of themselves golden oil,' ver. 12; that is, did naturally drop and distil it into that bowl, and the two pipes thereof, to feed the lamps continually: a vision so clear and full of light to set forth the work then to be done by the Jews, that the angel wonders that at the first sight the prophet should not understand it.

First, This candlestick thus lighted betokened the full perfecting and finishing the temple, and restoring the worship of God within it unto its full 'perfection of beauty' and brightness (as the psalmist speaks). And so the angel interprets it, 'This is the word of the Lord,' ver. 6; that is, this hieroglyphic contains this word and mind of God in it, that, maugre all opposition, Zerubbabel should 'bring forth the head or top-stone' that should finish the temple, so vers. 7 and 9.

Secondly, The two olive trees betokened two eminent ranks and sorts of persons that should give their assistance to this work.

First, Zerubbabel their prince, and the elders of the people with him.

Secondly, Jeshua the high priest, and the other priests with him; and of both these the rabbi doctors have long ago expounded it.

And accordingly, both in the story, Ezra v. 2, and in these two prophets, we still find mention both of Zerubbabel and Jeshua as the builders of this house; yet so as *collectivè* under Zerubbabel the elders, and under Jeshua the other priests are to be understood as included and intended; and there-

fore, in the third chapter of this prophecy, ver. 8, when Jeshua is spoken to, the other priests his fellows are spoken to together with him, 'Hear, O Jeshua, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee.' And in like manner, when Zerubbabel is here spoken to in the text to build the temple, the elders his fellows are intended in him; and accordingly, Ezra vi. 14, it is said that 'the elders of the Jews builded and finished the temple.' And so these, taken together, are the two olive trees.

Now concerning the first part of this vision, namely, the candlestick, with all its lamps lighted, you may ask how this should come to be a fit hieroglyphic to betoken this work of finishing and perfecting the temple? I answer thus: the candlestick was one of the chief utensils and ornaments of the temple, and therefore is still first mentioned, as in Exod. xxv. 31, and in the 9th to the Hebrews, ver. 2, where all the sacred household stuff of the inner temple are specified. The candlestick, as being chief, is ranked first, 'Wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread,' and therefore is here most aptly put for the bringing in all the rest into the temple, and of all those other best and aptiest served to represent the finishing thereof; for whilst the temple remained uncovered with a roof, there was no bringing in the candlestick as lighted; and till then, there needed no light to be brought into it, it being *sub dio*, under open air. But when the house itself should once be reared according to the pattern, without the candlestick and its light, it would have been full of darkness (as some affirm, which I will not now dispute); for however, the bringing in the candlestick argued not only the completeness of the edifice and building itself, but also, by a synecdoche, the introducing all sorts of ordinances that were appointed for the adorning of it. An altar would not so evidently or necessarily have supposed the temple perfected; for, Ezra iii. 3, an altar was set up 'when yet not so much as the foundation of the temple was laid,' ver. 6; but a candlestick, and that lighted too, supposes the house built, and completely furnished; and therefore under the gospel their whole church state, and that, as in the primitive times, under their full perfection, is set forth by seven golden candlesticks, so Rev. i. 13, which, ver. 20, are interpreted to be the seven churches of Asia. The difference is, that here is but one candlestick, because the church of the Jews was national, and but one; but there are seven, for the churches under the gospel are many.

And for that other part of the vision, the representing Zerubbabel and Jeshua by two olive trees, and those planted in God's court, so near the candlestick, is no new or strange thing. For David being the ruler of the Jews, and a nursing father to the church, compares himself to a 'green olive tree in the house of God,' Ps. lii. 8, and the pillars of the doors of the temple, and the cherubims therein, being made of that wood. The allusion is less remote. And these emptied golden oil, that is, their estates and pains, for the finishing this costly work; and likewise because it was done in sincerity of heart, therefore it is called golden or pure oil. And further, seeing it was made the duty of every Jew 'to bring pure oil olive beaten, to cause the lamps to burn continually,' as Lev. xxiv. 2, hence, therefore, to compare the eminent persons, the magistrates and priests of that church, to olive trees themselves, that for the first lighting of the candlestick did naturally afford it, was every way most elegant. And they are called 'sons of oil,' ver. 14, as being fruitful, and affording plenty of it. Thus, Isa. v. 1, a 'fruitful hill,' and a fertile soil, is in the original (as here) called 'a son of oil.' And thus much for the vision.

Now for the interpretation of it in the words of the text. As it explains the mind of the vision, so it adds all encouragements unto them to set upon



this work. First, by assuring them that that mountain of opposition (which you heard in the story was raised up against it) should be made a plain before them; namely, that Samaritan faction which was backed by many of the 'people of the land,' Ezra iv. 4. A *mountain* is a similitude frequent in Scripture, to note out high and potent opposition lying in the way of God's proceedings: 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord; every mountain shall be brought low,' Luke iii. 5. And so the poets do express their feigned war of the giants against the gods by heaping up mountain upon mountain.

And, secondly, whereas their doubting hearts might ask, how this was possible, it being so great and so rooted a mountain, with such foundations; where are the spades, the means that should remove it? The angel answers, 'Not by might' (or, as in the original, an army or multitude), 'nor by power' (of authority), that was in any human foresight, as yet like to countenance it, 'but by my Spirit;' and he that says it is 'the Lord of hosts.' By his *Spirit*, meaning both the Holy Ghost, inclining and strengthening their hearts, yea, turning those of their opposites thereunto; and by *Spirit* also meaning many concurrent acts of providence, which fall in to the effecting of it: for there is said to be 'a spirit of life in the wheels' of providence, which moves them, Ezek. i. 20. Not but that God did use the power and authority of the Persian monarchy; for, Ezra vi. 8, Darius reversed the former decree, and made a new one for the building of the house. But because that God, by his Spirit and own immediate hand, brought about the power of that state to countenance it. Therefore it is said to be, not by power, but by the Spirit; and for this he used not an army, as it is in the margin; there was no sword drawn, the state stood as it did, but 'by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts;' that so it might appear, that although Zerubbabel's hand was in it, yet that God would bring it so to pass, that nothing should be ascribed to them, but the glory of all unto God himself.

Which is the third thing in this speech of the angel here, that when the house should be finished, signified by Zerubbabel's bringing forth the head stone thereof (as master builders use to do the first and last stone), they should, with many shoutings and acclamations of joy, cry, 'Grace, grace unto it;' that is, magnify God's mere free grace, and acknowledge this to have been the work of it alone; and it was marvellous in their eyes.

Thus much for the exposition of the words. I shall now raise some observations out of them.

*Obs.* 1. Out of the recited story, and what is here said in the 9th verse, which doth put Jeshua upon finishing the temple, the first observation is this, that God carries on the building of the second temple after the coming out of Babylon (which was a type of the reformation of our churches), not all at once, but by degrees. The first temple under the Old Testament was at once erected perfect, so by Solomon; and the tabernacle before him, by Moses, was quickly finished, according to the pattern of the mount, Exod. xl. 48; but this second temple, after the captivity, received degrees of rearing of it. And thus, in the New Testament, those primitive churches were set up perfect (as for matter of rules) by the holy apostles. And so it was meet they should be, because the pattern was but once to be given in the model of them. But antichristianism having laid that temple desolate, and defiled God's worship in all parts of it, and those ages, wherein it should be restored, wanting apostles immediately inspired, hence the restoration of them becomes a work of time: the Holy Ghost, age after age, gradually revealing pieces of the platform of it; the Spirit by degrees consuming and dispelling the darkness that antichristianism had brought in, by light shining clearer and clearer to the perfect day, which is the brightness of Christ's

coming, as 2 Thes. ii. 8. Compare we for this the type, the building of this second temple here, with this antitype under the gospel.

These Jews, when first they were come out of Babylon, and gathered to mount Sion (which was holy ground, where they might sacrifice), they erected an altar only, Ezra iii., and that in haste, the fear of the people of the country being upon them, ver. 3, and so a poor and mean one, and (as it is thought), but of earth, as in the law of Moses, direction was given, before the tabernacle was reared; and accordingly, of this here it is said, 'As it is written in the law of Moses,' ver. 2. They now began the world anew, and offered burnt sacrifices upon mount Sion, kept a few feasts; but, says the 6th verse, 'the foundation of the temple was not yet laid.' Then, in the 8th verse, it is said that the foundation of the temple was laid, but left imperfect. But many years after, and after the succession of two or three kings, the temple is said to be finished, chap. vi. 15.

Come we now to the antitype, the times of reformation from under popery: in the story of which like gradual proceedings might easily be observed out of ecclesiastical story, if it would not be too long to make such narrations. I will rather take it as it is briefly and at once presented by the Holy Ghost himself in that great prophecy of the New Testament, and the succeeding times thereof, the book of Revelation. In the 13th chapter throughout, you have the beast of Rome in one entire view presented in his height, and as possessing all the European world as worshippers of him. And then, in the 14th and following chapters, you oppositely have Christ, and those that followed him; and the story of their separation from, and the several degrees of winning ground upon, that beast, in the like entire view laid forth before you. In the 1st verse, the Lamb appears with his company, nakedly standing upon mount Sion, without the mention of any temple as yet built over their heads, even such as these Jews' condition was when they came first to Sion. Some ordinances they had; they 'harping with their harps,' ver. 2, and 'sung as it were a new song,' uttering something differing from the doctrine of those times, but so confusedly, as 'no man could learn that song,' ver. 3; and they in a great part kept themselves virgins, and from being defiled with the fornications of the whore. And these are said to be the first fruits to God, ver. 4, that is, the first beginnings of a dislike of popery. But then, by degrees, the Lamb sends out three angels, to make a more open separation from Rome, the latter of which rises still higher than the former. The first, ver. 6, only preacheth the everlasting gospel; that is, salvation by Christ alone, and calleth upon men to 'fear' and 'worship God alone, who made heaven and earth,' and not to worship saints and angels (thus the Waldenses did). But then, ver. 8, an age or two after that, there follow others who proclaim with open mouth, and tell Rome to her face that she is the whore of Babylon (thus Wickliffe and Huss). And then, ver. 9, after these follows a third angel, who proceeds further, and preaches that all those who will cleave unto her doctrine and superstitions, 'shall drink of the wrath of God for ever;' and so urge a separation from her, upon pain of damnation. And then, at ver. 14, you have the Son of man crowned, the Lamb having overcome the kings, to profess and countenance the protestant religion with their authority. And then, ver. 15, you have mention of a temple, churches being in all these northern parts publicly erected by their allowance and commandment; as the Jews did build the temple by the decree of Cyrus. And, chap. xv., the pourers out of the vials do come all forth of the temple, ver. 6. And if we consult the 11th chapter (the main occurrences of which are evidently contemporary, and do sum up the story of the same time with the vials, as by comparing the one with the



other, late interpreters have observed), this book running over two entire prophecies of all times (each of them), whereof the first ends at the end of chap. xi. Now in that chapter (which therefore contains the story of the last times), there are three editions of that temple plainly intimated. The first, supposed to be already standing when the vision is given, but imperfect in this, that it hath too great an outward court of an ignorant and profane multitude laid to it. And therefore John, bearing the person of the godly of that age, is stirred up to set upon a second reformation of it, and is bidden to measure that temple, altar, and worshippers anew, and to cast out that outward court that had defiled it. And then, ver. 19, there is a third edition of an holy of holies, for therein the ark is said to be seen; now the ark stood only in the holy of holies: noting out a more perfect church at last than all the former had been. A manifest allusion this is unto those three parts of Solomon's temple, the outward court, the inward temple, and the holy of holies.

Thus much perhaps might more clearly have been discovered in the story of the Reformation, but I judged it would better and more briefly be done in this the prophecy of it.

*Use.* Let no church therefore think itself perfect and needing nothing (as bragging Laodicea did), especially when it hath but that first foundation which it had when it came newly out of Babylon, and more especially in matters of worship and discipline. It is no dishonour unto those reformers to say that they fully finished not this work, as it was not unto Zerubbabel here that he perfected not the temple at first. Blessed men! It is evident they purposed more than they did or could effect, because 'the people's hearts were not as yet prepared,' as the phrase is, 2 Chron. xx. 33. In our very Common Prayer book there is an 'until the said discipline may be restored,' which argueth they aimed at more; and besides, they were not apostles, to whom nothing might be added, as Gal. ii. 6; and God, raising up the tabernacle that was fallen down, not by immediate inspiration (as at first by the apostles), but by his Spirit, renewing and begetting light in an ordinary way. Hence, therefore, the church's coming out of the darkness of popery must needs recover that fulness and perfection of light (which the apostolical times had) *πολυμερῶς*, by piecemeals and degrees. As for the great things of the gospel, matters of faith or doctrine, they had so happy a hand therein that there is to be found little if any hay or stubble therein; but in matters of order, which concern worship or discipline (for so the apostle distinguisheth Col. ii. 5, 'faith and order'), let it be inquired into, whether they were so exact therein. Although this must be said, that God did take care for all fundamental ordinances of his worship, and it is a bitter error and full of cruelty to say, We have had no churches, no ministers, no sacraments, but antichristianal. God's first and chief care was to build up his church mystical, to make men saints, and he hath made glorious ones in their personal walkings with him; and to that end he made a plentiful provision in matters of faith, even from the very first. It fell out in this case as in a new plantation, which if men were to make in another world, and so to begin the world anew, their first care would be to provide necessities for their subsistence as they are men; to have corn for bread, cattle for meat, and the like; but matters of order and government they think of afterwards, and often fall into the right by seeing their errors by degrees. Think not much, therefore, that men call for (as most men do) a reformation of some things amiss in matters of worship and discipline, or an addition of some things; perhaps a candlestick or some other utensil or ordinance of church worship, is found wanting. You will wonder that all along during the reign of those good kings, both

David, Solomon (who yet gave the pattern of, and also built, the temple), and those other reformers among the kings of Judah, there should something have been omitted about the feast of tabernacles until their coming out of the Babylonish captivity. Yet we find it was so, as appears by Neh. viii. 16, 17, 'The people went forth, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of God's house, and in the streets; and since the days of Joshua the son of Nun, until that day, the children of Israel had not done so.' This feast was kept (as is thought) by Solomon, 2 Chron. vii. 8, and by these same Jews, Ezra iii. 4, yet not in this manner according unto the law; and therefore at the 14th verse of that of Nehemiah it is said, 'They found it written in the law, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths,' which before that they had not done, although they might have kept that feast. But now they had learned by a sad experience to keep it aright with dwelling in booths, by having been lately strangers out of their own land; to signify which, and to profess themselves strangers, was the intent of that feast, and that rite of it, the dwelling in booths. And this reason is intimated in the 17th verse: 'All the congregation that were come again out of the captivity made booths,' &c. They did read also every day out of the law, ver 19, which before when that feast was celebrated they had not done.

*Obs. 2.* A second observation, that in the greatest businesses, which most concern the good of God's church and his own glory, he oftentimes suffers mountains of opposition to lie in the way of them; so here in the way to the building and perfecting his church. To give another instance of it, and that the highest. The salvation of the sons of men, whom he hath chosen before all worlds, is a business which of all other he most minded and effectually intended; but doth he bring it about without rubs? Never such mountains lay in the way of any business. Adam, he sins, and in him all those whom God meant to save, whereby the way to their salvation was quite blocked up. Mountains of sins make a separation between him and them, Isa. lix. 2, and not all the power of men and angels can any whit move, much less remove, them, no more than straws can move a mountain. But then comes the Son of God, who throws and buries all these mountains in the bottom of the sea. And when Christ had thus removed the guilt of sin, and would come into men's hearts to apply his death, there lie as high mountains in his way to us, as before lay in ours to him: Luke iii. 5, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight: every mountain shall be brought low.' There are high things and strong holds, 2 Cor. x. 4, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of Christ; but all these shall be brought low, and shall be made a plain. And as this is found true in the salvation of the church by Christ, so in its preservation and growth. There is almost no mercy, but some mountain or other lies in the way of it.

*Reason.* And the reason of this dispensation of God's is, both that his hand and power in bringing things to pass for his church may be seen and acknowledged, and that his enemies may be confounded. I put both these reasons in one, because we find them mentioned together in one place, Neh. vi. 16; in which chapter you may read of the great opposition made in building the city, as here the temple, which yet when God had carried on, 'It came to pass,' says that 16th verse, 'that when all their enemies heard thereof, and all that were about them saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes' (there is one part of the reason), 'for they perceived that this work was wrought by our God;' there is the other part. First, God's power appears in carrying things through much opposition. If there were a full concurrence of all second causes, and a general suffrage of them, his



voice would then be lost and swallowed up among that crowd; but when there is a great canvas (as in colleges we call it) then the power of his casting voice appears. Thus, why is God said to 'bring Israel out of Egypt with a strong hand,' Exod. xiii. 30, but because it was carried on through much opposition? There lay no less than ten mountains in the way of it. Pharaoh's heart was hardened ten times, which God did on purpose to shew his power, Exod. ix. 6. Secondly, he doth it to confound his enemies the more, which usually goes together with doing good unto his church: 'He renders vengeance to his adversaries,' and is 'merciful to his land,' both at once, Deut. xxxii. 43. He often suffers them to have the ball at their foot, till they come to the very goal, and yet then to miss the game, that so wherein they dealt proudly, he might shew himself above them, which is Jethro's reason, Exod. xviii. 9.

*Obs. 3.* This observation but in general. More particularly, a third observation is this: that temple-work especially useth to meet with opposition. You shall find the building and the finishing of this temple, in all the degrees of it, to have had many contentions against it, all along accompanying it. Thus, when first that altar was set up, Ezra iii. 3, it is said, that 'fear was upon them because of the people of those countries.' Again, when the foundation was laid, what interruption that met with, you heard before, out of the 4th chapter; and lastly, when they came to finish it, chapter v. 2, at verse 3, their enemies came and questioned them for it; 'who hath commanded you to build this house?' &c., and the devil was in it, in a pure opposition to the temple; for they had suffered them to build their own houses, as appears, Hag. ii. 4, and never stirred against them, but only now when they began to build the temple. Thus, in the New Testament, *Ædificabo ecclesiam*, 'I will build my church,' hath and will always have the gates (or the power) of hell following it to oppose it. I could demonstrate it all along out of that story also, but it would be too long.

*Reason 1.* The reasons of it are,

First, There is nothing more contrary to Satan than the setting up of God's worship, and the purifying and completing of it. And therefore, whilst the devil is god of this world, and hath any power therein, he will be sure to raise a head against that of all things else. So far as there are any aberrations in worship, Satan is set up; and so far as the worship of God is perfected, God is set up, and Satan 'falls as lightning.' Rev. iii. 9, false worshippers are called the 'synagogue of Satan.'

*Reason 2.* Secondly, There is nothing more contrary to flesh and blood. When Paul came to set up evangelical and spiritual worship (which is called a reformation, Heb. ix. 10), he met with opposition everywhere; and that from such who were worshippers also. There is a natural and blind devotion in men, that is most opposite to spiritual worship. Therefore, Acts xiii. 15, 'devout women raised up a persecution' against Paul. And men are addicted to their old customs, and what they were brought up in. Thus it is said of the Jews, though godly, that many thousands of them opposed Paul, out of their zeal to the law they were brought up in: Acts xxi. 20, 'Many thousands of the Jews which believe, are all zealous of the law:' and thereupon, at verse 27, we read that they stirred up the people, crying out, verse 28, 'Men of Israel, help: this is the man that teacheth everywhere against the people, and this place' (namely the temple, and the ceremonial worship of it).

*Use.* The use of both these points together is, not to be discouraged in, or think the worse of any business that is for God, because of difficulties and interruptions. In the 4th of Nehemiah, when the Jews went to build the walls of the city, the enemies mocked them, and said, 'What will these feeble



Jews do?' but still, verse 6, the people they went on, for they 'had a mind to work;' which when their enemies heard of, they then set upon them with open force of arms, verse 8. Yet nevertheless, 'We,' says he, 'made our prayer to God,' and set a watch day and night; they doubled their care and pains, and wrought both night and day, and did not put off their clothes, verse 21. And when Nehemiah heard that the enemy threatened to kill him, on purpose to dishearten him, yet, chapter vi., he would not flee, verse 11, neither was he at all disheartened, as knowing it was a sin to be afraid, verse 13.

*Obs.* 4. There is no mountain of opposition so great, that can stand before Zerubbabel (or God's people), especially when he goes about to finish the temple. (I might have made two observations of it, but I put them both together.) You see how contemptuously he here speaks of the opposition made: 'Who art thou, O great mountain?' though great in their own eyes, yet as nothing in his. He speaks as a giant unto a pigmy: 'Who art thou?' I will name one place more suitable to this allusion: Isa. xli. 14, 15, 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob: I will help thee, saith the Lord. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp thrashing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thrash the mountains, and beat them small, and thou shalt make the hills as chaff.' He supposeth, in these his expressions, the church to be in the lowest, weakest, and most contemptible condition that might be: a worm, which no man fears, for it cannot do the least hurt, and which no man loves; yea, thinks it no cruelty or oppression to tread upon and kill. On the other side, he speaks of the enemies, all that might argue greatness, strength, and exaltation; he calls them mountains and hills. And what an unequal match is this, for worms to be set upon mountains to overthrow them! Yet, says God, 'I will take this worm' (for it must be his power must do it), 'and make it as a new sharp thrashing instrument with teeth' (with which kind of instrument those eastern countries did use to mash in pieces their rougher and harder fodder for their cattle), 'which shall thrash these mountains even as small as chaff, which is scattered with the wind,' as verse 16. This is the metaphor, the plain song you have in the 11th and 12th verses, 'Behold, all they that are incensed against thee shall perish; and those that contended with thee be as a thing of nought.' But this is especially found true when God's people go about to build the temple; no mountain then can stand to hinder them. There stood in the way of laying the foundation of this temple, the greatest mountain that was then (and well nigh that hath been since) upon the earth, the Babylonish monarchy, by the power of which these Jews were detained captives, and they would never have let them go. And therefore, Isa. lvii. 14, this phrase is used, 'Cast ye up, cast ye up, take the stumbling-block out of the way of my people;' and more expressly, Jer. li. 25, the prophet calls Babel a destroying mountain, 'I am against thee, O destroying mountain;' and for strength of situation he compares it to a mountain seated upon a rock, which is a farther addition of fortification to it. Yet, says God, 'I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain, so as they shall not take from thee a stone for a corner, or for foundations,' verse 26. Whereas thou didst unbuild Jerusalem and my temple, I will unbuild thee, so as not so much as a stone of thee shall serve for any other building, but my Sion shall be built again. For to what end was the mountain thus removed? Even that poor Jerusalem, and God's temple there, might be built again. Thus Isa. xlv. 28, and xlv. 1st and 2d verses compared, 'Thus saith the Lord of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure;

even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built ; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.' Cyrus and his army were the workmen whom God hired to cast up (as Isaiah's phrase is) or throw down (as Jeremiah) this rubbish that lay in his people's way, and of their building this temple. And all the victories that Cyrus obtained, and hidden treasures that through spoils he acquired, were all that Jerusalem might be built. So it follows in the 45th chapter 1-4 verses, and so on, 'Thus saith the Lord to Cyrus, whose right hand I have strengthened to subdue nations before me ; and I will loose the loins of kings.' He was to overcome other nations and kings, before he could come at Babylon ; 'as Croesus, that rich king of Lydia, &c. And God threw down all afore him : 'I will go before thee ; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron' (all difficulties flew open, and nothing could stand in his way), 'and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, the hidden riches of secret places.' And why did God do all this for him ? 'For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect.' For otherwise, says God of this Cyrus, thou hast not known me, so verse 4. All this which God did for him was that he might 'perform God's pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, Be built, and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid,' as you had it out of the last verse of the foregoing chapter.

And then again, when the foundation thereof was thus happily laid, there stood (as you see in the text) another mountain in the way to the finishing and perfecting of it, namely, this Samaritan faction, who gained the power of that Persian monarchy to be against it ; of which mountain the prophet here in like manner says, that it should be made a plain. And if the Persian monarch Darius had not come off too as he did, Ezra vi., from the 1st verse to the end of the chapter, God would have served him as he had done Babylon : 'Be ye wise therefore now, O kings, and instructed, O ye judges of the earth.'

*Reason.* The reason of all this lies but in three words which God hath spoken once, yea twice, *Ædificabo ecclesiam meam*, 'I will build my church,' which have more force in them than all the created power of heaven, earth, or hell. He had said it in the Old Testament (as you heard), Isa. xlv. 28, 'saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built ; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.' And Christ said it over again in the New Testament : Mat. xvi. 18, 'I will build my church.' He speaks of that church under the New Testament, which in future ages was 'to come. And what follows ? 'The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' You heard before in the Old Testament, that the brass gates were opened to make way for the building of that temple, Isa. xlv. 2. But here in the New Testament there are stronger gates than of brass ; here are the gates of hell ; which yet Christ, like another Samson, flings off their hinges. As whilst the devil is god of the world, *Ædificabo ecclesiam meam* shall be sure to be hindered, if he can ; so whilst Christ is king of this world, and hath all power committed to him, both in heaven and earth, most certainly the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. It is this same *Ædificabo ecclesiam meam*, 'I will build my church,' that hath made all the stir in the world. I remember in the year 1619, or 1620, or thereabouts, when the wars in Germany began, it was reported that a great brass image of the apostle Peter, which had that pretended claim, by which Rome would hold her keys, fairly embossed upon a roll that hung down upon the image, in these words, *Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam : et tibi dabo claves, &c.*, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church ; and I will give to thee the keys,' &c., standing (as I take it) in St Peter's Church at Rome ; there was a great and massive stone fell down upon it, and so shattered it to



pieces, that not a letter of all that sentence (whereon Rome founds her claim) was left whole, so as to be read, saving this one piece of that sentence, *Ædificabo ecclesiam meam*, 'I will build my church,' which was left fair and entire.

That promise, 'I will build my church,' is the *magna charta*, yea, the *prima charta*, the great and first charter of the saints in the New Testament; those words in the 16th of Matthew being the first that Christ uttered about it, and so contain within them all lesser promises of all sorts that follow, that concern the building of his church, or any piece of it. Now all that concern the building of his church are reducible unto these two heads: First, the preservation and enlarging of his church mystical, and of his saints on earth; and thus considering them personally, although they should be scattered each from other. Or secondly, the building up his church, as gathered in assemblies to hold forth his public worship in the world, as that place fore-mentioned is apparently to be understood by the next words; for he speaks of the keys in the following verse, whereby are meant all *media cultus*, all ordinances of worship whereby his church is built. So then this reason, taken from *ædificabo ecclesiam*, branches itself into two parts: the first is taken from his love to his church mystical, or his saints simply considered as such; the second is from his interest in his own worship; for which he loves his churches that are the seat of it more than all the world.

1. His love to his church mystical is such that no mountain of opposition can stand before it, to hinder the enlargement and building of it up. This reason you have Isa. xliii. 3, 4, 'I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.' It is put upon this reason, *quia amavi te*, 'because I have loved thee,' and that more than all the world. Or if you will have it expressed in the language of this similitude here in the text, 'Mountains shall depart, and hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee,' says God, Isa. liv. 10. It is such a kind of speech as that of Christ's: 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not a tittle of my word,' &c.

2. His love to his churches, holding forth his name and worship in the world, is such, as nothing shall withstand the repairing and perfecting of them, and of that his worship, and every parcel of it. If God had not such assemblies in the world, he should have no worship. Therefore these churches are called the 'ground and pillar of truth,' both where it grows and where it is held forth, 1 Tim. iii. 15. He there speaks of church assemblies, as wherein Timothy was to learn how as an evangelist to behave himself, in the ordering and governing of them, as you have it in the words immediately foregoing: 'That thou mightest know how to behave thyself in the house of God,' &c. And the truth is, that that building of the house of God, of which only Zechariah here gives us occasion to speak, was but the completing all the ordinances of worship. It was not so much the building up the nation of the Jews that was here directly intended, but the building of their temple, the seat of worship, and introducing the candlestick, &c. And their assemblings there to worship according to God's own prescription was more to him, and is so still, than whatever else was or is done in the world. In the 87th Psalm, ver. 2, 'The Lord loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.' The gates of Sion were the gates of the temple that stood upon mount Sion, set open for the Jews to worship in; and these he loves more than other societies or assemblings, though of Jacob, and this more than them all, take them all together; whether civil in their



cities and families, or religious in their synagogues ; where they were capable but of some few, not of all the ordinances that were in the temple.

And the reason of this his love, is the great concernment that his public worship is of unto him. God hath but three things dear unto him in this world, his saints, his worship, and his truth ; and it is hard to say which of these is dearest unto him ; they are *mutuo sibi fines*. God therefore ordained saints to be in the world, that he might be worshipped ; and reciprocally appointed these ordinances of worship as means to build up his saints. In the commandments, the epitome of the Old Testament, the institutions of God's worship have the second place. The second commandment is wholly spent thereon ; and therein how jealous doth God profess himself of any aberration or swerving from his own rules. Now jealousy, you know, proceeds from the deepest love. Yea, the third and fourth commandments are taken up about it also : the one about the manner, that his name (for so his worship is called, Micah iv. 5, compared with verses 2 and 3) might not be taken in vain ; the other about the time. And then in the Lord's prayer, which is the epitome of the New Testament, in the second petition, if not the first, the worship and government of his church comes in ; for his worship is his name, as was said, and we desire that to be hallowed : and nothing is more properly Christ's visible kingdom here than the right administration of ordinances in his church, which do set him up as King of saints. To this purpose I shall open that in the 15th of the Revelations, where, when the saints had got a temple over their heads, ver. 6, as was before hinted, then they call for a true and right worshipping of Christ, and this because he was King of saints. They sing : ' Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints, Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy : and all nations shall come and worship before thee,' &c. There are three pairs or *conjugata*, which harmoniously answer one to another : first, here is a double title and kingdom given unto Christ, (1.) *Lord almighty* ; (2.) *King of saints* ; or, if you will, he is King of nations, and King of saints : (1.) King of nations, for so in that parallel place, Jer. x, 7, from whence these words here uttered are evidently taken, and therefore it is quoted in the margin, he is called ; and so is all one with that expression here, ' Lord God almighty,' unto which (2.) they add this other, ' Thou King of saints.' And so these two are distinct, and both his titles. Then, secondly, here is a double duty suitably due unto him, according to these his titles, to fear him, and to worship him, both which are expressed by this general, to glorify his name. Thirdly, here is a double declaration of the justness of these titles, and the ground that calls for both these duties ; his great and marvellous works in the world declaring him to be Lord God almighty or King of nations, and therefore fear is due unto him ; and accordingly in Jeremiah we only read, ' Who would not fear thee, O King of nations ?' And then there are his just and true ways, declaring him to be King of saints, which these here in their song add unto that of Jeremiah ; and this calls for worship from us unto him : ' Who shall not worship thee, O King of saints ? for true and righteous are thy ways and judgments.' In fine, here is Christ's supremacy acknowledged both in matters civil and ecclesiastical, in his government of the world and of his church. And as he is known to be King of nations by his works of providence abroad in the world, so to be King of saints by those true and righteous ways wherein his churches are to walk. And a parallel place unto this latter, as that of Jeremiah was unto the former, is that in Ps. lxxviii. 24, where the psalmist, speaking of this worship of Christ, says, ' They have seen thy goings, O God, even the goings of my

King in the sanctuary.' Mark it; the *goings* he speaks of are restrained to his *goings in the sanctuary*, and spoken of him also as the church's King, *my king*. And so the words are the very same in sense that they in the temple here do utter, 'Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.' And the psalmist evidently speaks of his ways of worship in the church, as appears by the very next words: ver. 25, 'The singers went before, the players on instruments followed after,' &c., expressing the worship of him in his church in the language of the Old Testament, and he as their King in the midst of them, going in his greatest state. And yet more clearly, ver. 26, 'Bless ye God in the congregations.' Yea, and all this proves to be New Testament too, and a prophecy thereof, though uttered in the phrase of and in a prophecy of the Old. For what is said in ver. 18 before of this their King, is by the apostle, in Eph. iv. 8, applied unto Christ's ascension: 'Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and hast received gifts for men,' namely, the gifts for building of his church, and directing of his worship under the new Testament, as it is expounded by the apostle in the following verses. And therefore, that which I have even now cited out of that psalm, vers. 24, 25, 26, &c., is to be understood as meant of the worship of the gospel in the congregations thereof, erected after Christ's ascension. I shall add but this: these ways are called *just* and *true*, in opposition to ways invented by men, which on the contrary are unrighteous and false: Ps. cxix. 104, 'Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.' There is certainly a right rule or way chalked out for every administration in God's sanctuary, if we could find it out.

To illustrate all this by a similitude from other kings. Two things manifest a king to be a king, and shew forth the glory of his majesty: 1. His power and rule abroad throughout all his dominions; 2. The observance, the worship, and state ceremonies that are at court; and these shew him to be king as much as the former. This we may see in Solomon, whose royalty and majesty was held forth thereby, as much as by his power: 2 Chron. ix. 4, 'When the queen of Sheba had seen the house that he had built, the meat of his table, the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his ascent by which he went up into the house of the Lord,' it was said, 'there was no more spirit in her.' And in the 17th and 19th verses, 'He made a throne for the glory of his majesty, the like whereof was not made in any kingdom.' Now, Christ's court on earth are his churches, which are called God's house, Heb. x. 21 and 25 compared. And there his throne is set up, as in the temple of old. In all the visions of God, as sitting on a throne, made unto the prophets, that throne is presented as in the temple. So Isa. vi. 1, 'I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.' The temple was therefore called the 'place where God's honour dwells,' Ps. xxvi. 8, that is, his court, as some of our king's houses are called honours. And thus in the New Testament, in the representation of the church on earth as worshipping him, Rev. iv. 8th, 9th, and 10th verses, this church hath a throne in the midst of it, and God sits thereon, ver. 5, 6, 7. So that, indeed, there is nothing doth more exalt and glorify God than his public worship, and the government of his church purely and rightly administered: 1 Chron. xvi. 29, 'Give unto the Lord the *glory* due unto his name; *worship* the Lord in the beauty of holiness.' These two are joined together; the like you have Ps. xxix. 2. And it is part of that song which David made when he brought back the ark, and so set up God's worship. And further, in Isa. lx. 7, it is called 'the house of his glory;' and that chapter is a prophecy of the gospel, ver. 5.

Now, if the worship of God, and the government of his house, and every



ordinance thereof, tend so much to his glory, and set him up as King, then how much is he engaged to perfect it! He will fully shew himself to be King of saints in his worship, as well as King of nations in his works. And therefore, as his work is said to be perfect, Dent. xxxii. 4, so he will in the end make his worship perfect (I speak for the outward administration of it,) even the perfection of beauty, as the psalmist calls it, Ps. l. 2, which it cannot be styled whilst any part is wanting or misplaced; or, to conclude this reason in the language of the metaphor in the text, God is not like the foolish builder, that will begin to lay the foundation of his church, and not fully perfect and finish it.

*Use 1.* The first use shall be an extract of the first branch of this doctrine. Let God's people, therefore, know their strength. Though their enemies be as mountains, yet in a cause of God and his church, let them not be affrighted at them, Dent. vii. 21; yea, let them despise them all, as the phrase is, Isa. xxxvii. 22. When Rabshakeh brought a threatening embassage from the king of Assyria, with this preface unto it, 'Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria,' Isa. xxxvi 4, 'Where are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their land out of my hand?' &c. In answer to this, what doth good Hezekiah, through the prophet's encouragement, return again, but this, 'The virgin, the daughter of Sion, hath despised thee,' Isa. xxxvii. 22. Although she be but a virgin, yet she hath a champion who is in love with her, that will take her part, and fight her quarrel. The people of God are weak in themselves, but they have a strong captain; so Christ declares himself to be unto them: Joshua v. 14, 'As the captain of the Lord's host am I come.' And if a lion be the captain, though the army consists but of harts and sheep, yet they will be too hard for the wolves that come against them. It is the comparison the Scripture useth: Isa. xxxi. 4, 'Like as the lion and the young lion roaring on his prey, when a multitude of shepherds are called forth against him, so shall the Lord of hosts come down to fight for mount Sion, and for the hill thereof.' And then how still and quiet is the enemy and avenger! Jesus Christ was born, as to be a king, so a conqueror; and we may style him King Jesus the Conqueror. So Rev. vi. 2, 'He went forth conquering, and to conquer.'

*Use 2.* If God will throw down all mountains of opposition that hinder the perfecting of his church, then get up your faith and resolution for this great work of reforming the church, and forecast not what opposition you are like to encounter with; get but your hearts filled with faith, and you will be able to say (as Zerubbabel here), 'Who art thou, O great mountain?' It was long ere Zerubbabel could be brought to believe, or to resolve to do it, the discouragements were so great. The greater mountain of the two was the unbelief in his own heart; but when he once did resolve to set upon the work, he found all those mountains to vanish before him. To speak still in the language of the metaphor: have but as much 'faith as a grain of mustard seed,' and you may 'say to this mountain, Be removed into the sea, and it shall be removed.' Hezekiah was a great reformer; 'he removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent,' 2 Kings xviii. 4; and then, withal, it is added in the following words, 'He trusted in the Lord God of Israel,' ver. 5. They that will reform a church or state, must trust more in God in doing it than in any work else.

*Use 3.* It is a word of caution; for if the worship of God and every part of it doth so much concern God's glory (as hath been shewed in the reason of this doctrine), then take heed how you meddle with it. Be sure you set the service of the house of the Lord in its right order (as the phrase is of Heze-



kiah's reformation, 2 Chron. xxix. 35), and that according to clear light from the word of truth. Know and consider that you meddle with edge tools when you take this work in hand (which I speak, not to discourage you from it, but to make you wary in and attentive to it); more than all the works you ever did set your hands and hearts unto. It was a good and a religious purpose in David to bring back the ark, and for the substance of the duty he was right in it. He mistook but in the order; he set it upon a cart, whereas the priests should have carried it. Himself thus speaks of it: 'We sought not God after the due order' (that is, God's institution), 1 Chron. xv. 30; and when it was like to fall (God confuting thereby their error) Uzzah did but touch it to keep it up (and that too was done out of a good zeal). God smote him for it, though God himself acknowledged it to have been but an 'error' or 'rashness' in him, even when he smote him: 2 Sam. vi. 7, 'The anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah, and God smote him for his error.' But yet it was an error about the ark (God's worship), and a small one there is dangerous. But you will then say, We had best not meddle with it at all, but let it alone, and leave it as it is. It is true that David himself in his fear had just the same thoughts: 1 Chron. xiii. 12, 'David was afraid of God that day. How (says he) shall I bring the ark of God home to me?' If men be stricken thus for touching of it, God be merciful to me (thought he), let it rather remain where it is: 'So David brought not the ark home to himself, but carried it aside into the house of Obed-edom,' ver. 13; but God did soon confute him of this his error also, for the 14th verse tells us that 'the Lord blessed the house of Obed-edom, and all that he had.' And when David began to bethink himself, Surely if it brings a blessing upon the house of Obed-edom, it will do the like on mine too. And then we read in the 13th chapter, 'He prepared a place for it, and brought it home;' and he, being by this breach made put upon searching into the word, found that the Levites only ought to carry it; and that because they did it not at the first, the Lord therefore made a breach upon them, ver. 30. Now, above all we observe, that when he amended that error and brought it home, he was blessed, and blessed indeed; for no sooner did he think of building a house for it but God promised to establish his house for ever, 2 Sam. vii. 11. And read the 18th chapter, and you shall see how all his enemies upon this were subdued afore him. And then of his son Solomon, God says in the 13th verse, 'He shall build an house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.' His own house and the kingdom were established together by it. Thus likewise when this second temple was to be finished, God provokes them to it by this, 'From this time will I bless you,' Hag. ii. 19; and as he blessed them, so he will bless you and your families, and the kingdom. To instance in some particulars, which have been in your hearts also, as that purpose was in David's, together with encouragements out of the Scriptures suited thereunto. You have declared your godly resolution to be (to express it in your own words), to use your utmost endeavours to establish learned and preaching ministers, with a good and sufficient maintenance, throughout the whole kingdom, wherein many dark corners are miserably destitute of the means of salvation, which project tendeth to enlarge Christ's mystical church. From this time God will bless you (look for it), and establish the kingdom by it. The Scripture, for your encouragement, holds forth an example of just the like practice of one of the best kings, and of that same blessing following upon it, which is in all your aims: 2 Chron. xvii. 7-10, 'Jehoshaphat, in the third year of his reign, sent to his princes to teach' (that is, to countenance the teaching of the word) 'in the cities of Judah, and with them the Levites and priests; and they taught in Judah,

and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.' Here is the same practice that you have resolved upon, and the success is answerable to your hearts' desire ; for, ver. 10, it follows, ' And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, and they made no war against Jehoshaphat.' This will secure the land as much as that posture of war you intend. You have also issued out an order for the purging out divers innovations in and about the worship of God, for the abolishing of all crucifixes, scandalous pictures, &c., and other the like superstitions. Go on to establish it ; you will establish the kingdom by it. Not to quote the book of Kings and Chronicles, which is abundant in such examples, we have an instance more ancient of the like blessing of God upon the like practice : Gen. xxxv., Jacob reformed his family of all their strange gods, and all their earrings, ver. 2 and 4, and the success was, that the terror of God was upon all the cities round about them, ver. 5. You have likewise declared that you intend a due and necessary reformation of the government and liturgy of the church, &c. ; you will find the like blessing to be upon this also, in the war you have undertaken against the popish Irish rebels. When Abijah, king of Judah, was to fight with Jeroboam, king of Israel, that had perverted the worship of the Lord, see how he pleads the cause against them and his army : ' Ye have cast out the priests of the Lord ; but as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him ; and the priests which minister unto the Lord are the sons of Aaron ;' that is, such as by God's own appointment were to govern the church, and to minister afore the Lord : ' And they burn unto the Lord every morning and every evening burnt sacrifices and sweet incense ; the shew-bread also set they in order upon the pure table, and the candlestick of gold, with the lamps thereof. We keep the charge of the Lord our God, but you have forsaken him ; and behold God himself is with us for our Captain, but you shall not prosper,' &c. ver. 9-12. And the issue of all this is recorded ver. 16, 17, ' God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah, and the children of Israel fled before Judah ; and Abijah and his people slew them with a great slaughter, so that the children of Israel were brought under at that time.' But on the contrary, if you falter in the matter of religion and worship, know that from that time God will curse you, as he did Jeroboam and Israel with him, who, when he had set up the calves to hold the people to him, God threatens his house, to take it away, ' as a man takes away dung until it be all gone,' 1 Kings xiv. 10. And as for Israel and the state of that kingdom, he threatened to smite it as a reed is shaken with the water, ver. 15. Whereas you may stand as a rock in the waters, and all alterations and turnings of the stream would but dash and break themselves upon you, you all that while abiding firm and unmoved ; you will then become as a reed in the waters, tossed up and down with contrary motions of fears and troubles, as the stream carries you this way or that way, even as that state of Israel from that time was but fluctuating, and at best ' unstable as waters,' with variety of governments and governors, the stream of the people sometimes turning one way, sometimes another (as in the story appears) ; and in the end God says that he will ' root up Israel out of this good land,' and pluck up this reed even by the roots, when it hath been tossed awhile up and down. So it follows there.

I will end this caution with two rules. First, be sure you establish nothing but what you have full, clear, and general light for. Secondly, condemn nothing, and suffer nothing to stand condemned, in which you in your consciences are doubtful there may be a truth ; for if you should build the least hay and stubble, you will not only suffer loss, but lay a foundation of



a new rent and division in the age to come. For there is a Spirit mentioned in the text, even the Holy Ghost, who will not rest working in men's spirits till the whole building be rightly framed according to the pattern in every piece of it. And whatever is amiss, and not according to his mind, the light of his fire will both discover it and burn it up; which leads me to the fifth observation, which is this,

*Obs. 5.* That God carries on the work of finishing his temple, 'not by power nor might, but by his Spirit.' By *Spirit* he meaneth the Holy Ghost, by a more immediate hand stirring up men's spirits unto this work; turning and convincing them of the truth, and of their duty towards it; and likewise by coincident acts of providence, so apparently wheeling about to the effecting of it, that though *might* and *power* be brought to concur in it, yet so as his hand alone shall be seen and acknowledged in it. And thus his *Spirit* here is manifestly interpreted in the 10th verse, where it is said that as all should 'see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel' (the instrument of building it), so they should perceive those 'seven eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth' (that is, his eyes of providence, called *seven*, because of their perfection), these to have so guided and managed all the affairs thereof, that all the rays and beams of providence issuing from those eyes might be seen to meet in the accomplishment of this as their ultimate aim and scope. Now these seven eyes, Rev. v. 6, are called 'the seven spirits of God, sent forth unto all the earth.' And Rev. i. 4 are plainly interpreted to be the Holy Ghost in his various workings, for 'grace and peace' is there wished 'from the seven spirits.' Thus much for the explication of it.

Now that the building of the temple is thus more immediately carried on by the working of the Holy Ghost, you may read it all along in all the story of the building of this temple in the Old Testament, as likewise in that of the New.

First, the laying the foundation of this temple, it was done indeed by the power and might of Cyrus; but yet, Ezra i. 2, it is added, 'The Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus;' and how, but by a mere act of foresight or providence aforehand about it? God had, an hundred years before his birth, by his Spirit written a prophecy of him, and that by name, Isa. xlv. 28, which these Jews shewing him, God's Spirit stirred up his spirit thereby; for in his proclamation himself says, 'The Lord hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem,' so ver. 2 of Ezra i. And when he had thus given leave to the Jews to go and build it, yet still it was a great matter of self-denial to them to leave their houses and gardens which they had built and planted at Babylon, Jer. xxix. 5. Therefore it is further added in the fifth verse of that first of Ezra, 'Then rose up the chief of the fathers, and the priests and Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised up, to build the house of the Lord.' And then again, when it came to this second work, the finishing of it, they were exceeding backward to it; but God sent two prophets, who convinced them of their duty; and therefore, Hag. i. 14, it is expressly and on purpose put in, that 'the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, and the spirit of Jeshua, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came and did work in the house of the Lord their God.' And again, whereas the Persian kings had made decrees against the building of it (which was the greatest impediment of all the rest), God brought Darius his heart at last off to it, and that by so unexpected a way, as made all the people joyful. So it is expressly said, Ezra vi. 22, 'They kept the feast of unleavened bread with joy: for the Lord had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria unto them, to strengthen their hands



in the work of the house of God.' Yea, and his heart was so much stirred in it, that he not only makes a decree for it, ver. 8, but likewise against all those that should oppose it, under a capital punishment, ver. 11; yea, he curseth all that should 'put to their hand to alter it,' ver. 12, so that the enemies that before opposed it were now constrained to further it, ver. 13. All this was done, as you see, 'not by power, nor by might, but by God's Spirit.' Thus much for this instance in the text out of the Old Testament.

See the like in God's building his church in the New; both in setting up his church in the world at first, when heathenism, backed with the power of the Roman empire, stood in the way of it, and likewise in raising it up again, when antichrist had thrown it down. For the first (the erecting of it), did he use might, or power, or an army (as it is varied in the margin), to conquer the world by? No such matter. He chooseth twelve or thirteen men, whereof the most were poor fishermen, and he sends them not all together in one troop neither, but dispersed apart into several parts of the world, some taking one country to conquer, some another: the most ridiculous course in appearance for such a design that could be imagined. Yet (as Rev. vi. 2) Christ in these went forth 'conquering, and to conquer,' and took nothing with him but his bow (as it is there) and his arrows (as it is Ps. xlv. 5), the preaching of the gospel, even 'the foolishness of preaching' (as the apostle calls it); yet hereby the people fell so under him (as the psalmist's phrase there is), that in three hundred years that whole empire was turned Christian, and heathenish worship thrown down; and this, you see, 'not by power, nor by might, but by his Spirit.'

But then again antichrist steps up, the beast of Rome, and 'after him all the world wandered' (that is, the European world), Rev. xiii. 3, saying, 'Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?' ver. 4. But at the 14th chapter a lamb encounters him, and but with a handful in comparison, out from among whom he sends a few emissaries, to 'preach the everlasting gospel to every nation, tongue, and kindred,' ver. 6, &c.; and in the end he wins all the northern kingdoms to embrace that gospel, and will still go on to conquer and win ground; so that, in the 15th chapter and 2d verse, we read of a perfect victory over the beast. And whereas before it had been said of 'his holiness' the pope, 'Who is like unto the beast?' now it is said, ver. 4, 'Who shall not fear thee, O Lord? for thou only art holy.' And whereas afore 'All the world wondered after the beast, and worshipped him,' the world is now so altered, that it is said, 'All nations shall come and worship before thee,' in the same 4th verse. And now the wonder is as much how all this is brought about: 'Not by power, nor by might, but by his Spirit.' So it is expressly said, 2 Thes. ii. 8, speaking of 'this man of sin,' he says, 'Whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth;' that is, by his Spirit, in the preaching of the gospel, and working in the hearts of men, and overcoming kingdoms unto Christ and his church. So we read, Rev. xvii. 4, 'The Lamb shall overcome the kings that made war with him,' and yet not by power, but by his Spirit.

*Reason.* The reason of this is, because the building of God's church is his own business, in a more special manner, more than any other; therefore he will be sure to do it himself, and more immediately be seen in it. As it is said of Christ personal (the tabernacle of his human nature), Heb. ix. 12, that it was 'not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building' (as the apostle there speaks); that is, it was not framed by the power of nature, as other men are, but by the Spirit; so it is true of Christ mystical, his body, and the tabernacle of his church. It is not of the ordinary make that other societies of men (whether families or kingdoms) are of; it is not made with

hands (with human wisdom or power, as they are), that is to say, is not of this building. Thus, Heb. iii. 4, 'Every house,' says the apostle, 'is built by some man;' that is, all kingdoms, families, and societies, God in an ordinary providence leaves to men to build in their own way; but, says he, 'he that built all things is God.' Which is spoken of God's building his church (which is his house), and all things appertaining unto it, as is evident both by the foregoing words, ver. 3, 'He that built the house' (the apostle speaking of Christ, who is God) 'hath more honour than the house,' and also by those words that follow after, 'Moses was faithful in all his house' (namely, in the building of that house then), 'as a servant; but Christ as a Son over his own house (now); whose house are we.' The reason why thus himself by his Spirit builds it, is held forth in that one word. It is his own house, and therefore he will oversee the doing this himself; and will do it so that none shall share in the glory with him, although he useth them.

Use 1. First use is that which is made of it in the 10th verse, namely, that in matters which concern the building of the church, we should learn to 'despise\* the day of small things.' The prophet speaks it by way of reproof, 'Who hath despised the day of small things?' because the beginnings of this work then were but small, and there was little appearance in human foresight to effect it. Therefore, who almost was there that did not despise it and despair of it? Remember that there is a Spirit in the text, and no man knows how far he may carry on the smallest beginnings, which he lays as the foundation of his greatest works, that his own immediate hand may the more appear. 'The kingdom of heaven' was at first but 'as a grain of mustard-seed,' says Christ, 'the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest of herbs, and becomes a tree,' Mat. xiii. 32. In Dan. ii. 34, 45, there is mention made of 'a stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands;' which expression is used not only to shew the divine power that accompanied it, but to intimate that it was at first but some little stone which without hands dropped out, or was blown down from the mountain; for if it had been a great one, it must then have had hands to cut and hew it out, and to throw it down. And yet, lo! 'this little stone became a mountain, and filled the whole earth,' as it there follows.

A second use is that which is in the text, that when you see anything done for God's church, beyond the reach of human wisdom and foresight, that you would fall down and cry (as they are taught here, ver. 7), 'Grace, grace, unto it.' You are not to cry up, Zerubbabel, Zerubbabel, that is, any means or instrument whatever, whether king or parliament, much less this man or that man, but to exalt the free grace of God, the work of which alone it is and hath been.

One word more unto Zerubbabel; the text calls for it: 'This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel.' From which let the observation be this:

That this work of finishing the temple lies first and chiefly upon Zerubbabel and his elders to take care of, that is, upon prince and elders. And though Jeshua and his fellows the priests are intended (as being the one of those olive-trees formerly mentioned), yet Zerubbabel and the magistrates are only spoken to. All such motions should come first from you; it is your duty to be the he-goats of the flock, to lead on all the rest, as the prophet Ezekiel speaks. Thus, Ezra i. 5, 'Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin to build the house of the Lord;' it had otherwise never been done to purpose. So in the building of the temple at first, the motion came first into David's heart: 1 Chron. xxix. 3, 'I have,' says he, 'set my



affection to the house of God.' And then, ver. 6, 'The chief of the fathers and princes of the house of Israel,' they follow; and then fell in the people, and they rejoiced and offered willingly, so ver. 13. You should commend unto the people what is good and right: 'Let us bring back the ark of our God unto us,' said David, 1 Chron. xiii. 3; and no sooner had he commended it unto them, but (as it follows, ver. 4), 'all the congregation said they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.'

And the reason why this is your more especial duty is, because God hath honoured princes and magistrates above, and set them over, others. And as those who honour God, God will honour, so those whom God hath honoured, he expects should honour him, and you cannot do it better than this way; for how much his honour is concerned in his worship, you heard before.

Let the honour of it move you. Take the renowned men in Scripture, and their greatest glory hath been to be builders of God's house. It is mentioned as Moses his highest honour, Heb. iii. 2-4. And David, though a king already, accounts this a greater honour than his crown. So 1 Chron. xxix. 14, 'Who am I,' says he, 'and what is my people, that we should offer so willingly?' He speaks it of offering towards the building of the temple. And in the New Testament it is the apostles' honour, that they were master builders; yea, it is made Christ's highest honour: Heb. iii. 3, 'This man was accounted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.' So far as you are capable of it, and have power to do it, be in this conformed unto him. The prize of this honour is set before you, and you have the first offer of it. An opportunity such as these last hundred years well nigh have not afforded the like to it. This parliament seems to have been called by God 'for such a time as this;' and if you will not do it, God will do it without you. As he said that deliverance, so (say I) reformation will arise some other way. God hath a Spirit here in the text that will work it out in men's hearts, if power and might should not; and that will be little to your honour, as Deborah said to Barak. In the 5th of Micah, ver. 7, 'The remnant of Jacob' is said to be 'as a dew from the Lord, and as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men.' The prophet useth two similitudes, to shew both that the multiplication and growth of the church depend not upon man: first, for their propagation, and their being multiplied, he compares them unto the dew, which is engendered and distilled from heaven immediately; therefore, Ps. cx. 3, new converts added unto the church are compared unto the dew, and God's begetting of them unto 'the womb of the morning,' when over night the earth was dry. Again, the growth and maintaining of them he compares unto the sprouting up of herbs and grass in wildernesses where man comes not, and so their springing 'tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men,' for them to come with watering-pots to nourish them (as herbs in gardens do), but these have showers from heaven that give the increase: 'I the Lord,' speaking of this vineyard, 'do keep it; I will water it every moment,' Isa. xxvii. 3.

The conclusion. Now for a conclusion, and winding up of all. Is this word of the Lord spoken to you in a way of general application only, such as similitudinary examples, which in some things hold a likeness, use to have, (all things happening in the Old Testament 'for examples, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come,' as the apostle speaks, 1 Cor. x. 11)? Or is there not some more special word that applies this vision of the candlestick and olive trees as prophetic types of the

like work of finishing the temple, to fall out under the times of the gospel, when the church is come out of popery? That Babylon was the prophetic type of Rome, you all know where to find that; it is in the 17th and 18th of the Revelations, and so applied by the Holy Ghost. And that the foundation of this temple was the type of our first reformation, when we came out from Babylon, was in the first observation shewn you out of chap. xiv. and xv. And that the Samaritans are by the Holy Ghost made the type of those that shall in any age corrupt the worship of God, by mingling idolatrous or popish superstitions, as our innovators have done, we meet with the application thereof, by the Holy Ghost himself, unto some living in the best of churches under the gospel, namely, that of Philadelphia, Rev. iii. 9, 'who say they are Jews, and are not; Behold (says God), I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee,' (as speaking unto that church.) Now, whereas the Holy Ghost, describing them to be such as 'say they are Jews, but are not,' it is in a periphrasis of speech all one as to say they are Samaritans. Josephus tells us that, when the Jews were in a prosperous estate, the Samaritans would then say that they were Jews; and that fore-mentioned place, the 4th of Ezra, manifestly implies as much, for they there plead, 'We worship God as you do,' &c. And although we pass not this judgment on men's persons, yet we may speak of causes and things, as the Scripture hath done before us. Now, as certain it is that those God's magistrates who, under the times of the gospel, especially in these last days, have and shall assist the reformation of the churches from under those Samaritan superstitions intermingled with their worship, and shall afford their countenance and aid to the finishing and perfecting the temple, they are typified out by the olive trees here (which were then Zerubbabel, their chief governor, and his elders). And accordingly we find as express an application of it by the Holy Ghost himself, as prophetically intended herein. Thus, in the same book of the Revelation (in which prophecy of the New Testament the Holy Ghost borrows all the elegancies and flowers in the story of the Old, thereby to set out the story of the New in succeeding ages), in the 11th chap. ver. 4, the Holy Ghost describes the two witnesses that should oppose the beast and his party in all, and especially the latter, ages, saying, 'These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks, standing before the God of the earth,' where, by the candlesticks, are meant the churches, as was shewn before, and by the two olive trees, the eminent magistrates and ministers that supply oil for the maintaining of these churches' light and glory now, as Zerubbabel and Jeshua the priests did then. Yea, the Holy Ghost deciphers them not only by the very same hieroglyphic that is presented here in Zechariah, but also he useth the very same words which we find there in the interpretation of the vision, 'standing before the God of the earth.' And, further, this vision of the candlestick, and those two olive trees, in Zechariah, did signify, as was shewn, not so much, if at all, the first laying of the foundation of the temple, which had been done many years before; but was eminently, if not only, to hold forth that work of finishing and completing it, which remained then to be done, and to stir them up thereunto was that vision as there given. Therefore, answerably now, the full analogy of the type must principally fall upon, not so much the first reformation, as upon a second work of the perfecting and finishing of them. And accordingly, as Zerubbabel there in Zechariah is seen, 'with a plummet in his hand,' ver. 10, to measure out what remained unfinished for the building of the temple, so here in the 1st verse of the 11th of the Revelation, John hath a 'reed given him,' (he representing the godly of those ages) and is bidden to 'measure the temple



of God, and the altar, and the worshippers ;' and this, as supposing a temple to have been already built, only having too vast and great an outward court laid to it, ver. 2. And although the computation of the whole time of anti-christ's reign is there mentioned and annexed to these occurrences, yet but to this end, to shew how that time allotted him to reign should end and expire ; and so in that to shew what passages should fall out in the church, towards the expiration of it, as a warning and signal of it (whereof these are the chief) ; for, chap. x. ver. 6, the angel that gives that prophecy in the 11th, swears that time should be no longer (that is, the beast's time), but until the days of the seventh trumpet, which were shortly then approaching ; for immediately after these occurrences rehearsed, we find that that seventh trumpet sounds, ver. 15 of that 11th chap.

But then, you will say, there is mentioned after this an overcoming and killing of these witnesses by a war of the beast, even his last war against the saints, whereby he shall throw down their candlesticks, and cut down these olive trees ; and, if so, where then is all the encouragement which you have given ?

I dare not say that this killing is as yet to come. It is the greatest controversy in this book whether it be past or no ; but, however, supposing it not yet past, to take off discouragements from thence,

First, For the time of it, we know it not how long, it may be a good while unto it, and, in the mean time, we may yet enjoy a summer of the gospel, and an harvest of a better reformation, a little time of which (if it were to be bought) were worth a world.

Secondly, If you attentively observe it, you shall find that killing expressed by an allusion unto Christ's being crucified at last, and then their rising again, like his rising again with an earthquake, and ascending unto heaven, as these are said to do, ver. 11-13. Now, with what doth Christ comfort himself before he was to die ? 'Destroy this temple,' says he, 'and in three days I will raise it up again ;' with the same may you be encouraged also, though you supposed it yet to come. It is but a *destruite hoc templum*, a destroying of that you are about to repair, this temple, and but for three days and an half, no longer ; for 'After three days and an half' (as it is twice said, in the 9th and 11th verses), God will rear it up again, and that with advantage, making a better edition of it, even an holy of holies, in which the ark is seen (as ver. 19), in comparison of the former. Yea, and further (as some think), this killing shall be but a civil death, that is, of them as witnesses only ; not a natural death, as men. (For how else are their bodies said to lie dead for three years and an half ?) And so the same persons shall rise again, and enjoy the fruit of their former labours, and ascend into a greater glory.

And thirdly, Suppose this should come upon you, even when you are about to finish your work (as the 7th verse hath it, *ὅταν τελέσωσι*, when these olive trees are about to finish or perfect their testimony (as some do read it), yet let not even this cause you any whit to forbear this work. Christ knew he was to be crucified, yet he casts the money-changers out of the temple ; and so do you. Purge and reform the temple, though you die for it in the doing of it. It is worth the observing, that though it was told good king Josiah, in the beginning of his reign, that God would bring evil upon Jerusalem, because of their apostasy in Manasseh's time, and he knew that all he could do in reforming should not quench God's wrath, 2 Kings xvi. 17, yet he reformed with all his might, and therein 'there was no king before him that was like unto him,' ver. 23, 25. Do you your duty, and serve your generation (as David is said to do). 'Be strong, and let not your

hands be weak, for your works shall be rewarded,' as it is in 2 Chron. xv. 7.

I conclude all with that speech unto this whole State, which David used to Solomon, concerning the building of the temple in his days: 1 Chron. xxviii. 20, 21, 'Be strong, and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed, for the Lord God will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord. And behold, the courses of the priests and the Levites shall be with thee, for all the service of the house of God: also the princes and the people will be wholly at thy commandment.'

*Die Mercurii, 27 Aprilis 1642.*

It is this day ordered by the House of Commons in Parliament, that Mr Goodwin and Mr Caryll be desired to print their sermons preached the last fast-day before the said House; and that no man shall print those sermons for the space of two months next ensuing, without their particular licence and approbation.

H. ELSYNGE, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

These are to give notice, that I appoint R. Dawlman to print my sermon.

THO. GOODWIN.