

**THE MAGISTRATE'S  
PORTRAITURE  
DRAWN FROM THE  
WORD**

---

**by William Gurnall**

THE MAGISTRATES Pourtraiture Drawn from the  
WORD,  
AND  
Preached in a SERMON at Stowe-Market in Suffolk,  
upon August, the 20. 1656. before the Election of Par-  
liament-men for the same County.

On Isaiah 1.26. the former part.  
And I will restore thy Judges as at first, and thy Coun-  
sellors as at the beginning.

By WILLIAM GURNALL, M. A.  
of Eman Coll. now Pastor of the Church of Christ in  
Lavenham. Suffolk.

LONDON, Printed for Ralph Smith, at the Bible in  
Cornhil, near the Royal Exchange. 1656.

## THE MAGISTRATES Pourtraiture Drawn from the WORD.

ISAIAH 1.26. the former part.

And I will restore thy Judges as at first and by Counsellours as at the beginning.

IF we consider the great wickednesse of the people, to whom this holy Prophet was sent, we may wonder that God suffered so rare a Jewel, to hang so long on such a disobedient care, as theirs was; that he lent his Prophet so long to a people that made him and his message no more welcome. But again, if we consider how long heaven indulged

Page 2

them, this incomparable mercy, and calculate the long race of his Prophetical course, we have reason to wonder as much, though he found them so bad, that yet he left them no better. Stones weare with long dropping, but these relent not under sixty yeares preaching, and more of this holy man, (for so long the line of his Ministry was stretcht) they were wicked enough in Uzziah and Jothams reign, when he first ascended the stage of Prophcie, but by Manasses his time, (in which he died, and that by a violent and bloody death, (as Story tells us) being sawne asunder) they were wicked to some tune. It was now full water at Ierusalem, yea, the whole land becomes sea, covered with idolatry, oppression, and the work of sin, which might have been expected any where,

rather than among a people so divinely taught. But weeds grow no where so rank, as in fat soile; we may know enough of this wretched people, if we reade this chapter, which like a true glasse, will give us the feature of that people, as it look't in the Prophets time; and I wish with all my soul, we could not see a cast of our own Nations countenance in their face.

First, they were a people Sermon-prooffe. They had heard away their hearing eare, and 'tis a sad deafnesse, and hardly cured, which is got in hearing of Sermons; how far they were gone in this we may guesse by the Prophets strange Apostrophe, ver. 2. Hear O Heavens, and give eare O earth, for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. Take the words how you will, they speak them a people past councel, and instruction; if by Heaven and Earth you will have the Continents of both meant, then by speaking to these is intimated, he had as

Page 3

good speak to the inanimate creatures, as to them. That Preacher surely thinks his people bad indeed, who directs his speech to the seats they sit on, and pillars they leane to, Hear, O ye seats, and hearken O ye pillars. If for the inhabitants, Angels and men, who dwell in these, still he reproaches their obstinacy. It shewes the Father can work little on his childe within doores, when he comes into the open street, and proclaims his rebellion to all the world.

Secondly, as they were Sermon, so Affliction-proof, they

were so mad on their lusts, that rather then not have them, they would swim through their own blood to them; heavy judgements were on them, but no physick wrought kindly on them: God was weary of smiting, but not they of finning; therefore we finde him making his moan as a Physician, who hath run through the whole Art of Physick to do his Patient good, but findes him grow worse under his hand, and therefore at last speaks of giving him over, ver. 3. Why should ye be stricken any more, the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint? If affliction would do you good, you have had enough of that; I have beat you till I have not left you one sound part, from head to heele, and yet you will run after your lusts, while your blood runs after your heels.

Thirdly, in a word, they were impudent in their hypocri-sie; at the very same time that they acted all their abominations, they kept up a gaudy Pageant of Religion, they spared for no cost in the multitude of their sacrifices, but appeared great Zelots in the Temple, which the Prophet, ver. 11. protests against, as the worst part of all their wickednesse. Indeed spiritual wickednesse carries in it the very spirits of wickednesse.

Page 4

And all this is not charged upon some petty party, and inconsiderable faction in the Nation, which had not been so much, but the inditement is laid against the whole Nation, ver. 3. Israel doth not know, ver. 4. Ah sinful Nation. The whole head and heart were as sick of sin, as they

were of suffering. 'Tis sad when all the house are down together, or those that are well, not enough to look to the sick. There were indeed some gracious ones in that degenerate age, but so few, that their Religion, like a pinte of wine in a tunne of water, could hardly be tasted amidst such a multitude of ungodly ones.

Now as it is in the diseases of the body, when a general distemper hath invaded the whole (as in a Feaver or the like,) there is commonly some one principal part, whose disorder affects all the rest, which a wise Physician bestows his chiefest skill to finde out, as most conducing to the cure: so here, the sad distemper which the Jewish Nation lay under, both in regard of sin and misery, is observed by the Prophet in a great measure, to have proceeded from one principal rank, and order of men among them, and that was their Rulers and Magistrates, ver. 22, 23. Thy silver is become drosse, thy wine mixt with water, thy Princes are rebellious. Therefore the Lord levelles his threatnings at their breast, in an especial manner, ver. 24. Therefore, saith the Lord, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries. That as they had the greatest hand in the sin, so they should have the deepest draught in the judgement. No sins lie heavier on Gods stomach, and make him more heart-sick, then theirs who stand in high and publick place of Rule and Government. But lest the godly should be discouraged at the calamities denounced against them,

Page 5

(for they could not but know, it would be a sad day with

the whole Land, when God should make such an overturning of the great ones in it; the storme of Gods vengeance seldome falls so upon Princes and Rulers, but that the people are taken in the showre, and share with them in their sufferings.) To fortifie therefore the hearts of these few godly ones, he opens his designe of mercy which he had towards them, even in the captivity coming upon them, ver. 25. I will turne my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy drosse, and take away all thy Tinne; where he compares their captivity to a furnace, themselves to silver, the ungodly among them especially (Magistrates that were such) to drosse and tin, and himself to the Refiner, and that his designe is not to consume, but purge them from this drosse that did allay and debase them, and when he had done this (so as that wicked generation were once worne out) then he would provide better for them; faithful Magistrates in the room of the ungodly ones removed, ver. 26. which are the words of the Text, And I will restore thy Judges as at the first, &c.

So that those words are as a lump of sugar after a bitter draught, given to this poor people, to take away that unpleasing farewell, which the threatening of a captivity might leave on their thoughts.

Where by the way observe, Gods love and tender care over the godly in evil times, when his wrath is in its greatest career against the wicked, even then his thoughts of mercy are full at work in his heart for his people, he is carving a mercy for them out of the same Providence, in

which he deals out vengeance to the ungodly; God can blow hot and cold, wrath and mercy to his enemies at the same breath; yea, he contents

Page 8

not himself with this purpose of love to his people, but also he must acquaint them with it, that though they could not be put in present possession of the promise, yet they might be kept in possession of themselves, and by patience be enabled more comfortably to expect the performance of it. No such sweet companion to go with the Saints to a prison, as a Promise. The bed of affliction of it selfe is hard, now to prevent their tossing and tumbling in it, through anguish of their present sorrow, he layes this soft pillow of the Promise under their head; I will restore. And

The words are a Promise, wherein observe

First, the Person promising, I will restore, &c.

Secondly, the mercy promised, Judge as at the first, and Counsellours as at the beginning.

Thirdly, the time and manner, when and how performed, wrap't up in the word, And; which stands in the front of the Text, pointing to the preceding words, They indeed tell us when and how God will do this for them. I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy drosse, and take away thy tinne. Then follows the Promise in the Text, which comes in as a consequent of that



great National calamity to come upon them in the Babylonish captivity. So that though the birth would be joyous, yet before this Promise could be delivered, many a sad paine and bitter throw should precede. The people of God have usually their hardest labours of their greatest mercies. So have Churches and Nations their greatest Reformations, raised out of their greatest Confusions. Indeed, as a vessel of silver, (to which God compares Iudah) that is tempered of much drossie matter, and much batter'd and crack't, can never be refined and made fashionable, without melting and new

Page 7

casting. So God lets them know, they were grown so corrupt and nought, that they needed a hot and lasting fire to burne up their drosse, that their Nation might be cast into a new mould, so new, that the very forme of Government was to be changed.

First, of the Person promising, I will restore; In which observe, how in promising to give Judges and Counsellours, he ownes this order of Magistracy as lawful, yea, claimes it as his Ordinance. Whence note.

[Doct.] Magistracy is an Order and Office, which God himself sets up, yea, which he will have up in his Church, when in its best purity, as here he speaks of a time of more Reformation then ordinary. In that time he will restore. Here is Divinity stamp't upon the face of it. 'Tis called indeed an Ordinance of man, 1 Pet. 2.13. 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , not as if it were mans invention:

for all Powers are of God, but because 'tis discharged by men, and intended for mans good. And truly it is so distasteful to the ungodly world, because it layes their lusts in chaines, and so torments them before their time, that if God had not been in this bush (so oft on fire) it had been consumed before this. There has been old tugging to pluck this plant up, but being of Gods planting, it stands too sure for mans hand to root up.

We may use the same Argument to prove the Divinity of Magistracy, which sometime we do the Divinity of Scripture, viz. the strange preservation of it in all the revolutions and changes that have come over the head of times, by warres, and the confusions that accompany them. Some have indeed thrown off their Governours, but never could a Government, as soon almost as one is off, another is in the saddle; yea, so

Page 8

connatural it is to the principles and notions of mans minde, that a Government is found, where no Scripture is found to teach it.

[Use 1] First, then let us blesse God for a Government, as though it should be none of the best. It is a very bad Government indeed, that is worse then none at all. Where there is a Magistracy some may be opprest and wronged under it, but none can be righted where there is none. If might be right, then right will be wrong, and better poor people should sit under a scratching bramble, then have no hedge at all to shelter them from winde and weather,

stormes I mean of popular fury. The Persians had a custome, that when their Prince died, some dayes (five as I remember) of misrule, were indulged the people, in which they might do what they would without controll, that by the rapines and outrages, which might well be thought would be committed therein, they might be brought in love the more with the Person and Government of their succeeding Prince. It is a sad way I confesse, but a sure one, to know the happinesse of a Government, by experimenting the confusion of an Anarchy.

[Use 2] Secondly, what shall we think of those who would take the sword from the Magistrates side, though girded to it by Gods own hand? that call Magistracy it selfe to the barre to shew its Commission? This is no new Sect, we finde it one Article in the inditement of those seducers, Jude 8. They did despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignity; Mark, not the persons did so much displease them, as the office it selfe; and it had been well for the Churches of Christ, if this errour had died with the first Broachers of it; some Anabaptists of later times, have declared themselves heires to this spirit

Page 9

of confusion and disorder; Among other positions of this Sect in Transilvania, published one thousand five hundred sixty and eight, I finde this one, openly vouched by them, that 'tis a mark of Antichrist to have in their Church Kings, Princes, and the sword of the Magistrate, which Christ (say they) can no way allow in his Church; And I wish the sea, which runs betwixt that land and ours, had

been able to keep this error from setting foot on English ground. But is Magistracy such an uncircumcised thing, that it must be shut out of the pale of the Church? Is it an office fitted and formed for Heathens, and not Christians? Truly, then I should chuse to live rather among Heathens than Christians. But how an those reade the Scripture and not blush? were the Saints at Rome Heathens or Christians? and doth the Apostle bring any such newes to them, doth he see them out of the Magistrates precincts? No, He is the Minister of God to them for good; and he tells them they must needs be subject, (though then the Magistrate was no friend to the Church) and that not only for wrath, to save his skin from mans wrath, but for conscience sake, to save their soules from God, Rom. 13.4, 5. They cannot father their brat upon the Scripture; No, 'tis a misshapen brat conceived in the wombe of ignorance, and begot by pride, and it will appear so by the two principles, which are the very seed, of which this error is formed; and they are,

First, a liberty which they fancie Christ hath given them, to which, subjection under Magistracy (forsooth) is inconsistent; what will not a strong imagination finde in the Scripture? even that which was never writ, if it hath but a strong desire it should be so to back it. A liberty that never came into his minde to give a

Page 10

strange liberty that leads to licentiousnesse, and ends in bondage. True liberty is to chuse good, and reject evil, and this Magistracy is erected to defend thee in doing,

Rom. 13. Rulers are not a terrour to good works.

Secondly, a perfection that they dream of, which lifts them up so high, that now they need not the Ministry of the Magistracy to keep them within bounds. The Magistrate is an avenger (say they) to execute wrath to them that do evil, but Saints, who are led by the Spirit, dare not do thus Well, suppose them so holy as they would seem, yet do they not live among those that are wicked? (I am sure they think and speak bad enough of all besides their own tribe,) and do they not need the Magistrates help, that they may be defended in the exercise of holiness? The Saints do not finde the world so kinde, as that they should need dismisse their guard, before they get safe to Heaven. But what horrible pride is this, to pretend to such a conduct of the Spirit, as to be priviledged from sin? the Apostles that were of as high a forme in the Spirits Schoole, I trow, as the best in the Anabaptists bunch, are willing to be branded themselves for loud liars, if they should pretend to such a perfection. If we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us, 1 John 1.8. But the Churches of Christ have had too much experience of many of the Anabaptists, to give them their hands to be such great Saints; No, no, 'tis not their perfection that lifts them up above Magistracy, but their lusts that make them not able to bear the Magistrates power. Those Scholars are the first that would burne their Masters rod, who have most need of it. I am sure this sort of men have shewen, they need Magistracy as much as others. And some of them, those I mean at

Munster

Page 11

in Germany convinced the world, (for all their loud cries against Magistracy at first) that they liked the Magistrates seat well enough, when they could once come to set themselves in it. If God intend mercy for England, this Anti-Magistratical spirit shall not prevail; If we be too good to live under Magistrates, Gods Vicegerents, we are too bad to live under Gods own care and Government. The Hebrewes have a Proverb, *Migrandum est ex eo loco, in quo Rex non timetur*. We had best make haste from that place where the King is not feared, as if some heavy judgement impended that place where Magistrates are despised; and it were a sin that could not long stay for its guerdion and reward. I am sure those fanatick spirits in Germany found the warrant of vengeance sent from God against them, endorsed with speed.

[Use 3] Thirdly, Is Magistracy an Order of Gods erecting? a word then to you (worthy Gentlemen) into whose lap the lot of this dayes choice shall fall; Decline not the place for fear or ease. If God gives you a Commission, you need not feare to act; you are but under-Officers, and of all Cowards, he is the worst that dares not follow, when God leads him on. Go in this thy might (saith God to Gideon) have not I sent thee? Judges 6.14. Gods Word was his Warrant, and Gods Warrant was his Protection. Frederick Duke of Saxony, when he had read Luthers book, put out in Vindication of the divine Authority of Magistracy against the Anabaptists, lift up his hands to

heaven, and blest God, that he lived to see the place of Magistracy, wherein he stood, so clearly proved from Scripture evidence, to be a place wherein he might with a good conscience act, so as to

Page 12

please God therein. The Magistrates office we see is honourable, because 'tis of God, yet sometimes it goes a begging, but 'tis a certaine signe of calamitous times, when good and worthy Patriots are loth to appear on the stage of Government. Kings, Palaces, and Senate-houses do not use to stand long empty, or are hard to be let, except some evil spirit from the troubles of the times haunt them, and then indeed it is no wonder to hear it said, as in that deplored time of Judah's declining-state, Esay 3.7. I will not be a healer, make me not a Ruler of the people; If the Physician will not take the Patient in hand, 'tis to be feared, he thinks the disease too far gone, and he shall have little credit in the businesse, if he hap to miscarry under his hand. Indeed State Physicians, though never so faithful, can hardly escape blame, if they do not the cure. The multitude judge the Pilot good or bad, as the voyage he makes, is gainful or losing to the Owners. But I hope you have learn't not to judge your selves by others thoughts, *Nemo miser sensu alieno*, no man is miserable by what others think of him; If you be not willing to give up your own name to be sacrificed by the multitude, there is little hope of being a Saviour to your Countrey. Christ could not have saved man, if he had stood upon saving his Name among men, he was willing to do them good, though he was thought and spoken all to naught by

them for his paines.

Do your duty, and leave the issue to God; I confesse, 'tis a blustering time, but sometime Marriners find faire weather at sea, when they launch out in a storme. That God hath the winde in his fist that sends you to sea, and if a storme meet you in your work, Christ can

Page 13

soon be with you in it, and save you from it. God is not more seen in sea tempests, then he is in land-stormes, confusions, I mean, of States and Nations. He that stills the noise of the seas, doth the tumult of the people, Psal. 65.7. They are there, and may well be put together. Well, whatever comes of it, it will be more honourable and safe for you (when called) to be found in Parliament, endeavouring to heal the bleeding wounds of the Nation, though to your private hazard, then saving your own skins whole at home. Is it not sad, that a poor woman in travel should die for want of help, because 'tis midnight when she calls, and her neighbours, loth to break their rests, or come out in the cold to save her life? England is now in travel, and calls you to her labour; take heed that the ghost of your ruined Nation doth not haunt you to your graves, for denying your help. I confesse, 'tis like to speed the worse with the poor Land, because of some unhappy disappointments in former Assemblies; 'tis with England, as with a woman that hath oft called her women, but her paines have gone over and nothing to be done, which makes her want help when she hath most need of it; But who knowes that now the full time is not come for a



birth? God only keeps reckoning for States-deliverances, better go twenty times, when called re infectâ, then thy place once found empty, when the work indeed comes to be done.

Secondly, as God by this Promise of giving Judges as at the first, and Counsellours as at the beginning, ownes this order and state of Magistracy, so he layes claim to the dispose of persons that bear this office, I will restore, &c. It implies, that he had a hand in taking away  
Page 14

those holy Governours which ruled them in the first and better times for their sins; and ordering worse in their roomes, as a plague for those sins; and that now he will fill the Magistrates Seat again with faithful Judges and Counsellours like their first. Note hence,

[Doct.] That not only the office of Magistracy is of Gods erecting, but the persons also in the place of Magistracy, (whether good or bad) are of Gods appointing. When the Magistrates place is to be filled, though it be but in a private Corporation, what plotting and siding is there, every one to lift up a head for his own faction? And I wish there were not too much of this crowded into the great Assembly of this day, wherein most (it is to be feared) come rather to serve a party, yea, some particular person with their suffrages, then God and their Countrey; well, plot what you can, Heaven will carry it from you all, you (with all the bussle and pudder that is made) are but the flie upon the wheel, 'tis the wheele of Providence, not

you, that determines the issue of this dayes meeting. Matches are made in heaven between Magistrates and people; when they voted for Christ to die, and Barabbas to live, they did but make up the work, that God had cut out to their hand; chuse well or ill, you cannot denie God his casting voice. When the ten tribes made a rent from the house of David, it is said indeed Hosea 84. They have set up Kings, and not by me; they have made Princes, and I knew it not; that is, they asked not Gods leave, they were not by him, that is, not by his approbation, Princes that he knew not, that is, not by their acquainting him, they took not God into their Council, and if God could have known it no

Page 15

known it no way, else he should have been wholly ignorant of the matter, yet God tells them, he gave them these very Kings and Princes, Hosea 13.11. Gods secret Providence had the ordering of the matter, while they please their own lust, they fulfilled Gods Council wrath, who by their own wicked choice intended to plague them for their former sin.

[Use] Are Magistrates good or bad sent of God? see the way how to obtain a good choice this day, that is, by plying hard the throne of grace, if we have faithful Magistrates, they must be of Gods sending, I will restore, and no Key like prayer to open Gods heart. God rules the world by the lusts of his enemies, and by the prayers of his Saints; he by disappointing the one, and stirring up, as also graciously answering the other, accomplisheth his

own ends in the affaires of the word. The Egyptians policies, and Israels prayers, helped on the ruine of the one and deliverance of the other; when Israel groaned under the bondage of Pharaoh, the Lord heares their cry, and saves them by the hand of Moses, it was worth their groaning to get such a change, a Moses that carried them tenderly on his shoulder, for a Pharaoh the cruelly rid on their backs. Prayer moves the great wheel of the Clock, that sets all the rest a going. Perswade God, and he will perswade man; Jacob was afraid of Esau, and makes God his friend, and God made Esau his friend; He that could give Saul another spirit, and so altered the property of the man, that before he is aware he shall prophesie with the Prophets; he can alter those purposes which men had in their hearts when they came forth this day, and make them Vote for those they little thought on, he can make profane

Page 16

ones cast their suffrages into the lap of those that are godly; and truly if it were not so, I should wonder how a faithful, godly Parliament-man could be chosen in England, where the heap carries it. It hath been a custome in former times among us, for letters to come thick from Court, when Parliaments were to be chosen, to Townes and Corporations, which had almost the effect of a Mandamus. To be sure, God can send into the bosomes of men his secret messages, which shall awe their consciences, Gen. 31.29. It is in the power of my hand (said Laban to Jacob,) to do you hurt, but the God of your fathers spake unto me yesternight, saying, Take thou heed,

&c. Poor man! in his power? when God had tied his hands behinde him, yea, sealed up his mouth, that he could not speak a word but what God formed for him: Hath not God thus met some of you on your way, overpowering your hearts against your former thoughts? If he hath not met with you as you come, to binde up your hand from writing for an unworthy person, you may expect to meet him as you go home, sometime or other upon a sadder-errand. Better Cain had met God before he gave the bloody blow, to have stayed his hand from striking it, then afterward to meet him with that dismal Question, O what hast thou done! O it will pierce thy heart like a Dagger, when God shall ask another day, What hast thou done in giving thy voice for such as will help to ruine, not to heal the land? Thou art the Murderer of thy Countrey, and its blood I will require at thy hands. So much of the first Branch, the Person promising; the second follows, the mercy promised, Judges as at the first, and Counsellours as at the beginning.

Page 17

Three Questions may here be propounded, why Judges and Counsellours are here promised, and not Kings and Princes? why the Promise double both Judges and Counsellours? And lastly, why Judges as at the first?

First, Why Judges and Counsellours, and not Kings and Princes?

Because this Promise had a particular respect to a time,

when their Government was not to be Monarchical, (viz.) after their returne from captivity, when this Promise took place in Nehemiah, Ezra, Zerubbabel, and other faithful Judges, that after them ruled the Jewish State; where I pray observe, [Note.] That it matters not so much what kinde of Government a people live under, as what kinde of Governours. Let the Government be what it will, if the persons be naught in whose hands it is, all will be naught: The Jewes saw happy dayes under Kingly Government, when the Kings were gracious and wise, and happy under Judges and Counsellours, (such as Moses, Joshua, Zerubbabel,) though with lesse worldly splendour, and they saw as miserable dayes, under both Kings and Judges, being under the former delivered up into the hand of the Assyrian and Babylonian; and by the factions of the latter betrayed at last into the hand of the Romane power: the sword of Government cuts as the hand is that holds it.

[Quest.] Secondly, Why runs the Promise double, both Judges and Counsellours?

[Answ.] Because these by a Synecdoche comprehend whole Magistracy. Two things concur to compleat a Government; Wisdome to make wholesom Lawes, and  
Page 18

Advice for the good of the People; and faithfulness with courage to execute these Lawes; for the first, here are Counsellours to advise and forme Lawes; for the second, here are Judges to inform and put life into these Lawes

by execution; Counsellours without Judges, are as a head without a hand; Judges without Counsellours, a hand without a head.

[Q.] Thirdly, But why Judges as at the first?

[A.] To implie their present degeneracy from the primitive constitution, when first formed into a Commonwealth by Moses, or after in a Kingdome by David; where by the way we see, [Note.] The best constituted Governments are prone in time to degenerate. The nearer the Spring, the clearer the water: the farther the stream runs from its first source, the more muddy it is and troubled. And indeed as of States, so 'tis of Churches, purest at first planting, like Apples, faire and sound when first pluck't from the tree, but in time speck and rot; The world we live in is a muggish and rafty aire, the best things soonest decay in it: hence it is that God brings such revolutions upon Nations and Churches, one change is productive of another; First, they change in purity, and grow corrupt; Then God changes their peace and prosperity; yea, sometimes of their very forme and visible constitution.

But we shall wave the points those considerations would afford us, and take up one Conclusion, which ariseth from the Subject matter of the Promise in general, and 'tis this.

[Doct.] That faithful Magistrates are a choice blessing to

a Nation. I will restore Judges as at the first, &c. None of Gods gifts are 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , giftlesse gifts; it is worth

Page 19

the having what God thinks is worth the promising; yea, when he gives a people faithful Governours, he makes account he gives them a mercy not of the least magnitude.

First, observe on what designe God makes this Promise, which speaks it a choice mercy; and that is to quiet and compose their thoughts in the expectation of their captivity hastening upon them, and to make them the more willingly to leave their own land, upon this account, that when they returne, they should gain this by all their sufferings, to have Judges as at the first, as if this were a recompence adequate to all their losses and troubles. It must needs be some great thing that a man offers, to make a man willing to have his arme cut off, or endure some great torment. God gives this Promise, to make them patiently bear the calamities which their long captivity will bring with it, and therefore is a great mercy.

Again, observe how this is promised, not as a single mercy, but as a mercy that hath many in the wombe of it; a mercy representative of all the good he had in his thoughts to bestow upon them; he makes choice of this, as the fittest Interpreter of his large heart, as that which might best assure them of his love towards them. I will restore Judges as at the first, it is as much as if he had

said, I will restore all manner of blessings into your bosome; Indeed as Magistrates are, so we may expect things will go in a Nation: There is no one place where we may stand at greater advantage to see what God intends for a people (good or evil) then by observing what Rulers and Governours, his Providence orders out to them. The very Heathens signified thus

Page 20

much by their custome, who in erecting the statues of their Magistrates by fountaines, did imply, that from them issued out the good or evil of a people. Two wayes it goes ill or well with a Nation.

First, when Religion and Righteousnesse stand or fall. Without those, Nations are but forrests of wilde beasts, where the stronger devoure the weaker. As the Magistrate is, so are these lift up or cast down; no sooner here in the text is Religion and Righteousnesse set down in the Chaire of Government, but we finde the influence of it among the people, I will restore thy Judges as at the first, &c. then it follows, Afterward thou shalt be called a City of Righteousnesse, a faithful City. So soon doth the City learne to write, after the Copy which the Court sets her. The Septuagint upon that place, Psalme 24.7. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, &c. read thus 〈 in non-Latin alphabet 〉 , &c. Lift up the Gates, O ye Princes. The Gate leads the way to the City, and the Magistrate hath the command of the Gate, as he opens or shuts the Gate, so is Religion entertained or shut out of a Nation,



in the publick Profession of it. Therefore the open idolatry of a Nation is laid by God himself at the Magistrates door, Mich, 1.5. For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the House of Israel. Now mark the next words, What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem? That is, what is the Spring of all this idolatry, and other abominations of these two Kingdomes? Is it not the two chief Cities, and Princes Courts kept there? Reade Scripture-Story, and you shall finde Religion flourished and faded among the Jewes, as their

Page 21

Magistrates were good or bad. When Moses by death let fall his leading staffe, and there was a godly Joshua to take it up, it yet went well with Religion. When Joshua went off the stage, and there were but any of those faithful Elders left, who shared with him in the Government to hold the helme, Religion was safe, but when they were gathered to their fathers, and none to come into their place, and fill up the breach, then all went to wrack in Church and State, as we finde, Judges 2.11. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim.

[ 2] Secondly, it goes well or ill with a people, as the outward peace and prosperity fares, and this opens or shuts as the Magistrates are. The Queen of Sheba without a Spirit of Prophecy, was able to see happy dayes coming on the Jewes from the piety and wisdom she observed in their Prince, 2 Chron. 9.8. Because thy God loved Israel

to establish them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them to do Judgement and Justice. So the wickedness of the Kings of the ten Tribes, after their rent from the house of David, (for 'tis observed, not a good one is to be found of the whole pack, though some lesse evil then other) is by the Spirit of God interpreted, to proceed from his displeasure and purposes of wrath, that he had taken up against them, to break and ruine them, Hosea 13.11. I gave thee a King in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath. Which is spoken (if you observe the place) not of Saul, but of the ten Tribes after their rent from Judah; and not of a particular person, but of the whole succession of Kings from Jeroboam to the last, under whom their captivity found them. God gave them in wrath, that is, such as were

Page 22

sit instruments to be a plague to them, and execute Gods wrath upon them; and when he took any of them away, it was to make room for a worse, till by degrees the Nation (as a morsel prepared for a forreinemie) drop't into the Assyrians mouth, and was devoured by them. The whole Series of the Jewish Chronicle will confirme this, that when God intended mercy to them, he gave them faithful Magistrates; when wrath and judgement, he opened the door for it, by taking them out of the way. Josiah, who came to the throne in all ill time, and found it deep in arrears with God, yea, under an arrest from God, for the abominations of former times, and the people, at present, not much amended, being kept in rather by his royal Sanction, then their own inclination, for 'tis said, he

made them stand to the Covenant.

Which implies, they would soon have fallen to idolatry, and their own wayes, had not he shored them up by his authority; yet this holy mans zeal for God and Religion, doing as much as he could, tantâ faecê populi, reprieved them, and was their Baile to keep them out of prison, as long as he was above ground; but no sooner his head laid in the dust, and his wicked children in the throne, but God calls for his debt, and would stay no longer.

[Use.] Are faithful Magistrates such a choice blessing? Then in the feare of God, be serious, and consider the weight of that work, about which from all quarters of this County you are met this day. God forbid, that I should think any of you came with so wicked a minde, as to do this Nation, the place of your Nativity, a mischief; yet let me tell you, that if you did owe a

Page 23

spight to the peace and happinesse thereof, I know no way like this, wherein you could pay it to the full, by choosing unfaithful Counsellours. David, when he meant to curse Gods enemy and his to purpose, one thing he wished him, was, that God would set a wicked man over him, Psal. 109.6. one that would make no conscience to oppresse him, and tyrannically lord it over him; yea, God himself puts it among his dreadful curses, Levit. 26.17. I will set my face against you, and those that hate you shall reigne over you. I shall lay but foure Arguments before

you, to perswade you to a conscientious care in your present business.

[ 1 ] First, consider they are great things that you trust them with, whom you chuse to sit in the great Senate of the Nation; you trust them with your purse, and I am sure most of you account that something, whatever you think of other things; you will know him well, to whom you will give the Key of your chest, where your money lies. You trust them with your liberties and lives, and those your purses have paid soundly for; yea, with your Religion, without which the other are not worth the taking up. In one word, with all that is dear to you as English men, as Christians, you put that power into their hands, which if they be not the more faithful, they may turne like a cannon upon your own breasts, and so you most truly become felo de se, guilty of your own miseries; and let me tell you, those sorrows have a peculiar bitterness in them above all other, which are not imposed on us, but chosen by us. Better an enemy should come in and turne us by force of armes, out of possession of these, then we send those that shall Vote us out of them, partly because of the little pity we shall deserve, or can reasonably

Page 24

expect from others, when they shall see the rod with which we are whip't was of our own gathering; as also because of the inward guilt which will adde a further stinging consideration then all this to our sorrows, and deprive us of those comforts which the conscience of doing our duty would help us to, in the greatest calamities

that otherwise could befall us. He that is accessory to the burning down of his house, by the negligence of a drunken person, whom he trusted to watch and keep it, hath more reason to be troubled, then he that hath it consumed by a fire from heaven, or some other inevitable Povidence. O Sirs, there are lesse matters then these, in which you would be very choice and curious; if you were to chuse a Nurse for your childe, you would look for one of a healthful constitution and good disposition, you would weigh and taste her milke whether good or no; You are now to choose Nurses for three Nations, so Magistrates are call'd in Scripture, Nursing Fathers and Mothers; You are to choose these in a time of these Nations languishing, as the only meanes under God, (so thought by the best Physicians among us,) to recover the consumptive state of this great body; and will you send any to such a place and work, before you know what milk they have given in their private capacities in the Countrey? If you were to choose a Shield, should it be one that would let the arrow come through it, to pierce you to the heart? Magistrates are the Shields of the earth. You value the life of the Nation little, that will put a Shield into its hand you have not well tried; I am sure, David threw away Armour, though it were a Kings, because he had not tried it; in a word, if you were but to choose a Shepherd, or a Herdsman, any

Page 25

should not serve your turne. Pharaoh a King thought it not beneath his care, though in so low a businesse, Gen.

47.6. If thou knowest any man, saith he to Joseph, of activity amongst thy brethren, make them rulers over my cattel; you are to choose such, as are not to go before beasts, but to lead in and out the Lords people and flock.

[ 2] Secondly, consider your voices and suffrages are not your owne, to bestow them where you list, to gratifie this friend, or that party withal. No, if you do, you give what is not your own. What Jehoshaphat said to his Judges, I may with a little alteration apply to you that are Electours this day, 2 Chron. 19.6. Take heed what you do, for yee choose not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the choice. He is with you to observe who you give your hand for, and why you give it. There is one more that takes hands, then you see. When Bishop Latimer heard a pen going behind the hanging, as he was upon examination before the Queens Council, it made him more watchful what he said; and shall not Gods pen, that walkes behinde the Tent, where thou settest thy hand, make thee conscientious. 'Tis God we have to do with in this matter, he is the Supreme Lord of Nations; all Magistrates are his under-Officers, and hold their place of him, and are to do faithful service for him. Moses, 'tis said, was faithful as a servant, Heb. 3.5. Now, of what dangerous consequence is it for a people, to chuse one into an office, that is a Traitour to his Prince? This thou doest, when thou settest thy hand for an unfaithful person. Magistrates are said to be taken into Gods throne, 2 Chro. 9.8. Now, darest thou set Gods enemie in Gods throne? what is this, but to set up a Standard against

God, and declare to the world thou wouldest shake off his Government. This day the temper of this Nation will be discovered, no way that I know like this to feel how its pulse beats; and for my own part, as this solemn National act shall appear, I cannot look upon it otherwise, then as our owning or disowning God, to be our God, to rule over us; and if the Nation do but vouch God to be their God, by a godly choice, I shall not bury my hopes for our future happinesse; God comes in mercy many times before he is sent for; but he departs not to carrie away his mercie from a people, till they give him leave to go, yea, drive him away; and oh, how unhappy art thou, O England, if thou mayst still have thy God, and will not?

[ 3] Thirdly, consider the solemn Obligation that lies upon us, by a National Covenant, (famous through the Christian world, and we infamous for the breach of it,) to promote, and procure with our utmost endeavours the Reformation of the Land. God hath, I beleeve, most of your hands to shew for this, and darest thou who hast bound thy selfe in such a Covenant, give thy voice for an unworthy man to sit in Parliament, whom thy conscience, (if thou wouldest have patience to heare it,) will tell thee, he will never be the man that will help on that work with any Vote of his, yea, that is an enemy to it, and feares it more then desires it? if thou hast got the mastery of thy conscience, so far as to do this bold act, let me tell thee what thou doest; thou comest this day to declare in

the face of all the Countrey, yea, before God, men, and Angels, that thou art a forsworne wretch; and if thou gettest this brand upon thy forehead once, go where thou wilt, thou dragest a chaine after thee, that will binde thee over to the fearful

Page 27

expectation of Gods wrath; that (come it sooner or later) will take hold on thee. And now tell me, hadst thou not better have been asleep in thy bed, yea, sick in thy bed, yea, dead in thy grave, then to have come hither to do so unhappy a dayes work? Oh, think when thou goest this day to give thy suffrage for any that thou didst see the Covenant with thy hand at it spread before thee; durst thou then venture, to blot out what there thou hast wrote, by a wicked and unworthy choice? Suppose one should put himself under an oath of friendship, to promote the good and welfare of another, to his utmost power, (as Jonathan to David) and this his friend, to whom he is thus engaged, falling sick, should trust him to bring a Physician to him, and he should fetch a murderer to poison him, or an Emperick which by his ignorance should kill him (which comes to all one) Oh, how would his oath rot upon his conscience? This thou doest, only with this aggravation, thou doest it to a Nation, he to a private person; before therefore thou subscribest, spend one thought more upon the matter. Consider, thou standest at the greatest advantage of paying thy vows, and performing thy Covenant this day, that thou mayest in all thy life; possiblie, before the three yeares for a Parliament come about, thou mayest be summoned into another world, to



give an account, how thou bestowedst thy voice now; or if alive, thou mayest be reserved to see a poor Nation helped to its ruine by thy hand and such as thou art.

Fourthly, consider the greatest hopes our enemies have is to ruine us by our own Councils: The time hath been, the plot was to blow up our Parliaments, now they labour to blow us up by our Parliaments; to make

Page 28

our Parliaments, I mean, blow us up by their destructive Councils, and a Nation cannot die of a worse death, then to be ruined by their Saviours, and how near we have been undoing by some of them, 'tis so late, I think, I need not help your memories.

[Quest.] But you will say, Who is the man fit for our suffrage?

[Answ.] A hard Question, who fit for such a place, among such a people, and at such a time, a Question, I hope you have been asking your selves, and others, wiser then the Preacher, before you came hither; It were impudence for me to undertake a resolution, yet I shall not be too bold, if I lay a few Scripture lines together, which will make up an excellent Pourtraiture of a Parliament-man, though, I fear, we must abate something of the beauty which will appear in the face of it, if we choose any this day. The face is seldome so faire as the picture. I am sure you will finde it impossible to meet with any among the sons of men, whose graces are so orient and unsullied, as

to answer the Magistrates face, as it is drawn by the Holy Spirits curious pencil in the Word. And therefore your care is to come as neare the pattern, as the imperfections of the best among you will permit. You may see on a piece of clay, that hath been prest with a curious cut seal, its true stamp, though so ragged, as will tell you, 'tis clay, not gold like the seal. So there are some among us (I doubt not) on whom you may finde those Magistratical endowments and graces, that are engraved by the Spirit of God on the seal of the Word, yet so as their imperfections will tell us that they are printed upon fraile flesh and blood.

First, enquire for the feare of God in those you chuse. This is writ with so large a character in Scripture upon  
Page 29

the Magistrates forehead, and is so principal a letter in his Name, that it cannot be well spelled without it, Exod. 18.21. Moses bids them provide such men as feare God; Magistrates are called gods, because none among the sons of men represent his Power and Majestie like them; by stamping Authoritie upon a wicked man, what do you but present the beautiful face of God to the world in a broken glasse, and give them by his ill-favoured countenance, an occasion of setting up vnworthie thoughts of God in their hearts, as if he were like him who is set in his place? Some Kings have commanded, that none should carve this Pourtraiture in any meaner mettall then gold; And is it not pitie that Gods Image should be stamp't upon a person of base mettall? as every ungodlie

man is, how much soever his name swells in riches and honours in the worlds stile; Antiochus called a vile person, Dan. 11.21. The poorest Saint he persecuted, was a Starre, and he as vile as dirt, even while he stamped them under his foot of pride. He that puts a wicked man in place willinglie, would, if he could, pull a righteous God out of place. We had need look for the fear of God in those we chuse into Government, the more because they are so far above the fear of any else, and if they have not the fear of God to keep them right no wonder if they mis-carrie: When Joseph would perswade his brethren they should have honest dealing with him, see what pawne he gives them, Gen. 42 18 This do, for I feare God. Indeed his power was so great, that if the feare of God had not given law to his conscience, he had them at such advantage, that he might have revenged himself upon them for their unkindnesse, yea, crueltie to him without laying his own safetie to stake at all from man; The Governours that

Page 30

went before Nehemiah, wanting this, nothing could keep them from oppression, whereas good Nehemiah himself, had no other cord but this to tie his hands, Nehemiah 5.15. But so did not I, because of the fear of the Lord.

[ 2] Secondly, enquire for wisdom and ability of parts, for the work to which you choose them, Exod. 18.21. Provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God; All that fear God are not able men; Every godly man doth not carry a Counsellours head on his shoulders; there are

some so holy, that in regard of their Prayers and the Power of godlinesse in their lives▪ may be said to be Sav-iours, (I am sure the Nation had drowned, had not they helped to hold its chin above water) but if they were called to Parliament-work, they might for want of wisdom and a governing spirit be in danger of proving destroyers of it; and is it not pitie, that they who do such service to the publick in their private capacities should be called from praying for, to ruining of the Nation? Every good Christian could not make a good Minister: the Apostle speaks of a special gift, besides grace in common with others, that belongs to them, they must be apt to teach. So a Senatour must be apt to advise and counsel, without this all is insufficient, because he wants that which should enable him to reach the end of his place. A knife, though it hath a sheath of gold, & a haft of diamond, yet if it hath no edge, it is not a good knife, it may be good to sell and make money of, but not to cut. Look therefore for men of wisdom; you will not put a suit to make, no, not a shooe to mend, meerlie because he is an honest godly man, you desire something of the trade in the man, or else you may be pinched for it, and go uneasie. But, oh you will saie, if honest

Page 31

honest men, they will do no hurt, you mean, I suppose, not willingly, for else they may do much; That physick in a dangerous disease, which doth not good, doth hurt, because that might have been given which should have done good. The distempers of the Nation at this time are many, and those complicated, it will employ the skill of

a Colledge of as wise State-Physicians as ever sate within those walls to finde out a remedie; And I am of his judgement, Si pereundum, inter peritissimos pereamus, if we must die, let it be under the hand of the ablest Physicians, for therein we shall be least accessorie to our own ruine.

[ 3 ] Thirdly, enquire whether they be sound in the faith, and that upon a double account.

First, consider the care of keeping Religion pure in a Nation, is part of the Christian Magistrates charge, and not the least The Kings of Israel were commanded to keep by them the Book of the Law▪ that they might learn to feare the Lord, and keep all the words of this Law, Deut. 17, 18. which was not meant only personallie (that was to be the endeavour of every private Israelite) but as a Ruler to see the Law of God kept, and the true Religion there commanded, preserved in their Kingdom. Hence we finde those Kings sharply reprov'd, that did either set up, or connive at idolatry in their reign; and those commended who removed the Monuments of idolatry, and restored the Worship of God to its purity. Thus we finde of Hezekiah, the most famous Reformer of them all, a large testimony is given by God to him, for his zeal therein; That he cleaved to the Lord, and kept his Commandments, which the Lord commanded Moses. And truly, if it were the

Page 32

Magistrates work then, it continues to be so now, except

we can finde that Christ hath retrenched their power in matters of Religion, which he hath not: the observation is good that Dr. Rivet quotes out of Augustine. If we would resolve the Question, what the Magistrates power is in matters of Religion, we must observe those times rather, when the Magistrate was a member of the Church; as in the Jewish Church he was, then when an open enemy to the Church, as in Christs and the Apostles time; There is no danger, saith that Reverend Authour, to allow the Magistrate now as much power, as God then approved of. Well, is Religion the Magistrates care? then for the Lords sake, and Religions sake, choose not such as are corrupt and rotten in their principles, except you have a minde to diffuse the infection presently over the whole Land. The plague of this spiritual leprosie is spreading too fast already in the body of the Nations. God keep it from among our Rulers, if it takes the head once, we may then pronounce the whole Land unclean.

[ 2] Secondly, consider at what door our ruine is like to come in upon us. Truly, it is easier to foretel this, then it is to shut it. They say of the Hectick Feaver, at first 'tis easily cured, but hardly known; afterward easily known, but hardly cured. The evils which now threaten us most, might with more facility have been at first prevented, could they have been as easily known; but now, Alas! they have got that strength, that though they are easilie known, yet hardlie cured. Many of those errours, which at first appeared innocent things, grow now more formidable, because they come to their complexion, and we

see what they are like to

Page 33

resolve into, and that truly is no lesse then Popery it self, which the Merchants of Rome have these late years brought over from thence by whole-sale, and parcelled it out to the several Sects, Anabaptists, Seekers, Quakers, &c. in the Nation, as their petty Chapmen, to retail it for them, and put off some one point, and some another, as their trade lies here and there in the Land; so that as it is observed of those diseases, Pox, Purples and Malignant Feavers, when they abound, 'tis a signe the plague is not far off, their malignity being soon heightened unto the Pestilence: so 'tis to be feared, these errours are forerunners of Popery, in which they will end, except some help come timely from the Magistrate, to spoil the Popes Market among us.

[ 4] Fourthly, look for men of courage and resolution. Men of low spirits are borne to serve, not to rule. It is well if they will follow, never expect they will lead on in a time of danger; there are some may be blown like glasses, into any shape, with the flattering or threatening breath of others. A coward cannot be a good Christian; much lesse a good Magistrate, such a one will be wonne with a nut, and lost with an apple. Solomons throne of ivorie was supported by Lions; innocence and integrity cannot be preserved in Magistracie without courage. It was base feare made Pilate cruel to Christ, to save his sorry stake that he had in Caesars hand. The man had no minde to shed innocent blood, therefore sought how he

might release him, but when he heard the Jewes cry out, If thou lettest this man go, thou art not Caesars friend, the very winde of this bullet killed the mans heart, and makes him steer a clean contrary course, John 19.12, 13.

When Pilate therefore

Page 34

heard that saying (that now quoted) he brought Jesus forth and sate in the judgment seat, and basely proceeded to an unrighteous sentence against his conscience. Magistrates are great blessings (saith one) modo audeant, quae sentiunt; if they dare do their conscience. Chuse men that dare be righteous, only I wish we were wise to distinguish betwixt an humble boldness in a good cause, and a proud stoutness in any cause, be it wright or wrong. That courage is of the right mettal, which like steele, will bend, but not like lead, stand bent; some men if they be once engaged, will basely be bent and bowed into partiality.

Fifthly, finde out men that will make it their business to attend on the publique affaires of the Nation. It is said of Job,\*he put on Righteousness, and it cloathed him, he could as easily forget to put on his cloaths in a morning, when he arose, as to do his work as a Magistrate. It were a sad thing that we should pitch upon any, who when they are chose, should sleep out their time in the Country, or feast and juncket it away in the City, not caring whether the Nation sinck or swim. Non-residence is as bad in a Mgistrate, as in a Minister, they are Gods Ministers, as well as Preachers; so saith Paul, Rom. 13.6. For they are



Gods Ministers attending continually upon this very thing. O, then 'tis well, when the Magistrate attends to it, doth, hoc agere; where should the tradesman be but in his shop? and where a Parliament-man, but where his work lyes in the house; they are not worthy of the honour, that are weary of the labour, which goes with the Office. Why doth the head weare the Crowne, and hath the honour of the whole man put upon it, but because it is leane with taking care for the whole body?

Page 35

The faithful Magistrate is said to beare the burden of the people;\* away with those that will shift all the burden off their own, unto other shoulders, that like to be carried upon the peoples shoulders on an Election-day, and to heare themselves cryed up with the applause of the Countrey, but do not like to carry the burden of their Countries affaires, either in their head, or heart, that have no eares to heare the cry of the oppressed, when they come to them for relief.

[ 6] Sixthly, men of Healing spirits; that will make it their study, to make up the breaches that are among us, and not make them wider; though the warre be done, and sword put up, yet the minds of men are not come to their right temper; the feaver is hardly quenched in mens spirits, which must be, before all is well; as long as those embers are kept burning in the bosome, there is danger of breaking out into a flame. Suppose a man be shot with a bullet, he may be cured of his wound, yet dye of a feaver his wound put him into: If you can find any that

have more compassion towards this divided Nation then others, especially whose bowels work more tenderly over Gods people in the Land, and their unbrotherly contentions, who are for expedients, how to compromise those differences, those are the men fit for such a time as this; He is the Chirurgion, that hath not only a Lyons heart, but a Ladyes hand, to dresse the wounds of the Nation gently. We are like a man that hath laine long, and grown so weak, that the same strong Physick which might have cured him at first, when nature was in heart, would now kill him out of hand.

[ 7] Seventhly, men of interest in your Countrey, by place and estate. I pray, take me, as I meane; I desire not

Page 36

you should chuse by this single character, but take it in conjunction with the rest; to chuse meerly for estate, is too like the Israelites folly, who set up a golden calf in Moses roome. But let not parts and grace, receive any prejudice through envy, because they are inamelled with riches, and dwell in a great house. It is noted as a signe of a declining State, when the money, and coyne of a Nation is embased, or lesse then was wont; when the mettall is not so pure, nor the piece so weighty, when for gold, and silver, there is brasse, leaden, or leathern, as sometime it hath been. The Spirit of God compates Magistrates to one of the purest of mettals, as silver; And surely, it shews a people are going down the hill of honour, when the places of Magistracy that use to be filled with the chief heads of the Country, come to be of the

ignoble floore; indeed, when either Magistrate or Minister are of the lowest of the people, to use the Scripture phrase; that Church and State, their day is in the afternoon; and thanks be to God, there is not such a dearth of Gentry, but some may be found, able to do God, and their Country service.

[ 8] Lastly, let your eye be on such as are faithful to the Ministers, and Ministry of the Gospel; I confesse, I was under a temptation to have drowned this in silence, knowing with what disadvantage I shall speak on this subject; many will think me but selvisish in this, and only too kind to my own Tribe; but to know that, you must be content to wait for the great day, when the world shall know, why I speak for, and others against the Ministry; I am not therefore afraid or ashamed againe to presse this. Enquire for men that are faithful friends to the Ministry. It hath been resolved long since in the

Page 37

Popes Conclave, that the surest and speediest way to cheat England of her Religion, and Gospel, is to divide the people from their Ministers, and that they hold still of the same mind; we see by their rigorous endeavour, to persue this one thing, as if they had laid aside all other plots, and shipt their whole adventure in this one bottom; hence so many bitter invectives printed against the faithful Ministers of Christ, their Persons, and Office; and railing Rabshekahs sent about the Land, who whatever their text is, to be sure make this their Sermon, to throw dirt upon the Ministers face; to turne the hearts of the

children from their spiritual Fathers, by rendring them as base and filthy to their hearers, as the dirt under their feet, and have they not prevailed farre herein? when many thousands in the Land are made Proslites to them; yea, when some have ventured in Parliament it self, to heave both at the maintenance, and office of the Ministry; and can you think him worthy of the Magistrates seat, that would not allow you a Minister in the Pulpit? Oh my brethren, know the Ministry hath the same Authority to shew for their calling, the Magistrate hath; the same God that gave Moses, gave Aaron; it is said he led his people by the hands of Moses and Aaron. The same hand that planted one Olive-tree, on the one side of the bowle, to wit, Zerubbabel the Magistrate, did plant Joshua, the Minister, on the other, and both to drop their oyle, to feed the same lampe of Gods Church; the great blessings have been given in by a concurrence of both, as we see in Reformations of the Jewish Church under several Kings. I have heard that Queen Elizabeth, coming her progresse into this our County of Suffolk, when she observed that the Gentlemen of the County,

Page 28

who came out to meet her, had every one his Minister by his side, said, Now I have learned why my County of Suffolk is so well governed, it is because the Magistrates and Ministers go together. Indeed they are the two legges on which a Church and State stand. He that would saw off the one, cannot mean well to to the other; an Anti-ministerial spirit, is an Anti-magistratical spirit; the Pulpit guards the throne; Be perswaded to take that away,

and you give the Magistrates enemies room to fetch a full blow at them; as the Duke of Somerset in King Edward the sixths days, by consenting to his brothers death, make way for his own, by the same axe and hand.

I have no more by way of Council for you, as to the transaction of this day. But my deare friends, think not you have done all your duty to God and your afflicted Countrey by a Vote or suffrage, but labour to crown the work of this day with these things.

First, follow those you shall chuse with your prayers. Our Lord Jesus, when he sent his disciples to sea, he went into a mountain to pray for them; he knew a storme was coming towards them, and they would have need of his help; Truly, you send these Gentlemen, whoever they shall be, to sea; and God grant it may not be a winter-voiage. Oh, help them to as much strength as you can for their work, & no strength like that which is got from Heaven; indeed the whole success of that great Assemblie must drop from thence. The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them, Pro. 20.12. Neither of these can be spared if this Parliament ends well, they must have a seeing

Page 39

eye, to see what counsel and advice is both wholesome and seasonable; and the people must have a hearing eare, to submit to the Lawes there concluded on, and the Lord makes even both of these.

[ 2] Secondly, take heed you do not obstruct your prayers for them, nor their Councils, for you and the poor Nation by your sins; Go home, repent, and reforme, and that in earnest, or else all will be naught for all your praying. Sin is like a deaf stone, which I have heard to be in Scotland, that one standing at one end, cannot hear what another saith standing at the other end. If your sins get between your prayers, and God you pray to, he cannot hear of that eare you would have him; If you do not reforme, lay no fault on the Parliament, though no good comes of their meeting. A carelesse Patient disgraceth a good Physician; Samuels Council to Israel shall be mine to you with the change of a word; Feare the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart, for consider how great things he hath done for you, but if you continue still to do wickedly, you shall be consumed, you and your Parliament.

[ 3] Thirdly, in doing your duty torment not your selves with care, concerning the issue of this Parliament, or the great revolutions of these times; God hath eased us of this burden, had we but faith to take his kindnesse, who bids us cast our burden upon the Lord; why should we go sweating under that load, which God is willing to take off our shoulders? Though God looks we should sowe and plough, pray and use the meanes; yet he will never charge it upon us, if a happy harvest crownes not our labour. In

Page 40

the Parable of the man fallen among thieves and wounded, the Host was not commanded by Christ to undertake to

cure him, but to take care of him: Leave the curing of the Nations wounds to God, a happy people you will be, if found to have taken so much care of your poor Nation, as to discharge the dutie of your place, which you owe to God and it.

FINIS.