
THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not kill.

THE Commandments of the Second Table, do all of them immediately respect that Duty which we owe unto Men; whom we may consider, either, as under some peculiar Differences; or else in their common Nature. We have already spoken concerning the Duties that belong unto them under the first Acception, as they are differenced into *Superiours*, and *Inferiours*. There are other Duties, which appertain universally unto all, under what Difference soever they may be considered; whether they be *Superiours*, or *Inferiours*, or *Equals* among themselves; and these are contained in the five following Precepts; all which concern our Neighbour, either in his Person, or in his exterior Gifts, of Wealth, or Good Name.

His Person is to be considered, either naturally, or Mystically: Naturally, as he is this individual Man; and so the Sixth Commandment provides for his Security: *Thou shalt not kill.* Mystically, as he is in the state of Marriage; which, of Two, makes up one Mystical Person: And so Care is taken for him in the Seventh; *Thou shalt not commit Adultery.*

If we consider him in his External Gifts, so his Estate and Substance is safeguarded by the Eighth Commandment; *Thou shalt not steal.* His Reputation, and good Name by

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the Ninth; *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy Neighbour.*

- And as a strong Fence set about him, and also about the other Laws, that neither of them be violated, God hath not only prohibited the outward Acts of gross and flagitious Crimes, but the inward, and lurking Motions unto Evil, in our Thoughts and Affections; and this, in the Tenth Commandment: *Thou shalt not covet.*

I shall begin with the first of these; which takes care for the Security, and Indemnity of our Persons; *Thou shalt not kill.* And this forbids that barbarous and inhumane Sin of Murder, that First-born of the Devil, who was a *Murderer from the beginning*; the first branded Crime that we read of, wherein natural Corruption, contracted by the Fall, vented its Rancour and Virulence, the Sin of *Cain*, that great Instance of Perdition, who slew his Brother *Abel*, because his Brother's Works were *righteous*, and his own *evil*.

Neither doth this Precept confine it self only to forbid the actual Sin of Murder; but all Degrees, and all Causes of it; as Hatred, and rash Anger, Revenge, and Slanders, and false Accusations; and whatsoever may prejudice the Safety of our Neighbour, or tempt us to see him perish, when it is in our power to rescue, and relieve him.

Some old Hereticks * extended the Sense of this Prohibition, *Thou shalt not kill*, even unto Brute Creatures themselves; holding it unlawful to slay any of them for the Use and Service of our Life. Possibly indeed, Unmercifulness even towards them, and a cruel tormenting of them, not to satisfy our Occasions, and Necessities, but our unreasonable Passions, may be reducible as a Sin against this Commandment, (for all Acts of Cruelty are so;) but simply to kill them for our Necessity, cannot: God the universal Lord both of them, and us, hath granted us this Prerogative in our Charter, to have the power of Life and Death over them.

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* *Manichei. Aug. de Civit. Dei, l. 1. c. 20.*

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Gen. 9. 3. Every moving Thing that liveth, shall be Meat for you. And doubtless we may put them to any kind of Death, that the necessity either of our Food or Physick will require. This *Killing* therefore, forbidden in the Text, refers only unto Men, like our selves; and therefore it is very properly rendred by others, *Thou shalt do no Murther.*

Yet neither is every killing of a Man *Murther*: For there are several Cases, wherein, although one kill another, yet he is no *Murtherer*: As,

First, In the Execution of Justice. Magistrates, and such who have lawful Power and Authority, may, and ought to put capital Offenders to Death, and if they do not, God will charge it upon them as their Sin. It is an ancient Law upon Record, *Gen. 9. 6. Whosoever sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed*; as if there were no other way for Expiation, no other Method to wash away the stain and guilt of Blood, but only by his who unjustly spilt it. And Again, *Deut. 19. 21. Thine Eye shall not pity; but Life shall go for Life.* And indeed, if we rightly consider it, this is not to Butcher up Mankind, but to preserve them. God hath commanded Magistrates to kill, that he might prevent *Murther*: For our Nature is so extremely corrupt, that there is no other effectual way to hinder us from killing, but by enjoining the Magistrates to do it. And therefore as Physicians, in cases of violent, and immoderate Bleeding, do often open a Vein in another part of the Body, as the best Method to stop it by Revulsion; so when the Body Politick bleeds by private rage and revenge, gushing out into *Murthers*, the way to stop this Blood, is to shed Blood.

Neither doth our Saviour's Command, not to *resist evil*, *Matth. 5. 39.* gainsay this legal and punitive way of Blood-shedding: For those words do only forbid private Revenge, not publick. We must not be Judges in our own Causes, nor when we apprehend our selves wronged, carve out to our selves what Measures of Revenge our Wrath and Fury shall dictate;

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disstate; we who have no Authority, or Commission, ought not to take Life for Life, nor Eye for Eye, nor Tooth for Tooth, much less Life for an Injurious Word, or an idle Quarrel; we must not repay with the least revenge, those who have done us the greatest wrongs; in which sense, we must not resist evil; but if we have in any thing suffered wrong, we ought to bring all our Causes and Complaints to the Magistrate; for into his Hands hath God put the *Sword of Justice*, Rom. 13. 4. *Revenge* is so sacred a thing, that none ought to intermeddle with it but those whom God hath appointed; for he hath solemnly ascribed it to himself, *Heb. 10. 30. Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord.* And he hath constituted the Magistrate, as his Deputy, in this Work and Office; and therefore he only ought to revenge, by Punishment proportionable to the nature of the Crimes committed: So that to speak properly, it is only God, and not Man, that sheds the Blood of wicked Persons. The Magistrate receives his Commission from God, and doth it as his Minister, and Servant; yea, and in doing it, is so far from doing a cruel and unjust Act, an Act that will either pollute his Hands, or stain his Conscience, that it makes him the more holy and pure: And therefore when *Moses* called the *Levites* to slay those *Idolaters* that had worshipped the *Golden Calf*, he speaks of it, as an holy Function, *Exod. 32. 29. Consecrate yourselves to day unto the Lord; every Man upon his Son, and upon his Brother, that he may bestow upon you a Blessing this day.*

Secondly, There may be Blood-shed in a just and lawful War, without the charge or crime of *Murder*. Indeed we are commanded to *follow Peace with all Men*, and as much as lies in us, and, if possible, to *have Peace with all Men*, Rom. 12. 18. But sometimes, through the Ambition, and turbulent Spirits of others, through their politick Designs of picking unjust Quarrels, it may be no longer possible to main-
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tain Peace; and in this case, where we have Right, and Equity on our side, it is lawful to wage War : I speak not now of private Differences between Person and Person; but of publick, between Nation and Nation : In which Case, the Supreme Magistrate hath the power of making War, and proclaiming Peace.

There are some who decry this Assertion, and think it contrary to the Temper of a Christian, who is a Son of Peace, to be a Man of War. I confess, there is nothing that can justify War against another Nation, but either,

First, Necessary Defence against an unjust Invasion: Or,

Secondly, Recovery of what is unjustly taken away. Thus *David* pursued the *Amalekites*, who had carried his Wives away Captives : Or,

Thirdly, The punishing of some great Injury and Wrong. Thus *David* likewise wars against the *Ammonites*, for the contumelious Usage of his Ambassadors.

But where the Cause is just, the Manner in which we prosecute it is warrantable, the Authority which engageth us in it, being rightly constituted over us, I see nothing but that it is very fit, when it is very necessary, to take up Arms, and in a publick War to right ourselves upon injurious Enemies: For, as there may be many wrongs done by one Party against another, who must be judged by the Law common to them both; so there may be many wrongs by one Nation against another; which, if they will not consent to redress, there being no common Magistrate, nor common Law over them both, (except the Law, and Right of Nations, of which, the more powerful usually make little account;) in this case, certainly the injured may very justly have recourse to War. For, what Law is to Persons of the same Nation, that War is to Persons of a different Nation.

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We read, That among those many Penitents that came to *John the Baptist*, for Instruction, when Soldiers also came, he did not bid them lay down their Arms, or their Commission: He preach'd not to them, *Fight no more, Kill no Man*; but gives them directions how they should demean themselves in their Calling: Which he would not have done, if he thought their Calling is self unlawful. He bids them *do no violence, accuse no man falsely; but be content with your Pay, or Wages*, Luke 3. 14. Neither did our Saviour, when he so highly commended the Centurion for his Faith, rebuke him for his Profession; but extolls him for taking the Ground and Argument of his Faith, from his Military Calling, Luke 7. 8. *I am a Man under Authority, having Soldiers under me; and I say unto one go, and he goes; and to another come, and he comes; and to my Servant, do this, and he doth it.* This very Calling of his he urgeth Christ with, and makes it an Argument to strengthen his Faith, that certainly Christ was able to cure his *sick Servant*; because, if he, who was but a Captain, had such Authority over his Soldiers, to command them to come, and to go at his Word; how much more absolute Power had Jesus, as Lord both of Life and Death, over all Bodily Diseases, to command them to come, and to go at his pleasure. This I take to be the Force and Reason of his Words: Upon which Christ gives him this large Testimonial and *Encomium*, Verse 9. *When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled, and turned him about; and said unto the People, I have not found so great Faith, no, not in Israel.* But not to multiply more Instances, that one Place may seem fully convincing and satisfactory, *John. 18. 36.* When Christ was examined concerning his Kingdom, he answereth, *My Kingdom is not of this World; if my Kingdom were of this World, then would my Servants fight, that I should not be delivered unto the Jews:* Which clearly implies, That although Wars, and Fightings were not proper Means to advance the Spiritual Nature of the Kingdom of Christ,

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Christ; yet if the Methods of his Humiliation had permitted him to assume the Royal Sceptre, his Servants and Followers might lawfully have fought to defend his Claim and Title. But enough of this.

Thirdly, A Man may shed Blood in the necessary Defence of his Person, without being guilty of Murther, when he is suddenly assaulted by those who attempt to take away his Life, and hath no other means left him to secure it. In this case, there being no Possibility of having recourse to a Magistrate for Protection, every Man is a Magistrate to himself. But here (because all Cases of Blood are tender) let me caution you, that it is not enough the Danger be impending, but it must be instant and present, such wherein a Man's Life is in all Probability lost, if he doth not stand upon his Defence. For in Dangers that are only threatened and approaching, we ought to trust Providence, and to use our best diligence to work our escape from them. But if the Assault be sudden, and no way of Escape visible, we may lawfully take away the Life of him who unjustly seeks to take ours; for this is not a design to kill him, but to preserve our selves.

Yea we find *Exod. 22.2.* that God allows the killing of a Thief, if he break into a Man's House by Night; but not so if he attempted it by Day. And possibly the Reason of this Law might be, because when any cometh upon another in the Night, it might be presumed that he takes the Advantage of the Darkeness, not only to steal his Goods, but to mischief his Person. And therefore God allows it as lawful to kill such an one, as a part of necessary Defence. From which I think we may safely conclude, that it is lawful also to kill those who attempt upon our Goods, when we have reason to fear they may likewise design upon our Persons.

Fourthly, There is yet one Case more, and that is accidental Blood-shedding, which is not chargeable with Murther, when Blood is shed without any Intention or Purpose of doing;

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doing it. Such a Case we find mentioned in Scripture; as when in hewing of Wood from a Tree, the Ax should slip, and by chance kill a Man's Neighbour, *Deut.* 19. 5. And therefore for such innocent Man-slayers, God himself appointed Cities of Refuge, that they might fly unto them, and be safe from the Avenger of Blood. But here we must look to it, that we be employed about lawful things; otherwise, if we be doing that which is unjustifiable, which accidentally proves to be the Death of another, this cannot be excused from Murther; and I am sure God exacts the same Punishment for it: And therefore it is said, *Exod.* 21. 22. That if Men strive among themselves, and hurt a Woman that she die, though it was not intended by them; yet Life shall go for Life, because their Strife and Contention between themselves is an unlawful Action. There ought also to be a due Care taken, to avoid any Mischief, that may happen upon doing of a lawful Action; by giving notice to those who come in the way of Danger, and forbearing to do it whilst they are there. But in all Cases, where the Death of another is intended, (let it be upon never such violent and sudden a Passion,) although there were no premeditated, and rancouring Malice born towards them before, howsoever our Laws may be too favourable to it, and call it Man-slaughter; yet doubtless it is in Conscience, and in the Sight of God, wilful Murther. For the Man-slayer, whom the Scripture mentions distinct from the Murtherer, is only he who slays his Neighbour accidentally, not designing nor intending him any harm: This is the only Man-slaughter, which our Law is pleased to call Chance-Medley; and whatsoever is not this, is Murther, and ought as such to be punish'd.

Now Murther may be either of a Man's self, or of another. Both of them are most black and heinous Crimes.

First, As for Self-murther; Many of the ancient Heathens thought it the most heroick and gallant way of dying, and would have recourse unto it upon very slight Occasions; accounting

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counting it an universal Remedy that Nature had put into their hands, to rid themselves of any Trouble which they were loth to bear. Yet some, even among the *Heathens*, have very sharply, as well as justly taxed this wicked Custom; among whom that saying of * *Aristotle*, in his *Ethicks*, is very considerable: For a Man to die, only that he may avoid Poverty, or Crosses, is not Gallantry, but meer Cowardice; and declares, that he wants Courage to encounter them. In which Particular, this Heathen had a better Illumination than the Author of the Book of *Mactabees*; who very unworthily commends one *Razis* a Jew, for chusing rather to destroy himself, than yield to his Enemy. Which Passage, besides divers others, do evidently prove those Books not to belong to the Canon of Scriptures; but deserve to be called, as they are, *Apo-chryphal*. And truly, Self-murder, next to the unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, is, I think, the most dangerous, and most desperate that can be committed: and because it leaves so little room for Repentance, it leaves but very little for Hope and Charity. Those wretched Creatures whom God hath so far abandoned, as to permit them to fall into this horrid Crime, had they but any the least Care of their Eternal Salvation, they would certainly tremble, when they are offering Violence to themselves; considering that they must instantly appear before God, and lift up those Hands at his Great Tribunal, which they but a minute before imbrued in their own Blood: It is a Sin, which when the Devil tempts Men unto, he cannot make use of his most prevailing Wile and Stratagem. For when he tempts to other Sins, he still drills on the Sinner with Hopes of living to repent and reform, and promiseth him Mercy and Forgiveness: But this of Self-murder precludes all such Hopes and Expectations; For they die in their Sins; yea, their Death is their Sin; and what a forlorn Estate are they in, who resolve that their last Act shall be a damnable Sin? These are Self-Murderers to Purpose, and destroy not only their Bodies, but their Souls too.

* Τὸ δὲ
πονηρὸν
φύλον
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ἐρωτα, ἢ π
λυμνοδν.
ἐκ ἀνδρῶν
ἀλλὰ μὲλ-
λον δ' ἡλκ.
Arist. Eth.
l. 3. c. 7.
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Consider again, that it is a Sin committed against the very Standard and Rule of our Love to others: For God hath commanded us to love others as our selves; and therefore as we may not murther another, so much less may we murther our selves. And those who are hurried to this impious Act, as they do actually destroy themselves, so they do virtually and interpretatively murther and destroy the whole World; and are as guilty before God, as if, together with themselves, they had murthered their Parents, their Children, their nearest Relations, and all Mankind besides; and that because they destroy that Fundamental Law which should regulate their Love to their Neighbours; and which is the stated Rule, according to which they should endeavour after their Welfare and Preservation. And therefore, if ever the Devil work upon thy melancholy and discontented Pride, to tempt thee to this damnable and almost unpardonable Sin, be sure to collect all thy Strength unto thee; and, with infinite abhorrence of it, command him to avoid: Let not any Shame, or Poverty, or Horrors of Conscience, fasten this Hellish Temptation upon thee; for know assuredly, that if thou hearkenest unto them, and puttest them in Execution, there is no Probability, but that thou must pass from Temporal Sufferings to Eternal Torments; which, be thy Condition in this Life never so deplorable and wretched, thou hast no Reason to hasten, but wilt, in Hell, think that they came too soon upon thee.

Secondly, The Murthering of another, is a most heinous and black Sin, a Sin, that God doth usually by some wonderful Method of his Providence detect, and bring to Punishment; and which dogs the Consciences of those who are guilty of it, with horrid Affrights and Terrors, and hath sometimes extorted from them a Confession of it, when there hath been no other Proof nor Evidence. The two greatest Sinners that the Scripture hath set the blackest Brand upon, were both Murtherers, *Cain* and *Judas*; the one, the Murtherer

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Murderer of his Brother ; the other, first of his Lord and Master, and then of himself. And God so infinitely hates and detests it, that although the Altar were a Refuge for other Offenders, yet he would not have a Murderer shelter'd there ; but he was to be dragg'd from that unviolable Sanctuary unto Execution, according to that Law, *Exod. 21. 24. If a Man come presumptuously upon his Neighbour, and slay him with Guile, thou shalt take him from mine Altar that he may die.* And accordingly we read, *1 Kings 2. 30.* That when *Joab* had fled, and taken hold on the Horns of the Altar, so that the Messengers who were sent to put him to Death, durst not violate that Holy Place by shedding his Blood, *Solomon* gives Command to have him slain even there, as if the Blood of a wilful Murderer were a very acceptable Sacrifice offered up unto God. And indeed in the first Prohibition of Murder that we meet withal, God subjoins a very weighty Reason why it should be so odious unto him, *Gen. 9. 6. Whoso sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed ; for in the Image of God made he Man.* So that *Homicidium est Deicidium* ; to slaughter a Man, it is to stab God in Effigie : For though the Image of God's Holiness and Purity be totally defaced in us since the Fall ; yet still every Man, even the most wicked and impious that lives, bears some Strictures of the Image of God in his Intellectuals, the Freedom of his Will, and his Dominion over the Creatures : And God will have every part of his Image so revered by us, that he who assaults Man, is esteemed by him, as one who attempts to assassinate God himself.

This of Murder is a crying Sin ; Blood is loud and clamorous : The first that ever was shed, was heard as far as from Earth to Heaven, *Gen. 4. 10. The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth to me from the Ground ;* And God will certainly hear its Cry, and Avenge it.

But not only he whose Hands are imbrued in the Blood of others ; but those also who are Accessory, are guilty of Murder. As,

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First, Those who command or counsel it to be done: Thus *David* became guilty of the Murther of innocent *Uriah*; and God, in drawing up his Charge, accuseth him with it, 2 Sam. 12. 9. *Thou hast slain him with the Sword of the Children of Ammon.*

Secondly, Those who consent to Murther, are guilty of it. Thus *Pilate*, for yielding to the clamorous Out-cries of the Jews, *Crucifie him, Crucifie him*; though he washed his Hands, and disavowed the Fact, yet was as much guilty as those who nailed him to the Cross.

Thirdly, He that concealeth a Murther, is guilty of it. And therefore we read, *Deut.* 21. 6, 7. That in case a Man were found slain, and the Murtherer unknown, the Elders of that City were to assemble, and wash their Hands, and protest, *That they had not shed this Blood, neither had their Eyes seen it.* Intimating that if they had seen and concealed it, they had thereby become guilty of the Murther.

Fourthly, Those who are in Authority, and don't punish a Murther, when committed and known, are themselves guilty of it. Thus when by the wicked Artifice of *Jezebel*, *Naboth* was condemned to die, although *Ahab* knew nothing of the Contrivance till after the Execution; yet because he did not vindicate that innocent Blood when he came to the Knowledge of it, the Prophet chargeth it upon him, 1 Kings 21. 19. *Hast thou killed, and also taken Possession.* The Guilt lay upon him, and the Punishment due to it overtook him; although we do not read, that he was any otherwise guilty of it, than in not punishing those who had committed it. And those Magistrates, who upon any Respect whatsoever, suffer a Murther to escape unpunished, are said to pollute the Land with Blood, *Numb.* 35. 31, 32, 33. *Ye shall take no satisfaction for the Life of a Murtherer, but he shall surely be put to Death. So shall ye not pollute the Land wherein ye are; for Blood defileth the Land: And the Land cannot be cleansed of the Blood that is shed therein, but by the Blood of him that shed it.*

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But in this Commandment, not only the Perpetration of Murther, and the actual imbruing our hands in the Blood of our Brother, is prohibited ; but likewise all Causes and Occasions leading to it : As,

First, Envy ; which is the Rust of a cankered Soul, a foul, meagre Vice, that turns the Happiness and Welfare of others, into our Misery and Torment. Thus *Cain* first enviously repined at the Success and Acceptation of his Brother's Sacrifice, and this quickly prompted him to Murther.

Secondly, Unjust, and immoderate Anger ; which if it be suffered to lie festering in the heart, will turn into the Venom of a perfect hatred. This is not only a Cause, but a Degree of Murther ; and as such, it is accounted by our Saviour, who is the best Expofitor of the Law, *Matth. 5. 22.* *You have heard, that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill ; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a cause, is in danger of the Judgment, and whosoever shall say unto his Brother, Racha, shall be in danger of the Council ; but whosoever shall say, Thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-fire.* Which Passage I have formerly at large explained to you ; and therefore I shall at present wave it.

Now *Anger* is not as *Envy*, simply and in it self unlawful ; for there may be a vertuous Anger, as well as vicious ; an Anger that merits Praise and Commendation, and is so far from being a Sin, that it is a noble and generous Grace. To be moved with indignation for the Cause of God, when his Glory is eclipsed, his Name dishonoured, his Ordinances profaned, his Sanctuary polluted, his People vilified ; this is an holy Anger, and may well lose that common and vulgar Appellation of *Anger*, and pass under the Name of *Zeal*. Such was our Saviour's against those that defiled the Temple, when with a miraculous Authority, he whipp'd them out, and vindicated the House of God unto the Worship of God, from the usurpation of the God of this World, *Mammon*. And therefore we find that Passage, *Psal. 59.* applied to,

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to this Action of Christ, *The Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up.* So likewise, when by their hypocritical Silence they seemed to discountenance and disallow the *curing of a Man on the Sabbath Day*, it is said, *He looked round about upon them with anger; being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, Mark 3. 5.*

2. Again, There is also an innocent and allowable *Anger*, when we have just provocation unto it; for Religion doth not utterly root out and destroy the natural Passions; but only moderate, and regulate them. We may be angry, but we must not sin in our Anger, *Ephes. 4. 26. Be angry, but sin not.* And,

3. There is a vicious and sinful *Anger*; which is a rash and foolish Passion, a short Phrensie, that puts a man for the present quite besides himself, and so agitates the Spirits, that the Bloud boils about the Heart, and sends up such sooty Fumes, as darken the Understanding, and deprive him of the use and benefit of his Reason.

—ΧΑΛΘ—
—Ανδραγ—
—ση—
—α—
—ν—
—υδρ. Hom.
—Iliad. Σ.

The Two Ingredients that make up *Anger*, are Grief for some Injury conceived to be done unto us; and Desire of Revenge, to discharge our Gall and Choler upon those that have wronged us; as if we gave our selves ease by laying load upon others.

And there are Two Things that make *Anger* to be evil and sinful.

1. When it is without Cause.
2. When it is without Bounds.

First, Causeless Anger is a kind of Murther; when Men will fret and rage, although there be no provocation at all given them. Some Men's Galls overflow so much, that upon every trivial occasion, or perhaps when there is none, but only their own Umbrage and Suspicion, they fly out into intemperate

temperate Speeches, and revengeful Acts, and are presently all in a Flame and Combustion, when there is nothing to irritate them, but their own cholerick Fancies; like Clouds that break out in Thunder and Lightning, when all the Fire and Sulphur is bred only in their own Bowels. See this testy Spirit in *Jonah*, who, though he were an holy, yet it seems by his History, he was a very passionate Man: First, he is angry that God would spare *Nineveh*, after he had prophesied Ruine and Destruction to it: He grows into a Pet, even with the Mercy of God, as if he circumvented him, and designed to make him accounted a false Prophet. *Jonah 3, 1. It displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.* *Jonah* is angry because God is appeased: The froppishman thinks the Almighty too easie; and can hardly forgive that Mercy, which so readily forgave the *Ninevites*. And again, when God had caused a Worm to destroy the Gourd which he had prepared to shade this hot and angry Head, *Jonah* falls into another Fit of bitter Passion for the loss of so poor a thing as his Gourd: And when God meekly expostulates the cause with him, *Dost thou well to be angry for the Gourd?* His Passion so far transports him, that he dares to return this malapert Answer, even to the great God, *Yea, I do well to be angry to the very death.* See here how his Gall overflows, and taints both his Reason and his Religion: He hurls his Fury about against God and Men; and (as he sits in his Booth, looking, and praying daily that Fire and Brimstone might come down from Heaven to consume that great City,) when he saw his Expectation frustrated, and the Date of his Prophecy expired, without the Accomplishment of it, he quarrels with God, storms against every thing, is weary of his Life, and could rather have fired it himself, than it should have escaped.

Secondly, As Causeless Anger, so immoderate Anger is a great Sin, and a committing of Murder in our hearts.

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Now *Anger* may be immoderate two ways; either in the Degree, or in the Continuance and Duration of it.

First, In the Degree, when it is vehement and excessive, transporting us beyond our due Bounds and Temper. I know no Law that forbids a Christian to resent an Injury. Our Saviour Christ himself, when he was buffeted, was sensible of, and reproves that Insolence. *John 18.23. If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?* Christianity doth not make Men Stocks, but keeps them from being Furies; it doth not root up, but only prune our Anger, and cuts off all *superfluities of Naughtiness* from it. It may, when just cause is given, warm, but not fire our Spirits: But when it breaks forth into reviling Speeches, or into revengeful Actions, be sure it hath catch'd fire then, and is enkindled of Hell.

And yet the just Anger of Superiours, as Magistrates, or Masters, or Parents, may lawfully break forth upon Inferiours, in inflicting due punishments. Nor will this fall under the guilt of a sinful Revenge, but a just Reward, whilst they are careful that the Punishment exceed not the Fault and Crime committed.

But for those who have no Authority over others, to seek revenge upon them, either by railing or defaming Speeches, or by repaying Injury for Injury, is a Transgression of this Commandment, the Effect of immoderate Anger, and a kind of Murder in them.

Secondly, Anger may be immoderate in the Continuance and Duration of it: For Age will sow it into Hatred, and turn what was Wine into Vinegar: And therefore the Apostle counsels us, *Be angry, and sin not*. But how may that be done? *Let not the Sun, saith he, go down upon your wrath, Eph. 4. 26*. And indeed he that goes to Bed, and sleeps with Anger boiling in his Breast, will find the Scum of Malice upon it the next Morning. This is a Passion, which if it be long cherish'd, will *excitere Spiritum*, drive away the Spirit.

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For how canst thou think that the Dove-like Spirit of God will reside where the Heart remains full of Gall; or, that the Celestial Flame of Divine Love should burn bright and clear, where there are so many thick Fumes and Vapours continually rising up to damp and choak it? How darest thou betake thy self to Rest without first invoking the great God, and locking up thy self by Prayer into his custody and safe tuition? And how darest thou pray whilst Wrath estuates and rancles in thy Breast? Canst thou in Faith pray for Forgiveness, who dost not thy self forgive? Our Saviour hath expressly told us, that if we *forgive not Men their Trespases, neither will our Father which is in Heaven forgive us our Trespases*: And therefore as long as Anger and Desire of wreaking our Revenge upon those that have wronged us, are entertained by us, so long we invalidate our own Prayers, by not performing that Condition, without which, God will never hear nor accept them. And therefore be sure you be no longer angry than you may lawfully abstain from Prayer. For we are commanded to *lift up holy hands without wrath*, 1 Tim. 2. 8. For certainly Dissention and Animosity with Men, is no fit temper to prepare us to hold communion with God. And therefore, though thy Gift be ready to be laid upon the Altar, remember thy self, look inward, and see whether all be quiet and calm there; if there be no grudge, no anger against thy Brother: If thou findest any, either go first, and actually reconcile thy self unto him, or if opportunity will not suffice for that, purge out the Leaven of Wrath and Malice, and reconcile thy self unto him in thine own heart; for under the Law, no *Offering of the Lord was to be mingled with Leaven*; and now under the Gospel, God will accept of no oblations that are offered up unto him with the Ferment of Wrath and Passion: Although it may surprise us, yet let it not possess us. See what the Wise Man counsels us, Eccl. 7. 9. *Be not hasty in thy Spirit to be angry*: Or if through haste and incogitancy, it may seize upon you,

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yet let it not dwell there; for he adds, *Anger dwelleth in the bosome of Fools.* And certainly the calm and peaceable Spirit of God will not dwell in that House where there are perpetual Tumults and Discords, and where our unruly Passions make such a Noise and Uproar, that his secret Whispers, and Suggestions cannot be heard.

And thus you see what kind of Anger is sinful; that which is causeless, and that which is immoderate, either in Degrees, or in Duration: and likewise what Anger is lawful; that which is zealous for God's Glory, and that which is rightly tempered, for our own, and our Neighbour's Good.

Let us, in the next place, consider whence sinful and unwarrantable Anger doth usually proceed. You shall find this bitter Fruit to have likewise its Root of Bitterness. The Causes of it are commonly these;

First, Pride, and an over-weening conceit of our selves. *Pride* is the fruitful Mother of many Vices; but it manifestly none with more care and tenderness than this of *Anger*; and therefore the Wise Man tells us, *Prov. xij. no. That only from Pride cometh Contention*; and indeed, as the Philosopher * observes, *Anger* usually arises from an Opinion that we are despised and contemned. Now the proud Man thinks every one contemns him, that doth not value him as highly as he values himself; that is, beyond all reason; and if he cannot meet with such Fools, he grows angry, and discontented with all the World. Proud Flesh about a Scare, is always tender, and cannot bear the least Touch; and so proud Persons, if they be never so little touch'd, presently grow enraged, and think they have a great injury done them, if others do not as much admire and respect them as they do

* Η ἀργὴ ἔστιν ὀρεξίς μετὰ λυπῆς πικρῆς αἰσινῶν διὰ πικρῶν αἰσινῶν ἐκλεγεῖται ὅτι εἰς αὐτὸν, ἢ εἰς αὐτὸς πικρὸν καὶ πικρὸν. A. ritt. Rhet. l. 2. c. 2.

Ἄλλ' αὖτις, καὶ τῆς ὀργῆς ἀπὸ διαφάν τῆς γένεσιν ἄλλος ὡς ἄλλων αἰσινῶν ἐκλεγεῖται εἰς αὐτὸν τὴν εἰσὶν οἱς ἐπὶ τῆς ἀπορίας δὲ αὐτὸς τὸ ἀπορροῦν καὶ ἀμείνων πικρὸν γένεσιν. Plat. de Ira c. lib.

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themselves. Whoſoever is much a Self-Lover, cannot fail of frequent occasions to make him angry. Now the proud Man is the greatest Self-Lover in the World ; and the Misery is, that he usually loves himself without a Rival ; and if all do not veil to him, to say what he shall dictate, and to think what he shall determine, and to do what he shall prescribe, he takes it for an high Affront ; and as he hath given himself an Authority over others, looks that they should submit to it, and acknowledge it : And others, perhaps, having no less Pride, or, possibly, more Reason, refusing to gratifie his vain and arrogant humour, Quarrels and Dissentions arise, and endless Jars and Discords.

Secondly, Another Cause of this Passion, is the Weakness, and Feebleness of Nature : And therefore it is truly observed by *Plutarch**, that those who are of the infirmer Natures, and weakest Constitutions, are most harass'd with it ; as, Children more than Men ; old Age more than the staid part of Life ; and sick persons more than those that are in Health : For *Anger* is a great Weakness, and therefore lodgeth most in the weakest ; *Ants* and *Pismires*, and such little Creatures are most busie with their Stings ; whereas strong and generous Creatures must be much provok'd before they will be injurious.

* Μείζων
δυνάμις ἐστὶ
μέλιτος
ἀδυνείας.
Αἰὼς καὶ γυ-
ναικὶς ἀν-
δρῶν ὀργή-
λαίτερον καὶ
νοσήνους
ὀργισμένους
ταῦτα καὶ γέ-
νηταί τε ἀν-
μαλόντων.
καὶ κακῶς
περιήνορες
ἐπιτιμούντων. Plut.
De Ira co-
hib.

There are many other Causes of the violent stirring of this exorbitant Passion ; as over-much Love of vain Trifles ; which, if they come to any Mischance, as usually they do, we are apt to be disturbed at it ; easiness to believe at the first Recommendation, and engaging our Affections in things before we have had Trial and Experience of them ; which, afterwards proving quite contrary to our Expectations, the Disappointment will excite our Choler, &c. But I shall not insist on these.

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Let us therefore proceed to lay down some Rules for the
restraining, and moderating of Anger : And that,

First, In Others.

Secondly, In our Selves.

First, In Others It is an hellish Sport for us to irritate and stir up Anger in others, only for us to laugh at, or to make our Advantages by it : Scarce a less Sin than to make them drunk, that we may abuse them : For prevailing Passion is, for the time, a kind of Drunkenness ; and both are a degree of Frenzy and Madness. Thou oughtest not therefore unnecessarily to exasperate thy Brother, whom thou knowest prone to this great Weakness. Otherwise be assured that all his intemperate Speeches, and rash Actions, shall be imputed unto thee, and are thy Sins as well as his ; and whatsoever Revilings he dischargeth against thee, shall at last also be charged upon thee : And what a foolish thing is it for thee to bear the sting of them here, and the punishment of them hereafter ? The Wise Man hath told us, *Prov. 14. 9.* That they are *Fools who make a mock at Sin.* And if thou, for thy Recreation, provokest any to an undecent and misbecoming Passion, know that such Laughter is deadly to thy self, and thou art like those poisoned Persons who laugh themselves to Death.

Secondly, To prevent, and suppress it in thy Self, (for there it doth most hurt, since another Man's Anger is none of my Guilt, if I have neither been faulty in stirring it up, nor too easie to catch the Flame from him,) take these following Rules and Directions :

First, Labour and pray for a meek and humble Spirit. Think lowly of thy self; and then certainly thou wilt not be angry, if others conspire with thee in thinking and speaking of thee as thou dost of thy self. Most commonly Anger

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ger (as I have said) proceeds from an Opinion of being despised : Now do thou first of all despise thy self ; and then all Reproaches and Injuries will signifie no more to thee, than that other Men approve thy Judgment ; and that certainly can be no Cause of Anger. Thou wilt not be angry for want of a Ceremony, or Demonstration of Respect, which others impose or exact ; nor wilt thou quarrel with any, for not relying on thy Judgment, or contradicting thy Sentiments, when thou shalt reflect upon thine own Ignorance and frequent Mistakes. They are the high Hills, whose Heads are wrapp'd about with Clouds and Tempests, when the humble Valleys are calm and serene : So humble Souls, that lie low in their own Esteem, remain undisturbed, when lofty Persons are still molested with the Tempests of their own Passions.

Secondly, Consider how often thou givest God occasion to be angry with thee ; which if he should take, thou wert for ever undone. He bears many Affronts and Indignities at thy Hands. And who art thou ? A poor vile Worm. And who is he ? Even the great Almighty God, the universal King of Heaven and Earth, that he should put up such Wrongs at thy Hands. And shall God daily take Injuries from such a wretched nothing as thou art, God, who is thy Lord and Master ; and wilt not thou bear them patiently from thy Fellow-Servant, who, it may be, is in every respect equal to thee ; but only inferior to thee in this, that he provokes thee unjustly ? Certainly were we as tender towards our Brethren, as we all desire God should be towards us ; could we forbear others, as we our selves would be forborn, there would never be any Quarrel commenced ; or if it were, it would be soon compounded. What saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 103. 9. He will not always chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our Sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities.* Let this great Example be ours, not to be soon moved to Anger, or quickly

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ly to free our selves from it. Indeed many there are that are slow to Anger, and in that they imitate God ; but then they are tenacious and retentive of Wrath, and hardly placable again. Their Anger is like an Impression upon some hard Metal, very difficultly made, and as difficult to be effaced. Let such consider what would become of them, if God should be as slow to be reconciled to them, as they are to their Brethren : Nay, he is infinitely more wronged by you than you can be by them ; and yet he so far condescends, as first to seek Reconciliation. And although he be infinitely able by the least expression of his Wrath and Power for ever to destroy you ; yet herein God commandeth his Love unto you, that when you were Enemies, ye were reconciled unto him by the Death of his Son. Certainly whosoever doth but seriously reflect upon the infinite Patience and Forbearance of God, if he hath any Sweetness diffused into his Soul by that Consideration, if he hath any Conscience of imitating his Heavenly Father, in that which is his most adorable Attribute, if he hath any care to ascertain unto himself the Pardon and Remission of his own Offences, will therein find a powerful Influence to sway him to the like Acts of Mercy and Forgiveness.

Thirdly, Another Rule is, beware of Prejudice against thy Brother ; for Prejudice is a very ill Interpreter of Actions, and will be sure to expound them in the worst Sense. Be not easie to believe, that those who offend thee do it with design, or that they despise and undervalue thee : Rather think it any thing else than Contempt of thee : Believe that his Offences proceed rather from his Folly and Indiscretion, or that he is forced and necessitated to do it, that others have put him upon it. If they be thy Friends that wrong thee, suppose it to be only a Fault of their too great Familiarity, and a misgoverned Intimacy. If they be such as are subject to thee, believe that since they know thou hast Power to chastise them, they would not do it purposely to provoke thee.

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If they be vile and sordid Persons, trouble not thy self with their Affronts; for thy Reputation is above them. Thus I say, incline to believe in any thing rather than a design'd Abuse. For though a strict Jealousie over our Reputation, and an Aptness to think our selves wronged, seem to proceed from Generousness, and a Sense of Honour; yet indeed it proceeds only from Baseness and Weakness of Mind. Who soever accounts himself despised by another, is in a Sense less than he, and confesseth himself his Inferior. He is the noble, and heroick Spirited Person, who is unshaken with the petty Affronts and Injuries of others; and hath so much stable Confidence in the Integrity of his Actions, that he cannot believe any can traduce him, or them; whereas to be angry at them, doth but in a sort justify Slanders, and will beget a Belief, that that is not all together groundless, whereat he shews himself so much concerned. It is an old Maxim of Prudence; *Cavortia: si irascere, agnita videntur; Spreta, exolescunt*; If you be angry at Railings, you seem to acknowledge them; if you condemn them, they vanish.

Fourthly, Be not familiar with any angry Person: For as one Fire will kindle another; so it is likely that his Choler will kindle thine, till both flame into an inordinate and extravagant Passion. See the Direction expressly given us, *Prov. 22. 24, 25. Make no Friendship with an angry Man; and with a furious Man thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his Ways; and get a Snare to thy Soul.* Indeed there is no such Food to Wrath, as Wrath; and it is a very hard Matter to refrain being angry with him, who will causlessly be angry with us. And as thou must shun the Company and Acquaintance of cholerick Persons; so likewise of Scoffers: For a Scoff and a Jeer is many times more provoking than a Blow; and nothing will sooner kindle the Coals of Contention than a biting Taunt. And therefore Solomon adviseth us, *Prov. 22. 100. Call out the Scammer, and Contentions shall go out; yea, Strife and Reproach shall cease.*

Fifthly,

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Ἀγαθὸν
καὶ ἐστὶν ἐν
πυρετῷ
κραδίῳ δὲ
ἐν ὀργῇ πῦρ
γλῶττι
αἰπὰ καὶ
ἐχέει τὴν
ἀσέβειαν.
Plut. de
ira cobib.

Fifthly, It is very good Counsel, if thou seelest any *Motions* of this unruly *Passion* begin to stir in thine *Heart*; that thou arrest it for some time, before thou either speak or act. Let this *Mud* have some time to settle again, that *Reason* may in the mean while recover its *Throne*, and direct thee how to govern thy self like a wise *Man* and a *Christian*. Speak not whilst thou art in the impetuous *Hurries* of thy *Passion*: For it was well said of *Plutarch*, that it is good in a *Fever*, but much better in *Anger*, to have the *Tongue* kept clean and smooth. Put an Interval of time between thy *Anger* and thy *Actions*. For those who act in the *Violence* and *Paroxysms* of their *Anger*, do either they know not what, or else what they may have *Reason* to repent of. And therefore *Solomon* tells us, that the *Discretion* of a *Man* deferreth his *Anger*, Prov. 19. 11. and the beginning of *Strife* is as when one letteth out *Waters*, Prov. 17. 14. At first when a *Man* cutteth the *Bank* of a *River*, the *Passage* is but little, and the *Stream* may be easily stopp'd. But by continual running, it will wear away the *Earth*, and widen the gap; and whole *Floods* and *Currents* will pour out, where but some few *Drops* were intended.

Sixthly, and lastly, Contemplate the huge *Ugliness* and *Deformity* of this *Sin* in others; how it makes *Men* brutish in their *Souls*, and deformed likewise in their *Countenance*. It inflames the *Face*, fires the *Eyes*, and makes a *Man* look like a *Fury*, deafens the *Ears*, froths the *Mouth*, makes the *Heart* beat and pant, the *Tongue* stammer, the *Voice* harsh and rough, the *Speech* precipitate, and oftentimes ridiculous; briefly, it puts the whole *Man* into a preternatural *Fever*, and transforms the *Body* into a *Monster*, and the *Man* into a *Devil*.

And what! Shall I give way to *Passion*, so uncomely a *Passion*, that will make me scorned, when I would seem most terrible? Certainly, were there no other thing whereof to accuse this immoderate *Anger*, it were enough to render